

The increase of the widow's oil (2 Ki. 4v1-7)

Part 1

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Duration	00:02:45
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/hn001/the-increase-of-the-widow-s-oil-2-ki-4v1-7

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:30] Und der 38. 1. Und Elisha kam wieder nach Bilborn, und da war ein Dörfer auf dem Land, und die Söhne der Propheten saßen vor ihm, und er saß auf seinem Servant, saß auf dem großen Hof, und schlief im Kott für die Söhne der Propheten. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered [00:01:02] there a wild goose, his lap-paw, and came and spread them into the pot of potage, for they knew them not.

So they poured out for the men to eat, and it came to pass, as they were eating in the potage, that they cried out and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot, and they could not eat thereof. But he said, then bring meal, and he cast it into the pot, and he said, pour out for the people that they may eat.

And there was no harm in the pot.

And there came a man of Baal-Sherisha, and brought the man of God bread and the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof, and he said, give unto the people that they may eat. And his servitor said, what, should I set this before a hundred men?

And he said again, give the people that they may eat. [00:02:03] For thus saith the Lord, they shall eat, and they shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof according to the word of the Lord.

I suppose the story that we've read together tonight follows much the pattern of what we had before us this morning. And as we think of that scripture that we read concerning the children of Israel then, everybody was doing that which was right in their own eyes. But it was mentioned that at that time there was a portion for those that were faithful. And as I read the chapter that is before us tonight, I want to read it and put into it that which is here vividly, that there never is a time when God has not a portion for his people.

[00:03:01] I say that again because I truly believe it. There never is a time when God has not a portion for his people. Always, in whatever circumstances the people find themselves there, if there are those faithful to himself, he has a portion for them.

I know that there was a dearth in the land here, and as I think of the dearth and that which was before us this morning, I would realise how up to date the word of God is when we think of conditions today.

When we think of conditions today, I know that there are many that say, well I won't go to the meetings because I won't get anything. Of course you won't if you go in that spirit. You'll never get anything if you don't go expecting of the Lord. So as I think of that, there might be somebody that today says, well if this is so, why are conditions as they are today? Why is it that these things are so?

Why is it that the people of Ghana are impoverished today? And as I think of this, we must realise that they are. [00:04:04] When we think of those things that happened in our meetings years ago, how much blessing there was in the meetings. When we think of system and when we think of people gathered out into other places, what blessing there was amongst them. But today you say, well there's nothing like that. And we might feel that we can shrug our shoulders and say that it's a sign of the times, but I think it's very, very sad when we do. When I think of the man that's fell before us this evening, that man, Elisha, and when I think of what he did on this occasion, I would feel that he did something that we ought to do.

If you had read this wonderful little fourth chapter of the second book of Kings through, you would have found just previously to this that he brought a great miracle. Yes, he praised the son of the woman where he lived and where he went in, and as he praised the son of that woman, now straightway we see that Elisha went again to Gilgal.

[00:05:06] Elisha went again to Gilgal.

So evidently Elisha had been there before, and we know by other chapters that he had. But in him going again to Gilgal, I would suggest to each one of us that are here tonight, if we desire a portion from the Lord, and I know that certainly he will give it, we must know something about going again to Gilgal.

We must know something about going again to Gilgal, and when I say those words, we would realise, those of us that study the scripture, how important Gilgal was to the children of Israel.

Do you remember when they firstly came through the Jordan, and they came to the other side of Gilgal, and it says that they lodged there that night?

They lodged there that night. It wasn't the last that they had to do with Gilgal, it was the beginning of Gilgal with [00:06:03] regard to them, and how important Gilgal was for them.

On an occasion though, I remember reading when the people were out in touch with their Lord, it was said of, it's no good going to Gilgal. Because of the very fact that if they went there in that condition, they would not be blessed of the Lord, it meant something with regard to the children of Israel. And what did it mean to them? And what does it mean if I say to you tonight, this is the time when we should return, go again to Gilgal, what does it mean?

