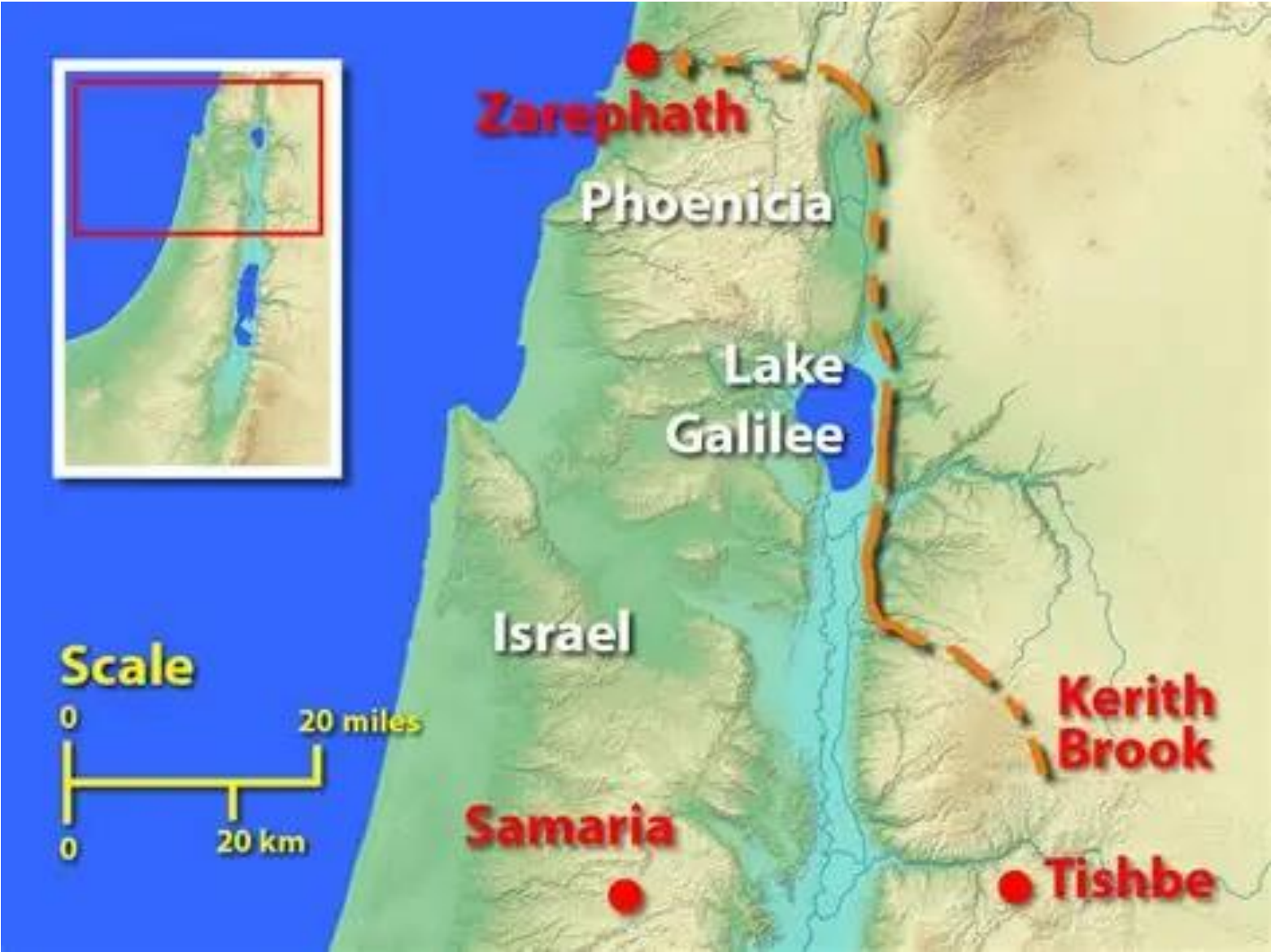


***Luke 4:25-26*** Certainly there were many needy widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the heavens were closed for three and a half years, and a severe famine devastated the land. Yet Elijah was not SENT to any of them. He was SENT instead to a foreigner, a widow of Zerahpath in the land of Sidon [Lebanon].



**ELIJAH** went to Zerapath (80 miles) for a meal.

**WIDOW** = “Nothing to give you,  
only enough for myself.”

E = “Surrender what you have to me,  
and God will give you more for yourself.”

$W = ?$

$W = \text{“OK”}$  [If I die one day earlier.. Big deal!]

Later... W's son died. She accused Elijah of hating her, reminding her of her [past] sin and killing her son!

(Unbelieving people make many such accusations against God.). These landed on the missionary that had been sent to her.

E = “Now LORD, since you SENT me here,  
I expect better things than this to happen!  
Let the boy’s life return to him!”

GOD... revived the child. *Alive again!*

W = “Now I know there is a LORD,  
and you speak his truth!”

**POINT #1** Only God knew that W's son would die. This is actually why he sent E to her. The miracle of flour/oil was to get her attention and give the possibility of hope.

**Missionaries do many things to prepare people, to arouse attention and hope.**

**POINT #2** Every person must see their sin before they will respond to the Savior.

The process of exposing/understanding sin is brutal, like the death of this child.

Repentance is deflating and debilitating.

Yet repentance alone can comprehend grace and lead to faith. **Missionaries are sometimes hated because they are the medium for that message.**

**POINT #3** Jesus never mentioned the starvation of the widow or the death of the son. He keyed on the distance E traveled to minister to that widow when E could have stayed in Israel and helped many widows there. **Missionaries do no travel elsewhere because they wish to escape responsibilities at home or ignore their own family or community.**

How much cheaper and efficient it would be to stay home! **Missionaries go because God calls them. They love their local neighbors, but God has sent them to their global neighbors.**

**POINT #4** Jesus did not mention the expense of airfare to get from Jordon to Lebanon. Cost of VISAS or Immigration fees. Food. Hotels. Taxis. Why not? Because Jesus did not care about that. He simply said, “Elijah was SENT to a widow in Zerapath.”

**Missionaries do not care what it costs (financially) to answer God's call.**

They are SENT by God's Spirit. Yet they must come up with money, no matter how irrelevant it may seem to them. So, they ASK us... Just like E asked W.

**POINT #5** E's promise to W... *"Give. Your own flour bin will not get empty. Do not be afraid."* This promise was not from him. He said, "This is what the LORD says." **And... The LORD has said this same thing across the centuries. He says it to us... today!**