

# *What Hast Thou In the House?*

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**2 Kings 4:1-7** 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. 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. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. 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. 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. 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. 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.

- I. Bad times come to all of us in this journey of life.
  - A. This was the family of one of the sons of the prophets.
    1. They were not a wicked or ungodly family.
  - B. This was a family that had already had major problems and losses.
    1. These boys had lost their father and were now in danger of being taken from their mother and sold as slaves.
    2. This woman had lost her husband and was about to be deprived of her sons, as well, which would leave her completely destitute.
  - C. She was in debt; for what reason we do not know, but it could have been something unavoidable.
    1. It is possible to end up in debt in other ways than careless spending and managing of money.
  - D. As the children of God, none of us have the assurance that our circumstances will always be wonderful and never be as bad as those of this woman and her sons.
  - E. There are some very valuable lessons to be learned from this situation, though.
- II. The woman went to the man of God first.
  - A. She didn't go to the world seeking help.
  - B. She didn't go out and get a job and try to come up with some scheme of her own to pay off the debt.
  - C. She simply sought out the man of God and told him what was happening to her and her sons.
    1. She didn't even ask him for anything, according to the Scripture.
  - D. It was Elisha who said, "What shall I do for thee?"
    1. He wanted to help her, but he did not pay her debt for her.
    2. This is where most people look for miracles and help – from the hand of others.
    3. But Elisha truly helped this woman by steering her away from such thinking.
- III. What hast thou in the house?

- A. This was what Elisha asked the woman in the first step toward solving her problem.
- B. The first place to look when we are in a strait is to what we have at hand.
  - 1. Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
  - 2. This is a principle revealed in the Bible many times: Joseph, the Children of Israel time and again in the wilderness, the little boy's lunch, etc.
- C. Never be discouraged by how little you seem to have.
  - 1. Little is much when God is in it, and God generally won't be in it unless it is very, very little.
  - 2. So in order to see the miracles of God we usually first have to be brought down very low.
- D. Never be discouraged by how irrelevant what you have is to the problem you are facing.
  - 1. What did a pot of oil have to do with the debt that was threatening to ruin her life completely?
  - 2. She would have never looked at that oil as the means of her deliverance without the wisdom of God.
- E. We cannot use what we do not possess and therefore those things are useless when we are in dire straits.
  - 1. To focus on obtaining more things to help us get out of trouble is to just heap to ourselves more trouble.

IV. She had to act in faith.

- A. Elisha told her to go to her neighbors and ask for empty vessels.
  - 1. She was not to ask for help or for anything but EMPTY vessels.
- B. He said to ask for "not a few" – in other words she was to get as many as she could.
  - 1. So according to her faith is how she was to be given.
- C. This had to arouse curiosity among the neighbors as to what she was up to.
  - 1. They had to know that she was broke and in trouble and had nothing ...what was she going to do with all these pots?
- D. That is why he told her to take her sons in the house and shut the door.
  - 1. She had to disregard the skepticism of others who would surely deride her for her foolishness.
  - 2. She had to disregard the counsel and so-called wisdom of others who would give her their plans and suggestions for solving her problem.
  - 3. What she had to do to get deliverance from God was to believe God and trust Him and act upon what He said – and most people do not believe that is way to deal with real earthly problems like this.

V. When all the pots were full the oil stayed.

- A. There was just enough to fill all the pots she had borrowed – not lacking and not more.
- B. She went back to the man of God for further instruction after all the pots were filled with oil.
  - 1. She didn't "take it from there" herself, even though she had to realize that she had a lot of money sitting there in those pots.
  - 2. She didn't claim it as hers automatically but went and told the man of God what they had done.

- VI. Sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live ...of the rest.
- A. So it didn't come out of nowhere, but from the little she already had.
  - B. The little she had was not cast to the wind, but was multiplied into a blessing for many others.
  - C. Those who bought the oil were glad to get it and so it turned into a blessing for everyone.
  - D. The creditor was paid and so he was blessed from this, also.
  - E. Her sons saw that God was real and that He was faithful to provide for his children.
    - 1. This was a very important thing considering what these boys had been through in losing their father and then almost being sold as slaves.
  - F. There was more than enough to take care of the debt – there was enough left over for them to live on, also.
- VII. So when we are considering our dire circumstances we should keep these things in mind.
- A. Look to God for wisdom FIRST.
    - 1. Seek counsel and advice from godly people who truly walk with God.
  - B. Don't look to others for help but to God.
  - C. Don't focus on what you do not have, but on what you DO have.
  - D. Don't think about running away or coming up with a scheme of your own.
  - E. Use what you have, to do what you can, where you are.
  - F. This is good for our individual life, our family, and for our church.