

Elijah and the Widow's Oil

When the brook dries up, God sends Elijah to a starving widow. Through faith, her handful of flour and small jar of oil miraculously never run out.

1 Kings 17:8-16

CHARACTERS: Elijah, The widow of Zarephath, Her son, God

THEMES: Faith, Provision, Obedience, Miracles, Caring for prophets

WHEN THE BROOK Kerith dried up, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 'Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.'

Zarephath was in Phoenicia—Jezebel's homeland, the very center of Baal worship. Yet there God had prepared a provider.

When Elijah arrived at the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her, 'Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?' As she was going, he called, 'And bring me, please, a piece of bread.'

'As surely as the Lord your God lives,' she replied, 'I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.'

She was preparing her last meal. The famine had brought her to the end.

Elijah said to her, 'Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: "The jar of flour will not be used up

and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land."

She went away and did as Elijah had told her. It required enormous faith—to give her last food to a stranger on nothing but his word and a promise from a foreign God.

But God proved faithful. There was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. The jar of flour was not used up, and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

In the darkest place, among a people who didn't know Him, God provided for a widow who dared to believe.

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