

# ELIJAH & THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH (1 Kings 17)

## 'STAKE IN THE GROUND' PRINCIPLES

- A. God is GOOD (Psalm 34:8).
  - B. God is CLEVERER than me (Isaiah 55:8-9).
  - C. He WORKS all things together for GOOD (Romans 8:28).
  - D. Our job is to TRUST HIM (Proverbs 3:5-6).
- *Do you really live as they those four statements were true? What might change for you if you did? How might that affect the way you lived or thought or acted or reacted?*
- *Do you ever get tempted into essentially deciding God is not good (to you) or that you know best? Or do you ever feel that things are conspiring to work against you and that God is powerless or reluctant to fix it? Are there any areas in your life with which you're reluctant to trust Him?*

## THE FAITH REALM

- \* God OPERATES by faith ... His is a faith REALM ... Faith is his M.O. (Romans 1:17, Matthew 9:29, 2 Corinthians 5:7).
  - \* As believers, the way we THINK, SPEAK & ACT should be different, because different RULES APPLY (Isaiah 55:8-9).
  - \* Problem is, life PROGRAMMES us to operate in NATURAL ways that are CONTRARY to what God teaches about FAITH.
- *Do you tend to live by faith or sight? Does the fact that God's realm is a faith realm really impact the way you think, speak and act? Should it? What should it change? Can you think of examples where Jesus stepped out in radically obedient faith?*
- *How does the world programme us against faith? What needs to be 'unlearned' and 'relearned'?*

## THE FAITH LESSONS (1 Kings 17)

1. God sends Elijah to a widow who has NOTHING, is NOBODY and is at her WITS END.
  - \* God CAN and WILL use anybody ... It will be on HIS TERMS and won't always MAKE SENSE.

→ *Why is this encouraging for us? Why do you think God chose that widow? How would this situation have encouraged Elijah? (Remember the land was in a severe state of famine, resulting from the wickedness & idolatry of king & country.*
2. Don't be AFRAID (v13) → FEAR decisions BAD; FAITH decisions MUCH BETTER.
  - \* FEAR will always LEAD you AWAY from the promises, provision & presence of God.

- *"Fear is imposing, loud & demanding." Discuss!*
- *How does fear work against you and how does it oppose your faith?*
3. God didn't ask the widow to GIVE anything she didn't ALREADY HAVE
    - \* The solution is almost always ALREADY in your HANDS.

→ *What things already in your hands does the Lord tends to use? Why does He normally use us rather than spectacularly intervening from the outside?*
  4. When we are prepared to GIVE to GOD what He's already PLACED in our HANDS, He can MULTIPLY it supernaturally (v15-16)
    - \* God CAN'T and WON'T do it until we RELEASE it.
    - \* A SEED is no good TIGHTLY HELD in your hand.

→ *Why is our willingness to 'release' so significant? If we don't, does that really mean He can't or won't? Is it can't or won't or both?*
  5. The SEED comes FIRST (v13).
    - \* GIVING before receiving. OBEYING before providing. BELIEVING before seeing. TRUSTING before receiving.

→ *Why is it seed first? Does the world have these 4 the other way around?*

→ *"Supernatural outcomes will always be preceded by a seed of Holy Spirit initiated obedience" What does that mean and how does it work?*
  6. How God provides for you TODAY won't necessarily be how He provides for you TOMORROW (v14).
    - \* The point: Don't DIG IN STUBBORNLY assuming that what God was doing YESTERDAY is what He intends to do TOMORROW.
    - \* The danger: We start to REPEAT a formula, WORK the plan, TRUST a process and forget about the SOURCE.

→ *Why is it so tempting to keep looking back and doing the same things over and over again?*

→ *Good habits and spiritual disciplines can both underpin and, at times, keep us from bold faith. Discuss!*
  7. GIVE me your SON (v19)
    - \* Are you prepared to LET GO and LET GOD?

→ *What are the things that keep you clinging on & not giving it all to God? Self-sufficiency? False theology? Blaming God? Forgetting His promises?*
  8. If you want a miracle, you have to DO what the Holy Spirit SAYS.
    - \* PRECISELY that; nothing MORE & nothing LESS.
    - \* It might be UNUSUAL or UNEXPECTED, but the walk of faith demands TOTAL & UTTER, sometimes RADICAL OBEDIENCE (v21).

→ *What biblical examples can you think of where radical obedience to an unusual directive produced spectacular results? Have you ever seen God do something amazing in response to a bold, unusual faith action?*