

An Expression of Sacrificial Faith

“And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the sojourners of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before the Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of Jehovah; for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before the Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. And the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Sidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath; and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she said, As Jehovah thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in the jar, and a little oil in the 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. 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 forth unto me, and afterward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, The jar of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that Jehovah sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. The jar of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spake by Elijah” (1 Kings 17:1-16).

The widow of Zarephath exercised faith in the God of heaven, even to the point of giving the last of her food to Elijah, saying, “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.” What’s of further interest is that she wasn’t of Israel: Jesus said, “There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow” (Luke 4:25-26).

The same God who “commanded the ravens to feed” Elijah, the same God who had “commanded a widow to sustain” Elijah, this same God, says to mankind,

“Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithall shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

Remember the words of the Lord, saying, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).