Now as we think of that place to the children of Israel, it would firstly be a place of remembrance for them, wouldn't it? That as they came through the Jordan, a different journey altogether from going through the Red Sea, as they came through the Jordan, and as they were found on the other side and in the land, God said straight away with regard to them, that they were not to forget, they were never to forget their journey through that Jordan. [00:07:04] You'd say, well it wasn't such a great journey after all, it was nothing like the Red Sea, and we see that the Ark of the Lord stood in the

Jordan, the Ark of the Testament stood in Jordan, and as we see it standing there, the people then were able to go right through, what was the importance of it. I think it was a place of remembrance because afterward, from that day onward, they were to remember what Jordan would mean and had meant to them when they followed the Ark, and then the Ark stood in those waters, stood in the place of the bed of the river, and stood there till everybody had passed over. And I feel that there were times when the Israelites went back, and as he saw those waters flowing over the stones, those twelve stones in Jordan, he'd say this is the place of remembrance, and it's an important place to me.

[00:08:01] I wonder whether we ought not to think afresh of what the death of the Lord Jesus Christ means to us.

So often we speak to people, the one with another, and we say, see you on Wednesday morning at the meeting.

I know that it's very well to gather to the name of the Lord Jesus on Lord's Day morning, but we go there and it isn't the Lord's Day morning meeting, it's the remembrance of the Lord Jesus in death. And when I think of it as the remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ in death, it can be that over the years of our lives, because of things coming into our lives, it can have lost its freshness in our lives.

Why was it that we came to the Lord Jesus Christ? Why was it that we asked for a position to remember him?

It was because we knew that the Lord Jesus Christ had taken our place in death, and we wanted to show our love to him when he said to us, this do in remembrance of me.

[00:09:06] And in those early days, with all the freshness of those days, what wonderful days they were to us then.

Aren't they as fresh today? Is it that as we come week by week, those thoughts with regard to the death of the Lord Jesus have lost their freshness?

I feel that here we should come again to Jordan. We should come again to Jordan, and as we come, and as we think of the sufferings of Christ on our account, it should be that we come, and as we come into his presence, knowing that we are not to take the shoes from off our feet. We hear sometimes that when we come in, we will take the shoes off our feet. We wouldn't, because the work of Christ has made us suitable for his presence, so that we can come there, that let it be when we come in, we have a sense of reverence of the place where we are, and let it be a true remembrance of himself, and let it come to us in all its [00:10:04] freshness, that that blessed person that died so long ago for our sins, was the one who died for our sins, and we've come there again to thank him, and to remember him, and as the meeting would go on to rejoice in the fact that he's gone to sit upon his father's throne.

Yes, when we think of it, it was a place of remembrance. Also, it was a place of resurrection, wasn't it?

I take it in that way, because all the children of Israel passed through those waters, and they followed, and as they went through, and on the other side, there was a new life for them.

As we see the ark now coming out of the waters and coming into the land, what a new life it was going to be for the children of Israel there. A new life altogether.

Yes, it meant resurrection for them, because they'd come through the waters, and there [00:11:01] it was, in that land, they'd come to just the place where God would have them to be, and they'd come to the place where they wanted to be, and they knew from this time forward their life was a new life.

Yes, when we came firstly to the Lord Jesus Christ, and when we realised that he died for our sins upon the cross, when it was that we took our place in the remembrance of the Lord, then it was, not because we took our place in the remembrance of the Lord, but when we accepted him as Savior, taking that place, it would give us to realise at that time that we were there.

We were there in that newness of life. There we found our place to be, those that were in the inheritance. And as we think of the people at that time, what a different life it was for them. There they had been bound in that land of Egypt, now they were free and they were in the land, and there they entered to take their inheritance, and what a new life it [00:12:02] was for them.

