

The Widow of Faith

1 Kings 17:8-16

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him: ⁹ “Go at once to Zarephath^(A) in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” ¹⁰ So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” ¹¹ As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”

¹² “As surely as the LORD your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”

¹³ Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son.

¹⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land.’”

¹⁵ She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. ¹⁶ For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.

This text tells a powerful story that exposes God's love and grace at work. We once again see God at work for good through the prophet Elijah.

A. *The woman:*

She was about to carry out her final act of love by preparing something for her son and her to eat before they would surely die.

She admitted her shame to Elijah. She had enough to prepare a meager meal for the two of them.

In the midst of what we would surely call scarcity, she found abundance.

In the face of certain death, she heard the voice of God and was obedient to it.

In her fears and sorrow for what was about to unfold for her and her son, she discovered hope in what God would do.

Her powerful act of sacrificial service gave evidence of her complete dependence upon God. She was willing to give what was asked and was then blessed by God for many days.

B. *Elijah:*

He made a modest request for some water and bread

Elijah prevailed upon her to do as she had said she planned to do but first she needed to prepare a small bit of bread for him.

He conveyed the promise of God. This promise meant that she and her son would not starve to death if she first shared with Elijah.

C. *You and Me:*

How would we respond? These days we would certainly look at Elijah with puzzled confusion and respond "Are you crazy? We're about to starve to death and you really expect us to share? Really, you have got to be nuts."

OR

Her story can also be our story as we respond to God's call to generosity for:

the Malaria Campaign

the World Hunger Appeal

Mission Support

And all the other ways the needs of God's people make themselves known to us.

Finally, it is in giving ourselves away that we can discover God's richest blessings in our lives!