

THE WIDOW'S SON. 1 KN. 17:17-24. 2/19/23. #47.

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<sup>17</sup>Now it happened after these things *that* the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. <sup>18</sup>So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?" <sup>19</sup>And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. <sup>20</sup>Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" <sup>21</sup>And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. <sup>23</sup>And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!" <sup>24</sup>Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you *are* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in your mouth *is* the truth."

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1. From life to death

- a. God had saved the Zarephath widow & her son by sending Elijah to her & making the food supply last
  - a1. She felt safe & provided for now
  - a2. She believes that her trials are over
  - a3. With a prophet who had promised her perpetual food (bread) in her house, she was safe
- b. Suddenly, her son became sick & died
  - a1. She goes from security to grief in a short interval
  - a2. She discovers that a prophet in the house was no guarantee against the tragedies of life & vulnerabilities of fragile human beings

2. Of sons and sin

- a. Having a holy man in the house was awkward
  - a1. The widow did not know how much Elijah knew about her or what God had told him
  - a2. There is a certain degree of exposure when the Lord confronts us by the Word, the Spirit, or by use of others
- b. The widow is in anguish & regret
- c. She asks Elijah if had come to punish her for sins

- a1. Her greatest fears had come to past: God, who knows all, had used the prophet to expose her past transgressions
  - a2. What had appeared to be a blessing, had turned out to be a curse
  - d. Elijah had no idea why God had taken the boy
    - a1. God most often does not announce his actions & purposes in advance (Job)
    - a2. Elijah is a puzzled as the widow
  - c. There are many reasons for trials & tragedies
    - a1. Common lot of the Fall (Jn. 9, 1 Cr. 10:13)
    - a2. Testing (Job 1)
    - a3. Chastisement (2 Sam. 12)
    - a4. Punishment (Samson)
    - a5. Consequences (Acts 21, Gal. 6:7-10)
    - a6. Instructive (Hosea; Ezekiel)
    - a7. Warning (2 Cor. 12)
    - a8. Empathetic (2 Cor. 1)
    - a9. Persecution (2 Cor. 11)
  - d. The widow carried a load of guilt
    - a1. She had not confessed her sins, but there was no obligation to share her past with El.
    - a2. We are not told what her past failures were
3. Grace and confession
- a. Elijah takes the child to his room & lays over the child three times, praying to God
  - b. Elijah asks God why he would afflict his benefactor
  - c. God responds to Elijah's prayer in 3 manners:
    - a1. God listened to Eli.'s plea (exercise of faith)
    - a2. God restored life to the child
    - a3. God doesn't reveal the purpose of the event
  - d. Many events in our lives seem without purpose
  - e. 3 results of this episode:
    - a1. The widow receives her son back alive
    - a2. The widow confesses that now she knows for certain that El. is a man of God (the miracle of grain & oil was not enough)
    - a3. The widow's faith was strengthened
  - f. What does God have to show us to trust him fully?