You know, I feel that there are so many believers today who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and their life is just like the person that lives round the corner, who hasn't any knowledge at all of the Scripture, and yet will say with regard to them as they were baptised and as a type of death, raised again in the newness of life, there they are just going on and accepting and enjoying, it appears, the things that they always enjoyed before. Don't you think that we're to come again to Jordan, if we're going to have abortion from the Lord?

Is it not that a person in that way that doesn't appreciate the fact that there's this new life, don't you think that that person has not abortion from the Lord? Yes, but that place had another thought, did it not? Because now those children of Israel might rejoice when they have passed through Jordan, it was the place of renunciation.

Do you remember what happened there?

[00:13:01] They were to take sharp knives, and the people were to be circumcised there. Those people would say with regard to them, well we've come through the waters, we're in the land, we're a new people, what's to happen now? We're to be circumcised?

We're to remember with regard to ourselves that that which is of the flesh is to be cut off? And it might be that when we were early in our life as converted people, we had that thought before us, that there, that which was according to the world and according to the flesh, it had to be cut off.

Then I like to think it was a place of realisation, because when we think of the children of Israel coming into the land, we see that the manna ceased, and it was said this morning that they fed on the old corn of the land.

That gave them to realise, did it not, that the wilderness journey was for them finished, and in this life they had that food given them that speaks to me of Christ in glory, [00:14:04] and as I think of it, there was the realisation that what God has done, he has accomplished for me, and he's brought me into this new place. There was the realisation because of that which they fed upon, of where they were, and as I think of that, what wonderful people they were. Is there still that realisation of ourselves and

that which we can feed on in Christ? As regards to these hours, there's only one left, I think, and that's with regard to the people.

I see on the occasion when they were head of the land that there was one among them who would be a leader, and as he was a leader among the people, and as he had had so much before him, and now he would have so much more before him as regards to keeping the people in the land and securing the enemy, there was one that revealed himself to him. It was a time of revelation because there a captain of the Lord's host makes himself [00:15:01] known to him, and therefore in making himself known, we see that Joshua knew that in the new life he had somebody with him to uphold him and to maintain him, and have we not the same? Wasn't it so with regard to us as we entered into this new life? So it might be that we need to come again to Gilgal.

In coming again to Gilgal, we see that with regard to Elisha, that there he had the sons of the prophets with him, and they sat before him. They sat before him.

Now, the scripture clearly shows that there was a dearth, and yet these people sit before their master, and it appears to me that there they are before him in a position of submission to him, and also there they rest and they have peace because they're in his presence.

Not for them at this moment, the thought with regard to the dearth, because there they [00:16:03] are, and they sit and they rest before him in his presence. Isn't that how we ought to be before the Lord in this day? Should it not be that we realize that we can sit before the Lord? I know that with regard to many believers today, they have very, very much to do for the Lord Jesus Christ, and it appears that they have so much to do for him in rushing here and rushing there that they have little time to sit before him, and sit before him in peace and quietness.

And don't you think that the Lord would have it to be that we draw aside into his presence? Did not he say on one occasion to his disciples, come ye yourselves apart and rest a while? And would not it be his desire that his people, although they might serve him down here, might sit in his presence so that he might be able to feed them for further service for himself? [00:17:02] And so we see that there they sit, and there they sit as a people dependent upon him and submissive to his will.

And I feel that that's the position that we should be in today. It may be that we are impoverished.

It may be that the people of God have very little, it appears, at their disposal, but I feel that if we sit in this position in satisfaction before him, in peace, submitting ourselves to him, it will be that as they receive the portion there, that we can receive a portion even in our time, because he says, set on the clock.

No, he didn't, did he?

No, and I don't think he would have said set on the pot because of the very fact that here there was something more than that. When I think of the people of God, I say again that there is always a portion for them, and there's always abundance for them.

[00:18:01] It wasn't set on the pot.

It was set on the great pot, the great pot.

Now let us think of that.

What means to me then, if I can take this story and bring it up to date into my life, if I'm willing and ready to be found before him, having the truth of God in my heart, I can sit there in peace and in rest and know that he can give me that which will nourish me fully in my pathway.

