



## “What Hast Thou in the House?”



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Remember that every person who is in trouble, no matter how serious his need may be, has within himself something valuable, which if drawn upon in faith and prayer will help him to satisfy his needs and deliver him out of trouble.

The story told in II Kings about the poor widow whose two sons were about to be sold to pay her debts reminds us that we should not belittle our resources, no matter how meager they may seem to be.

When Elisha, the prophet, said to the weeping woman who was appealing to him for help, “What hast thou in the house?” she replied that she had nothing at all; that is to say, she had nothing valuable, only a pot of oil.

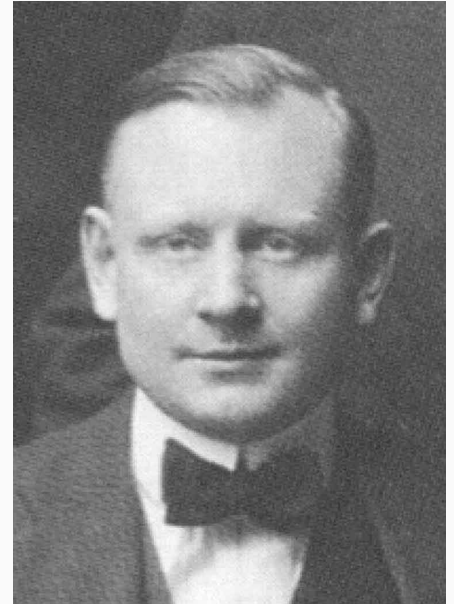
Elisha did not sympathize with her by saying: “Oh, you poor woman! I am so sorry for you because you cannot pay your debts with such meager resources.” Nor did he give her money out of his purse. Instead he gave her some very practical advice, telling her to begin to solve her problem by using that little pot of oil which she already had and increase it through her faith.

He recommended that the boys also do something to help, suggesting that they go out and borrow dishes from the neighbors, as many as they could get, and bring them home to their mother. Elisha then instructed her to take the receptacles with her into her house and, after shutting the door, begin pouring the oil that was in her little jar into the receptacles that her sons had borrowed.

She had faith, and she poured out the oil until she had filled all the vessels. And because there were no more vessels she had to stop pouring. This increased supply of oil was then sold for enough money to pay all her debts and release her sons from possible bondage. The supply of oil seemed to be limited only by the number of vessels that could be obtained to hold it.

It seems to me that the little pot of oil, which the widow confessed was the only possession she had left, is a symbol of a precious but little-appreciated possession that every person has within himself. When understood and rightly and prayerfully poured out it will supply the needs of anyone who has faith enough to use it. It is the tiny seed idea, which through faith and prayer grows to such proportions that it can deliver a man from any kind of bondage.

I suggest that we think of our needs as opportunities to be used as receptacles into which God’s increase may be poured. An empty life crying for satisfaction, if the cry is turned to God, will cause that life to become a vessel filled with the riches of God that truly satisfy. The empty vessels borrowed from neighbors may represent to us opportunities for pouring out our blessings and good thoughts upon others. By pouring them out thus we can increase our ability to draw more heavily upon the infinite Resource.



Oil represents joy and praise, which make life run smoothly. Even if we are without material food we still have that oil of Spirit within us which we can pour out to fill up the empty places in our life and the lives of our friends. We may wonder what good the increase of the spirit of joy and praise can do in supplying our material needs. In the story the widow sold the increased supply of oil and then paid her debts with the money she received for it.

Joy and praise are worth money, because they are what all the world is seeking. Like other spiritual gifts these are enjoyed and increased most when they are given away or shared. Giving and sharing God's gifts brings more joy to the giver than receiving and hoarding can bring to the receiver.

Those who depend upon the possession of many things to bring them happiness and satisfaction will remain hungry in soul even though their barns may be bursting, because material things alone cannot fill the emptiness of the inner man. It is the pouring out of the riches of Spirit in prayer that satisfies both the soul and the body.

When we give or express life we increase our capacity for living. When we express wisdom we grow wiser. When we love we increase our consciousness of love. When we are joyous we increase our joy. When we exercise our strength we grow stronger. Our labors and our experiences in the material world should help us increase our inner, spiritual resources. These include life, love, wisdom, strength, and other attributes of the spiritual man. These grow and expand by proper use, which proper use is the pouring-out process.

Spiritual riches have been given to every man and woman by our Father, God, abundantly; and as we prayerfully pour out these gifts, even though at first they may seem to be small, they will surely become great through faith and works. Their possible greatness will be limited only by the capacity of the vessels that we have provided to hold them.

We can discover the limitless nature of the blessings that God has given us when we draw freely upon them by pouring them out. We can pour them out with such faith and love that we inspire others with the desire to pass their blessings along also.

The gifts of God are limited only by a person's capacity to express them or pour them out. We can supply our needs for outer things by first drawing the oil of Spirit from within. The one who learns how to pour out this inner substance which God has given him will lack for no good thing in the world.

Let no one despair because he may seem to have little to draw upon. Rather let him look within and rejoice in the abundance that God has given him in Spirit, and then let him fearlessly give forth what he finds in the house.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR DAILY MEDITATION

- ☑ SUNDAY: As I bless, consecrate, and rightly use the little things that I find in my possession they grow, and I begin to discover how great is God's loving, generous supply for me.
  - ☑ MONDAY: The oil of God's bountiful supply is sufficient to fill all the empty places in my soul, body, and affairs.
  - ☑ TUESDAY: The source of my security abides within me, where dwells the Spirit of God, my Father.
  - ☑ WEDNESDAY: By exercising my faith in God's all-sufficient supply I am able to draw upon it for all my needs.
  - ☑ THURSDAY: Putting my God-given talent to work for Him brings me joy and success.
  - ☑ FRIDAY: The riches of God's creative word are the source of all supply.
  - ☑ SATURDAY: I am thankful that my Father-God supplies me richly as I make myself ready to use that greater supply wisely and well.
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