

SERMON: RUNNING ON EMPTY

1st Kings 17:8-16

(8) And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, (9) Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain thee. (10) So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. (11) And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. (12) And she said, as the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. (13) And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it to me, and after make for thee and for thy son. (14) For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. (15) And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she and he, and her house, did eat many days. (16) And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

Introduction

Almost everyone who has driven an automobile has, at some time or another, experienced an occasion when the needle on the gas gauge was on “e.” I have even had the needle to go past “e,” and every bell and buzzer in my SUV went off. I am told that some of the new cars actually have a computerized voice which will tell you how many more miles you can travel before your car will come to a complete halt for lack of fuel. Most of the time we run on “e,” because we were very busy and just did not take the time to fill up. Let’s face it: in life we often run on empty for many of the things that will make our lives fruitful and content. In this biblical narrative, two people who were running on empty meet by divine decree and both were filled. They are models of what to do when you are running on empty. Let’s analyze this meaningful story.

Exposition

1. Everybody Will Run On Empty, At One Time Or Another.

(Elijah Was On Empty Because He Stood Against Evil.)

(The Widow Was On Empty Because Of Tough Times.)

(A Drought Produced A Famine.)
 (Because You Are Weak Now Does Not Mean You Are A Weakling.)
 (Doers Are More Prone to Running On Empty Than The Non-Doers.)

2. God Speaks To Us When We Are Running On Empty.

(We Must Obey His Commands.)

3. God Produces Divine Collaborations to Bless Believers.

(A Preacher Having a Nervous Breakdown and a Poverty-Stricken Widow.)

(Sometimes God's Ways Are Strange-Very Strange.)

4. Even When Running On Empty We Still Have Something to Offer.

(We Can Always Be A Blessing To Someone Else.)

(The Widow Gave Elijah Food And Water.)

5. Faith Must Override Fear.

(Both Elijah And The Widow Exercised Their Faith.)

(Faith And Fear Cannot Live In The Same House.)

6. Faith Exercised Will Produce More Than Expected.

(The Meal Barrel Never Became Empty.)

(The Oil Never Ran Out.)

Closing Thoughts

God has the resources to move us from poverty to plenty. I am not just talking about material things. He can fill us with the fruit of the Spirit. We will run on empty from time to time, but God is able to "top off" our spiritual gas tanks. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scriptures

1st Kings 17:1-7

Luke 4:25-26

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