I needn't be impoverished.

To prove that, let's think of the time of the judges when we think of that man giving There was a dearth in the land, and have you ever seen that which he brought forth? Yes, there was a dearth in the land, and yet there he would be speaking out the richest of corn, not for him, the barley, but the corn in the ear, speaking it out for himself.

He was not impoverished.

And as we see the people of God, we think this morning of that mighty man of wealth, not impoverished.

[00:19:01] And so here, as they would sit it before Elisha, who is no doubt a type of the Lord Jesus, if we're willing and ready to sit before him in his presence, it is that he will put on the great pot. Put on the great pot because he has abundance for his people.

Yes, but as I see the story there, the servant is in charge of that great pot, but yet there's a very, very serious thing that happens there, and I cannot speak upon it for a little while because it says one went out, and one went out into the field just at the time when the great pot was to be put on, and just at the time when they knew that there was enough for the people of God there, because there was to spare afterward, because there was just at that time, one goes out searching in the field, and one went out into the field [00:20:02] to gather herbs.

I wonder why he went out.

He was not told by Elisha to go out. We see no mention of Elisha telling him to go out. In fact, I feel that as Elisha spoke of his servant at that one occasion, it was that the servant had in his hand enough, enough for the people of God. It was from Elisha's hand. It was food that they knew, and he was able to give them their portion at this time, so why did he go out?

I think that we ought to be warned in this master day with regard to going out and collecting and getting other things that we haven't proved before.

As I think of this man going out, it might have been, one of the sons of the prophets, he might have been, but it says one man out. As he goes out, it might have been that he was not quite satisfied with what was in the pot, or on the other hand, he might have felt with that which he could gather, it would [00:21:04] be something that would improve that which Elisha had for them, and I don't think it could be improved.

I don't think for a moment that this man was in a position to give that which would be for improvement.

But one went out into the field, and as we see him going out into the field, we can see what a condition that inheritance was at that time.

When I think of the inheritance given to the people of God, it was given them to till, was it not?

When I think of the fields that they had, at the time when earlier on they were able to bring their basket of first fruits, there wasn't the wild stuff growing in the fields, there was not that which was wild growing out in the fields, and yet at this moment the man goes out, and he gathers that which he does not know of, he had never seen perhaps before, and when he takes it back, they know it not. [00:22:04] Now, when we think of a man and that which he collects, it says that he was able to gather much, and as he gathered that much, he knew not what was in that which he gathered.

There was ample for him to take back, and as he takes it back out of the field, he takes it and he shreds it in that which Elisha had brought for them.

Now what was it that he took back?

Let's remember again that this food that was to be given them had not come under the husbandman's hand.

When we think of the food that we have supplied to us by God, we realise that that food is suitable for us.

It was something that had not come under the husbandman's hand, it was that which was wild. It was not that which Elisha had given them before, because Elisha had given that which [00:23:01] was for their profit and their life.

It was that which they knew not, they'd never tasted of this before, and as we think of them in this condition, I feel how sorrowful it is to see one of them going out and bringing back something that they'd never tested before.

Aren't we to be very careful in these late days that that, if we go out and if we go away from the assembly and bring back, aren't we to be very, very careful what we bring back? Because it may be that that which we bring back might be very well, but on the other hand let's be very careful in bringing that in that has not been under the hand of the husbandman, but that which is wild and that which is abundant in the world and perhaps in the professing church today.

He shreds it, and as he shreds it and places it into the pot, we see concerning it their [00:24:04] wisdom with regard to the people of God.

They had a discerning spirit because no doubt before this time that great pot had been set on and they had fed from the hand of Elisha, and they had that discerning spirit that we should have in this day to that which is noxious.

