

A Mother's Prayer

Signs of Energy at work in our church - Display Board in Lobby (Gail Perry- Jen Mercurio) Special
Thanks to Spring Cleaning juggernauts - The place looks and smells great (banner)

Mention of the **worship band** - special thanks for Chris lead guitar and to Kelly for taking lead with Pastor Nick away

Finally ... Happy Mother's Day! Momisms

Mother's Day origins here in America

Anna Jarvis who had no children of her own but lobbied Congress in memory of her own mother for a national day of recognition - on May 8, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed the bill that recognized the 2nd Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

Mother's Day is about memories - hopes and dreams - past, present and future

Text: 1 King 17: 1-16

This segment of Biblical history is tied to Israel's most, infamous King and Queen Ahab and Jezebel. It's because of them - Jezebel specifically, that God sends Elijah with this bold statement:

"There will be no rain or dew for the next few years, until I give the word."

Jezebel was personally responsible for instituting a state religion of Baal worship

Baal was the god of rain who brought rich bountiful harvests - So you understand the reason God sends his bold prophet Elijah to state that there would be none until He God said so through Elijah.

So Elijah has to get out of town - hide out because he became a hunted man by both Ahab and Jezebel

Living in a desolate area - God's sends ravens to bring his daily groceries - until God's next step is ready

I. Doing what God requests isn't always easy

When we step up to serve God we expect that our lives will be blessed and things start going our way! Instead we often find ourselves in a battle - but God is with us in that battle

The stream dries up - no rain - God instructs Elijah to go to Zarephath - a widow there will feed him.

What do we know about this widow?

- She's a mother, has an only son – who will be required to give all she has – her only son will suddenly die but will be resurrected by the power of God ... but getting ahead of ourselves
- The Widow of Zarephath – is nameless: always interesting when a person in the Bible is nameless – The Samaritan Woman at the Well - The Man with Leprosy who says to Jesus ...if you're willing you can heal me

These people are nameless in scripture for a reason— we relate to them – they represent us

II. Not nameless to God

This widow and young mother is so significant to God ... that Jesus makes reference to her in his first he speaks publicly in his home town of Nazareth See Luke 4

Study the instructions of God to Elijah ... *I have instructed a widow there to feed you*

When Elijah arrives the woman doesn't know him – but look closely at **God's words** ... I have instructed the widow to feed you

God had been speaking to this woman... this mother had been praying, **(it's easy to miss but critical that we don't!)**

She was crying out for help for her son for herself –they were on the fast track to starvation

She wasn't a Jew, she doesn't even know God's name -

The woman with no name reached out to the God whose name she didn't know!

What a strange series of events God constructs here

God tells the prophet with no resource to go to a widow who has no resource during a severe time of economic depression.

III. It wasn't logical – but Elijah is **obedient!**

When he gets there:

- She doesn't know him
- She looks hopelessness and despondent
- She barely has enough food to make or a last meal for she and her son

But Elijah is not fazed ... instead he is obedient (a key element in this account)

This guy just came from getting his daily provisions from ravens –

One thing about ravens – they're scavengers they don't share their food with anyone or thing.

Elijah is not fazed ..."**Don't be afraid**" *what* wonderful words when they come from God
"Do as you have said but make a little bread for me first, then for you and your son ..."

⇒ **Adrian Rogers** - story of how baby elephants are trained for later work in circus. Chained at the ankle – spike driven into the ground. As adults it still works because their minds have been conditioned to think they can't!

God is trying to break the chains of conditioning –through this faith relationship

The details this account with Elijah bare out the fact that God did speak to the widow ... but somehow she missed it –didn't understand it - or it just wasn't what she was expecting.

What if God chooses to provide help from a place we least wouldn't expect? – Because that's is what he is trying to do – in going beyond our narrow definitions

Every miracle from God, whether large or small, begins with an act of obedience. We may not see the solution until we take the first step of faith

The widow thought she was preparing her last meal but an act of faith changed everything!

Jesus said "*he who ears to hear let him hear*" ... spiritual understanding!

If you're frustrated or discouraged or even despondent because your prayers to God have gone unanswered ... it's time to take a closer look

What if ... What if God has already spoken to you ... Maybe it was months or years ago and because of time you dismissed it

What if the answer is right in front of you but you didn't recognize it

News 12 story Isaiah – eight year old champion caliber wrestler –what makes him so exceptional is Isaiah was born without legs but that has not stopped him.

Put God first, be willing to **take a step of faith in obedience** ... if for no other reason because he has proven himself faithful in the past

What if the only thing keeping God from delivering on promise or answering a prayer is our inability to see what's right in front of us ...

Don't be Afraid God has not abandoned you – He is waiting for you to see through eyes of faith.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
Hebrew 11:1(KJ)