

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

SONS OF THE PROPHETS' WIDOW LESSON NINE

by Sandy Harber

"And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed." II Kings 4:6

The widow and her sons had established an efficient process for filling the borrowed vessels. The widow stayed in one place with the small jar of oil and her sons took turns bringing the various pots and jars to her. She poured the oil into each empty vessel. When a vessel was filled with oil, one son would take it away carefully while the other son presented an empty jar to be filled. And the procedure continued until there were no more empty vessels in the house. At that point the continuous stream of oil was cut off and the little pot of oil returned to being just that - a little pot of oil.

Oil in Scripture is a type of the Holy Spirit. Oil was the fuel that filled the Golden Candlesticks in the Temple. It was through the agency of the oil that light dispelled the darkness in the Holy Place. Likewise, it is the agency of the Holy Spirit that enables the Church to shine as lights in the darkness of sin in this world. When Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world" (Mt. 5:14) He meant that His disciples had the ability to reveal the Truth to an unbelieving world. Their light was a reflection of Him, Jesus, the Light of the World (Jn. 8:12). Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, so Christians reflect the light of God's Son.

John tells us that "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4). By "life" John was referring to eternal life, salvation, deliverance from unending torment in hell to everlasting peace in the presence of God. But salvation ("life") was only possible through "light." That is, the revelation of the Truth that we are all sinners who deserve condemnation, but God has provided a way out through faith in the sacrifice of His Son (Jn. 3:16).

John goes on to say, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn. 1:5). The revelation of the Truth of the Gospel ("light") dispels the ignorance of sin and unbelief ("darkness"). But those who stubbornly continue in a state of sin and unbelief do not acknowledge their need of a Savior. Why? "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn. 3:19). Paul tells us that "the god of this world (i.e. Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4). Satan has deceived man into believing that obedience to God and His Word is a form of slavery and the only way to be free is to do whatever you want to, whatever "feels good." The truth is that "doing whatever you want" makes you a slave to sin (Jn.8:34). It is only through knowing Christ that man can be free (Jn. 8:32). This is the Truth that Christians have to share with the world.

The widow used her little jar of oil in obedience to Elisha's instructions. It multiplied many times over. We don't realize what an impact our obedience to God may have on those around us. Andrew brought his brother Peter to the Lord (Jn. 1:40-41). What an impact Peter had on the early Church and that influence continues on two thousand years later. Your testimony or your example may have a profound effect on someone. And that someone could become a great preacher, evangelist, or soul winner. Your little light could illuminate the path for one lost soul or many. Let your light shine and see what happens.

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Philippians 1:17