It should be that in this late day, as that may be brought in that we have never been used to before, that we realise and discern as they did of the people, a whole of the people, that it is not according to that which Elisha will give. What do they do then? They leave off eating and they pray, and brethren I feel that there are times when we should get down on our knees when things happen, when things

are brought in, and we should pray with regard to it.

They prayed to Elisha concerning it, and as we see them pray to Elisha concerning it, [00:25:02] he says then bring meal.

See there was no deficiency, there was no lack, they were to bring meal, and as I think of that meal, how much it speaks to me concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have a meal offering, do we not, in the second chapter of Leviticus, and how much that fine meal speaks of him, that fine meal that is made, that is produced by a crushing or reducing process, reminding me of him that made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant. Reminding me also of that fine, this sieved meal we often read of with regard to the sacrifice of the offering, and as we think of that sieved meal, it means that it's been tested, it's been under the eye, and it's been through the sieve of how much that speaks to me concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:26:01] He had something to present to them then that would speak to us today concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ in all his perfection, and as that was placed in the great pot, and as it was partaken of by those here and there, we see that there was no harm in the pot.

What we need today then brethren is not so much new innovations and new teaching as we so often hear, but what we do need today is to get back with regard to the teaching of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Going down farther, we read concerning a man that came from Baal Shelishah, and a so different man was he, not for him to go out into the fields to pick that that was wild, but with regard to him he was one that had kept his inheritance.

Yes, because so many, no doubt at that time, had neglected their inheritance, we see in [00:27:05] the day of impoverishment, in the time of Gideon, he kept his inheritance.

The Midianites might come, but there he is thrashing wheat and hiding it from the Midianites, and here's this man in this day of dirt, and here he is, and he's able to bring something with him.

He has his inheritance, and he has cultivated that inheritance, and therefore he has something to offer.

Now in looking up the meaning of the word Baal Shelishah, I see that it means the Lord of Three, or the Conqueror of Three.

As I think of this man then, he's characterized for that name.

And as I think of the one that keeps up his inheritance, as I think of the one who's not impoverished, and therefore able to offer to others, I feel that this is true concerning [00:28:01] you, the Conqueror, or the Lord of Three.

When I think of this, I think and think alone of the world, and the flesh, and the devil.

The Lord Jesus Christ, when he was here, he said, they are not of the world, even as I am not of the

world.

And yet we're told in the epistle of John, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

And as I think of those words, don't you think that they're a challenge for us today? Is it that as we live, and as we mix with other people, there's no difference in their houses and their lives with ours, only that on Lord's Day morning, we go to our meetings, we go to the gospel on Lord's Day evening, and perhaps we go out during the week, is that so?

Because when we think of this, it's very striking that we're not to be of the world. I remember reading in Pilgrim's Progress several years ago, and when it spoke about [00:29:05] the pilgrims, it says that the people laughed at them because they were so different from the people of that day.

Don't you think that the people got used to us today in how much we characterise them in our goings and our comings and that which we do? Yes, it is with regard to us that the words of the Lord will come back to us tonight as he says to his Father, they are not of the world. And if he has said they are not of the world, let it be that we're not characterised by the world.

Let it be that we love not the world, let us be separated from the world, but separated unto him.

As the Lord Jesus Christ was there in his lifetime separated to God his Father, let us in this day be separated unto him so that their hands are filled for him down here.

The world and the flesh, and the flesh.

[00:30:04] When I think of the Lord Jesus on one occasion he said these words, learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. And as I think of those words I see him the meek and the lowly one, and he could say with regard to his own life, the prince of this world cometh and has nothing in me. And I think that that was true in the whole of his pathway. When I see him here as a man, he was one that kept himself in his pathway as a man, submitted to the will of God his Father, and upheld by him.

When I think of ourselves today, I know that in every one of us that are here, and perhaps the speaker that's speaking to you tonight, we have the flesh. But we are told with regard to that flesh that's in us to reckon ourselves dead before the Lord God.

[00:31:01] Then the devil.

As I think of the devil, we may realise, perhaps we don't, what a constrictively powerful enemy he is.

