

# LEMONADE

## *Working from Home, 2 Kings 4:1-7*

### **Crisis**

**2 Kings 4:1 (KJV) Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.**

- 2 Kings 4 opens with a woman in crisis going to the prophet Elisha
- Her husband has died suddenly, and we can just imagine her grief at the passing of her husband and the father of their two sons
- To further complexify this situation, when her husband died, there was a loss of income, the bills were not being paid and the creditor has come to collect money she does not have
- The widow's husband was a godly man and it does not appear from the text that the husband or the widow were wasteful, frivolous, or not honoring God with their finances
- This woman and her late husband were godly people and life altering experiences still happened
- This coronavirus does not discriminate, it is altering the lives of people world-wide
- Virtually the entire nation is sheltering in place
- Employers that can are having their employees work from home
- While other employers were forced to furlough or layoff employees with little or no pay going forward
- We are personally and collectively in a bad situation
- This woman is trying to manage grief, loneliness, despair, parenting, and financial stress and pressure all at once, but she knew where to turn; she went to Elisha the prophet for advice and counsel
- Her *first decision* was to go to God for help
  - As this woman did then, we must go to God as our first choice and not allow the situation we're in dictate the decisions we make

### **What Shall I Do for Thee?**

**[2] And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, **Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.****

- Elisha says to the widow. "How can I help you?"
  - To put it another way, "you've told about your problem, but you have not asked me to do anything"
- What was true of the widow is often true of us, we don't ask God for help **James 4:2 (KJV) "... ye have not, because ye ask not."**
- One of the greatest failures of believers is the failure to ask God in prayer for the help we need
- Prayer is an act of *dependence* and *faith* in God
- Our prayers demonstrate that we *believe* God will ultimately meet our needs according to His will and His timetable

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- Elisha doesn't even what for answer to his question
- Instead Elisha asks her another question, "What's do you have in your house?" or Tell me what do you *already* have to help in this situation?
- The widow says, "I don't have anything except a pot of oil"
- The Lord is asking you today, what's in *your* house?
- There's *more* in your *house* than you realize
- The widow says, "I have nothing except a pot of oil."
  - Elisha has helped the woman take notice of a *previously overlooked* asset; the small pot of oil
  - God is helping you *now* take notice of your *previously overlooked*, gifts, talents and abilities
- God often uses what is *nearby* and *available* to help us and bless us
- Elisha helped the woman *think* in a different way
- In order to get this debt paid off she had to start focusing more on *possible solutions* than on the *current problem*
- Elisha wanted her to be a solutions thinker instead of a problem's thinker
- The Bible says as a man thinketh in his heart so is he
- When your thinking begins to change, so does your circumstances
- Elisha helped by teaching the widow how to help herself
- You must be an *active participant* in your own miracle

### **The God Idea**

**[3] Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. [4] And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.**

- God gave Elisha a plan for the widow to pay off her debt is this plan required her to be *directly* involved:
  1. Elisha told the widow to go to all your neighbors and they must be *empty vessels*
    - God can't use vessels that are already full
      - Sometimes we are the vessel that's already full
      - We don't want to be the vessel that hindering God's flow of oil in our lives
  2. *Borrow* as many vessels as you can, *not a few*
    - The number of vessels the widow brought into her house would show the level of her faith, obedience, and submission to God's plan
    - This is the time to take our limits off God, believe Him for all that we need ***Ephesians 3:20 (KJV) 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,***
  3. Go in your house and *shut the door* (self-quarantine) on you and your sons
    - Elisha said *shut the door* for four reasons:
      1. Shut out every voice that didn't believe

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2. What she was doing was to give God glory and honor, not *publicity* for herself
3. She needed to be in an environment where she could focus on what God told her to do and not be influenced by the voices of others
4. To pray and praise God as the miracle takes place
4. Start *pouring* the oil from your *one small pot* into all the bigger vessels
  - Elisha was testing her faith to see if she was “serious” about doing whatever it takes to get out of this financial problem she was in
  - When God gives you a plan you must *act on your faith in God* and carry out His plan

### ***Working from Home***

***[5] So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. [6] And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.***

- God through Elisha gave the woman *the idea* to pay off her debt, but she must *do the work*
- The woman needs *faith* and *works* to change her situation ***James 2:17 (KJV) 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.***
- How many *God ideas* and never implemented because we didn't *do* what God said?
- The widow by faith followed the plan of Elisha
- Faith that *trusts* God is the faith *obeys* God
- We know the widow had faith in the plan of Elisha by her pure obedience to it
- She did *exactly* what Elisha said
- She shut the door with just her sons and began pouring oil into the vessels and her sons *setting them aside*
  - I believe when the woman had the faith to pour oil from the little jar into the big jar the first time, it stirred her faith to continue pouring to the oil
  - The woman's sons kept bringing the vessels in and *she* kept pouring out
- **The oil was multiplied by her doing the pouring**
  - The widow's miracle was directly related to her putting *her faith* in action
- In order to experience your miracle, you must be an *active participant* in God's plan
- The sons kept bringing her vessels to fill and she kept filling vessels
- She asked for another vessel and her sons said there are no more, and then the oil stopped flowing

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- The number of vessels gathered was the *measurement* of the widow's faith
- God's provision was as large as her faith and willingness to obey
- The miracle God wants to do in your life is determined by *your* level of faith and obedience
- Don't limit God's blessings by a lack of faith and obedience
- Putting your faith in the plan of God and faithfully, fully and consistently following will yield the result you need
- God invites us to participate in His miracle of provision
- When you put forth the effort, God will provide the miracle!
- Keep working your plan until you have the miracle God promised you

### ***Making the Best of a Bad Situation***

***[7] Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.***

- The widow went back to Elisha and said what do I now?
- Elisha told the widow to do three things
  1. Go sell the oil
  2. Pay off the debt
  3. You and your children will live off the rest
- That means after she sold the oil and paid the creditor, she and her sons would be able to live off the *overflow*
- This woman by faith collected enough vessels to take care of her *present* situation and her *future*
- Her faith and obedience changed her life
- She placed her faith in God's word, obeyed it and the blessings started flowing in!
- We can do the same, take God at His word and obey it
- We can *expect* God to do the miraculous when we walk in faith and obedience
- The widow came to God with a bad situation and God showed her how to *work from home* to change her life
  - What's in *your* house?

