

Sermon – Observations of A Good Mother; Elijah and the Widow

1 Kings 17:8 - 24

⁸ And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, ⁹ Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

¹¹ And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. ¹² And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

¹³ And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. ¹⁴ For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

¹⁵ And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. ¹⁶ And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

My Observations:

- She wasn't lazy, she was busy gathering sticks and working for the benefit of her child. That's a good mother.
- The widow had a heart for service. She didn't have a problem ministering to Elijah. It was no problem for her to fetch him a drink of water. She didn't have a problem stopping what she was doing to help someone in need. That is a good mother.
- When Elijah asks her for something extra, something more, she explains she cannot provide him even a morsel of bread. She only has enough for her and her son.
 - Even though the situation is bleak, she will do what she can in the moment to help her family until the end.
 - She makes her family a priority ahead of any other requests. That's a good mother.
 - She is truthful about her situation and condition. That's a good mother.
- She has faith in God and the word of the Lord more than her circumstances. She doesn't let her circumstances or even the well being of her son, keep her from demonstrating faith in God. That's a really good mother!

- Elijah is telling her to not fear her situation. Tells her the illogical, serve him first, and then serve herself and her son.
- He tells her what God said and promised. It looks like she will run out of meal, but she won't. It looks like she will shortly run out of oil, but she won't. It might look like she is wasting what little she has on Elijah, but she won't, instead it will be the wisest investment she could make in her situation.
- She serves God first. She put God as a higher priority than her family.....That's a great mother.
- She doesn't fear her situation any longer. That's a good mother.
- She believes in the word of God and His promises; that's a good mother.
- She obeys the instructions from Elijah and the Lord. That's a good mother.
- She gets blessed and her son gets blessed because of her faith in the word....That's a good mother.

¹⁷ And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

¹⁸ And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

¹⁹ And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

More Observations:

- Her son falls sick and dies. She goes to Elijah for help. She recognizes her need, she knows how to turn to God for help by turning to His servants, and she recognizes her past mistakes. That's a good mother.
- She releases her son from her bosom and gives him over to Elijah. If she had continued to hold onto her son, she would have missed a blessing and her miracle. If she had held onto her grief, she wouldn't be able to take hold of her miracle. She didn't let the emotions of being a mother, the emotions of her grief cause her to hold onto a situation that she could not control. She knew when to let go and let God. That's a really good mother!

²⁰ And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

²¹ And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

²² And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

²³ And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.



24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.

Elijah calls upon the Lord on behalf of the widow. Your mercy and kindness from yesterday, may return to you today or tomorrow.

His prayers and actions and faith caused a revival. God hears his petition. God blesses the widow and gives her back what she thought she had lost. When she let him go, she got him back.

Observations:

- She confirms her faith and acknowledges that Elijah is truly a man of God because of how God used him to deliver the miracle. A good mother recognizes when God is at work and blesses others.
- She didn't keep her praise or confirmation to herself. She gives words of confirmation and encouragement to others. That's a good mother.

What does this show us today?

If a mother today can demonstrate these characteristics, and do what did widow did, she should be blessed like the woman in the story gets blessed.

If a mother is working and not idle,

If a mother provides for her children,

If a mother puts God first in her life,

If a mother has a servant heart; is willing to give of what she has rather than always receiving,

If a mother puts her faith in God and stands on His promises,

Then a blessing and a reward will come out of a bad situation which will be a great blessing for her family.

Do this and be blessed. Good mothers receive the word by faith and obey. That's a really good mother.

Trouble may occur even after you believed. Just because God blessed you before, doesn't mean you will be exempt from future trials and tough times. But this mother knew to go to the Lord when the tough times came.

Good mothers know when it is time to let go and let God. If you hold onto your child too long, it may not be good for their growth. Don't let your emotions cause you to miss or hinder God working out the tough seasons in your life or relationship.

Good mothers know how to celebrate a miracle and encourage others. That's a really good mom!

They trust in the word of God and stand upon His promises.....that's what good mothers do.



Summary

There are spiritual principles at play in this story which apply to us today. It doesn't matter who you are, these principles are in effect.

- Just as the widow, we need to come to the place where we need God's help.
- We need to turn from trusting in ourselves to trusting in God as the widow did.
- We place our faith and hope in the word and promises of God.
- We stand on the promises and are led by the Spirit in obeying His will.
- We put in the work of serving others.
- When we follow these steps, God shows up and He will not fail.
- We have peace; process brings peace.

This is the formula for a good Christian.