Perhaps in this day we as others might have just continued to think and continued to just have in our mind that he's an influence that comes up now and again. Until let us remember that this enemy is the greatest enemy that we have, and let us never in any way minimise the power that he has working with us.

When I think of the Lord Jesus Christ who had left us an example that we should follow his steps, well how did he meet the devil?

We see him in the Gospel of Mark, firstly driven into the wilderness, do we not? And there he met the tempter, did he not?

And then we see him in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, and as he meets the enemy there, what does he meet him with? He meets with him in the power that's at his disposal, and he meets him with the Word of [00:32:05] God. And therefore as we think of this man who is the conqueror of three, we can be the conqueror of three as well if we're dependent upon him.

But as we think of him coming, we would realise that he not only has an inheritance, but he has benefited by that inheritance, but he's in such a condition at this moment that he's not a priest to go to.

If you looked into the twenty-fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, the one who brings his first fruits, he brings them to the priest of that day.

But now everything is in disorder, and what can he do?

On the occasion in the twenty-fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, we see that he takes his basket of first fruits and sets it beside the altar. But there's no place for him to bring it today, and therefore he would still feel that God has a right to that which he has, and therefore he brings it to Elisha. [00:33:05] And as he brings it to Elisha, I feel he's doing what God would have him to do. Why were the first fruits taken in the twenty-fifth of Deuteronomy, and why were they placed beside the altar?

Did not the basket of first fruits that was placed beside the altar remind God that the man realized that there's faithfulness in God?

God had said concerning the Israelites that entered into the land that it would be a land of plenty for them.

And there, as he brings his basket of first fruits, it shows that God has been faithful, God has been as good as his promise. And as I think of this picture that we have here, again we see that God had been faithful and he was able to bring his basket of first fruits. And what did he bring?

[00:34:01] The scripture says that he brought the bread of the first fruits, and as I think of the bread of the first fruits, I think of the fact that they bring before us so much. The Lord Jesus Christ in resurrection. So he had something to offer that spoke of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that spoke of him, the bread of the first fruits.

Not only was he able to bring something that would speak of the life and the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, but also he brought those ears of corn, that corn in the ear.

And as I see the corn spoken of in the ear, I saw, as I was looking through this work, that it meant in his script or in his prose.

What would that mean to me? That that which he has and that which he has brought is that which he has made his own. It's in his prose, in his script. And as I think of that, unless this man had taken of his own first, he would not be able [00:35:05] to give to Elisha so that these people might eat.

When I think of those ears of corn, that corn in the ears, how much it reminds me of the perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ in another way. Those hidden years of his life, of which we know very, very little, but we must appreciate the fact that whenever we speak concerning his life of testimony and the perfection of that time, we must realise that the years of his life that were spent previous to that, the hidden years must have been as perfect as those years of which we know so little. So this man brings, he's able to give, and when we see the people take from the hand of a servitor, we see that they're able to eat.

Now isn't that something that ought to happen with regard to ourselves today? [00:36:02] In beginning this little meeting tonight, we said that there is no need today to be concerned with regard to apportion. There's always a portion for us.

And as we would look tonight and see that Elisha was there and the sons of the prophets sitting before him, don't you think that today, in this late day before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one that has the inheritance and appreciates it, and I feel that there are, even in this day, those that appreciate in the day when the enemy is prevalent in the land, there are those that appreciate their inheritance. Doesn't the Lord use them in that way? And therefore, in closing, brethren, don't you think that we should prize their inheritance firstly?

As it could be, as the man went out into the field, he saw that which was wild and brought it in.

This was not so with the man of Baal Shaddaisha. [00:37:01] It should be that with each one of us that realized that the Lord Jesus Christ has brought us into that place of blessing through his death. He's brought us there.

Let us, as we read the Word of God, find that which is ours, even down here.

And having appreciated that, let us be able to have a portion for others in their pathway because surely it's necessary today, isn't it?