

Weekly Word

May 26, 2008

By Mary Ruth Stone

Devotion

Mothers in the Bible: The Prophet's Widow

Widowhood is a sad life situation faced by many women. In fact, it is said that 80% of all women in the USA will be widows sometime before they die, and 45% of all women over 65 are currently widows. Sadly, a common companion of widowhood is poverty. Such was the case of the widow of the prophet who came to Elisha for help in 2 Kings 4:1-7.

It seems that her late husband had been a godly man. In spite of that, she and her sons were living in poverty, and her creditors were threatening to take her sons as his slaves to pay her debt. The woman was desperate for help.

She went to Elisha and told him her situation. He asked her two questions. One inquired as to what she wanted. The other asked what she had. An inventory revealed that all she had was a small bottle of oil. That seemed like very little. (However, oil often represents the Spirit of God in scripture.)

Elisha commanded a strange thing. He told her to go borrow all the vessels she could from her neighbors. He warned her to borrow more than a few. She did. When the vessels were collected, Elisha told her to start pouring oil from her jar into the vessels. When she obeyed, an amazing thing happened. As long as she had vessels available, the oil continued to pour without running out.

She was told to sell the oil and pay her debts. There was enough money left for her ongoing living expenses. What an amazing story! All that was required of the woman was obedience and faith—faith to borrow and faith to pour.

The best result of this story was that her sons were no longer in danger. They escaped a life of servitude, had their present and future needs met, and were able to witness a faith-building miracle. All of this occurred because a seemingly helpless, widowed mother knew where to go, was humble enough to ask for help, and obeyed the man of God. Her sons were the beneficiaries of her wise decisions and of her faith in God.

Mothers today would do their sons a favor to follow this nameless mother's lead.

Scripture

"Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest"
(2 Kings 4:7).

This 'n That

*"One major prerequisite to receiving answers to prayer is that our requests line up with God's will."
— Anne Graham Lotz*

Prayer

Dear Lord,

Supply all of my family's needs according to Your riches in glory. Amen.

Obediently,
Mary Ruth