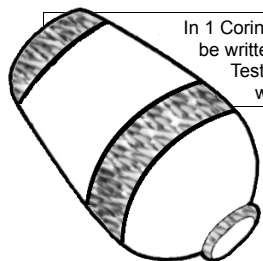


SURRENDERING THE LAST DROP



In 1 Corinthians 10:11 Paul tells us that the reason God inspired the old testament stories to be written is for our admonition. Today we start a series of sermons on the well-known Old Testament stories. I pray that God will reveal some new truths to us through these old, well-known, stories.

2 KINGS 4:1-7

A DIRE THREAT


“That’s final, if you don’t pay by then I’ll exercise my right to make your two boys my slaves as payment for the debt! Good day madam.” The angry man said emphatically as he turned on his heel and walked out. Abigale¹ wiped at a tear with her black widow’s shall of mourning. She’d just lost her husband and now her boys would be taken away and there was nothing she could do about it! The thought back on the events leading up to her impossible predicament.

A DEVOTED MAN

Abigale’s late husband was an upright man. In fact he was among the company of the prophets—he spoke for God! But even the righteous suffer tragedy. We don’t know how he died but we do know that he left behind a grieving wife at least two sons and a huge load of debt.

1 Timothy 5:8—Somehow he had failed to provide for his family in the event of an untimely death. He had gotten so far into debt that it was impossible for his wife to keep up. Lest we judge him to quickly, we should remember that we don’t really know how he got into debt. But the principal is that we should avoid debt as much as possible because the borrower is slave to the lender.

A DESPERATE SITUATION

In those days there was no such thing as bankruptcy. You either payed the debt or worked off your debt as a slave. That’s why if Abigale didn’t act fast her family would be split up and her sons would become this creditor’s slaves—no hope for the future. Her husband’s creditor had the right to demand justice in regard to this debt, and he was planning to do it! All this had lead up to this terrible  moment. What would she do? What *could* she do? She had nothing!

A DECIDING POINT

In desperation she appealed to the only One who can perfectly fuse justice with mercy—God. She did this by appealing to God’s chief representative in Israel, Elisha the head of the prophets of which her late husband had been one. Abigale’s request was noble. She was a mother who wanted to do what’s best for her family, she wanted them to be together.

2 Corinthians 12:9—As Abigale reached out in desperation to God humble acknowledging that there was absolutely no way her problem could be solved by her own strength or knowledge she tapped into the greatest strength in the universe.

1 KINGS 17:7-15

A STARVING BOY

“I’m Hungry Mommy,” Maacah’s¹ little boy cried as he sat huddled in the corner. The widow peered at the slight dusting of flour at the bottom of the jar. Only enough for one more meager meal for the two of them.

A STARK REALITY

“if only the rain would come.” She thought to her self. But it had been nearly three years since the last drop of rain had fallen. Now there was nothing left. “I guess I may as well face the inevitable and make our last meal, then, then prepare to die.” She thought with a sighed.

A STRANGE REQUEST

As Maacah set about collecting sticks for her last cooking fire she was startled by a foreigner’s words, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?”

“Water? I guess I could find a little”, She thought. She noticed that he must be a prophet from Israel by his mannerisms, clothing and accent. “Jar? I have plenty of those—they’re all empty!” But as she turned to comply with his wish he asked her to a piece of bread. The widow whirled around to face this prophet. “Sir, as surely as your God is alive I don’t have any bread.” What would she do? What could she do? She had nothing!

THE TWO STORIES COLLIDE

A DOUBTFUL AMOUNT

2 Kings 4:2—Abigale thought that the little oil that was left in her jar was to little to be of any real value. But God doesn’t need our stuff, He needs our willingness to surrender the last drop to Him.

A STARTLING PROPOSITION

1 Kings 17:13-14—Maacah was being offered God’s sustenance but first she must have enough faith to give up her last dusting of flour and her last drop of oil. She had to decide who to trust, herself or God.

A DOUBLE RISK

2 Kings 4:3, 4—Abigale would have to risk both her pride and her last possession to keep her family together. She had to decide who to trust, herself or God.

A STARTLINGLY DELIGHTFUL MIRACLE

1 Kings 17:15, 16—Because of Maacah’s total surrendering faith there was food enough!

2 Kings 4:5-7—Abigale’s surrender was rewarded not only with the payment of the debt but with money enough to raise her sons!

A STUNNING DIRECTIVE FOR US

Sometimes we try to hold something back from God as if it’s our security blanket in case He doesn’t come through. Sometimes we think that what we have is to insignificant to be of any use to God. But God challenges us to surrender even the last drop and watch as He multiplies it to fill our needs. He says use what you have and I’ll make it more then you could imagine!

¹ Names have been made up to make the story easier to follow.