

FULLNESS

I KINGS *17:16, There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the Lord had promised through Elijah.*

One of the kings of Israel was Ahab! I Kings 16:30 says, *But Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in the LORD's sight, even more than any of the kings before him.* What did he do that was so bad? He led Israel away from God by setting up altars for Baal (god of weather) and Asherah (goddess of fertility) in Israel and tried to erase the one True God from Israel's life and memory. Not only that, his wife, Jezebel was so evil that she became the symbol of idolatry, malice, immorality and cruelty throughout history. The people of Israel have chosen to seek their fullness from false gods. They began to take the place of God and they have abandoned His Word. But—here's what we'll discover about God; when we question His word, and choose to abandon our covenant with Him and instead worship idols in place of God, He has a way of making us understand that He alone is God, by attacking the very idols we have embraced.

In an agricultural society, rain is vital. No rain means no crops, no crops means, no food. God withheld prosperity to make Israel understand that they have chosen wrong—they have placed their faith on idols; they have prioritized something or someone that is incapable of bringing true fullness. Sometimes, the challenges (the drought or the emptiness) we face may be because we have dethroned God from our lives and have chosen to serve the things that seem to provide our fullness—it could be a person, a relationship, a job, a status, etc. And this story, reminds us, that God has a way of gently or sometimes fiercely shaking us to say, “Come back to me. I alone can truly fill you.”

Fullness is more than just money. We all know that money and fame don't bring fullness. It can bring a fake sense of fullness, but some of you have lived long enough to know that even the most famous and the richest people on earth are some of the most unfulfilled people on earth. Fullness in the Bible is a complete sense of satisfaction in God. Fullness is the word the Hebrew shalom—a sense of completeness in God. Shalom is what's missing in a person who has not found fulfillment in a relationship with God; or has abandoned God's promises.

In last Sunday's sermon, we have learned that sometimes God withholds fullness in order to call us back unto Himself; but to those who remain faithful, the Lord keeps supplying their fill even in the most dry and difficult circumstances. Pastor reminded us last Sunday that we should develop the attitude of M.O.R.E. in our lives (multiply, obedient, relationships, entrusted).

Read the whole story in I Kings 17:1-16.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT STEPS:

- New York Mission Trip (November 8-16)
- September 29-30 (Equip Seminar in Edmonton)

PRAY TOGETHER FOR

- Fall and winter ministries and activities
- The new attendees and the seekers who attend.
- M.O .R .E. attitude in all of us.

GOAL FOR THIS STUDY: The goal for each of us is still, to BELIEVE AND DO WHAT GOD SAYS. Through this week's lesson, allow the Holy Spirit to help you develop a greater sense of faith while embracing the attitude of M.O.R.E. because the only way to be filled is to make room for more.

Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

Question:

How did God prove to you or your family that He keeps His promise to be your provider?

Question:

What area in your life do you feel you need more of God and His fullness?

Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical point of view.

IN 1 KINGS 16:1-16

Question:

What was the biggest sin King Ahab committed against God? What was God's verdict?

Question:

Why did God supply Elijah's needs, and how did HE do it?

Question:

What is the difference between source and resource? Why should we not mix those two up?

Question:

When the brook dried up, where did God send Elijah to find his new resource, and why were they unlikely resources? What were the present conditions of the resources God pointed him to?

Question:

What is the central lesson in this story?

Question:

If you were Elijah, would you still ask for food from a woman who already said she had nothing? If you were the woman, will you still give what you have left for the purpose of God even though you know that your resource may be emptied?

Question:

What is God teaching you to do today with regards to giving to God's purpose?

Comment on the following:

"It's in giving, not keeping that leads to receiving."

"Give what you need and you'll receive what you want."

Growing in Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders.

Question:

As pastor pointed out, the widow experienced God's fullness when she acted in faith to empty her jar of flour and jug of oil and to use their contents for the purpose of God. What is the significance and application of this act of faith in your own life?

Question:

Pastor also reminded us, if we want to be filled, we've got make room. What areas do you need filling in and how is God leading you to empty what's left so He can fill them? Share your action points.

Question:

In our story, God's provision for Elijah depended on his obedience to speak faith into a stranger who was poorer than him, in a village where God is not honored. God supplies through unlikely resources. How does this truth apply to our lives?

Question:

Faith is such a great element in the Word of God. Elijah's role was to speak forth faith into the widow's life. As leaders and disciples of Jesus, we are also called to be "Elijah" to people who may be needing a touch or filling from God. Will you take on the challenge to speak faith into people's lives who otherwise could have their "last meal?"