

WHEN WE STEP OUT GOD STEPS IN (7)**GOD'S PROMISE IS ENOUGH**

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son."¹⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD gives rain on the land.' " (1 Kings 17:13,14)

1. Tithing is not enough

- The prophet asked for virtually everything the woman had. What would be an equivalent demand on us today?
- God doesn't just ask for ten per cent—he asks for 100%
- 3 T's: time, talent, treasure.

2. Fear paralyses the spirit of giving (13)

Fear that we will be worse off holds us back from giving. Heb 13:5-6 tells us—

- Keep your lives free from the love of money. This is the root of evil (1 Tim 6:10)
- Be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' God is enough.
- So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper.' What more do we need?
- I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? There is no need to be afraid.

3. God must come first (13)

Consider these words of Jesus—

- But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:33, 34).
- In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:33).
- We need to take these seriously.

4. God's promise is enough (14)

- God promises to supply every need (Mt 6:25-34; Phil 4:19).
- Giving is an expression of trust in God's promises. We give trusting that he will still meet our needs.
- Reluctance to give is an expression of mistrust in God's promises.
- It is not enough to believe God can do it for everyone else: can he do it for me?
- Eg story of how the Prince of Wales declined when the great tight rope walker Blondin offered to wheel him over the Niagara Falls. He believed Blondin could do it—but not with him!

5. God always keeps his Word (15, 16)

We can safely believe the Word of God. There are hundreds of promises we can believe –

- Forgiveness
- Healing
- Peace
- Guidance
- PROVISION

6. God set the pattern

- God set the pattern by giving us his own Son
- God so loved... that he gave (John 3:16)

Challenge

- Let's open our hearts to God's love for us
- Let's open our hearts to one another
- Let's give everything to the Lord.

SOMETHING TO THINK OR TALK ABOUT

Remember: You don't have to answer all the questions. First do those that seem most helpful to you.

Read 1 Kings 17:8-16

Biblical

1. Use a Bible reference book or website to identify the names in verse eight.
2. What does this passage tell us about basic cooking methods in Elijah's day?
3. Imagine you are the widow in the first part of this story (8-12), confronted by a wandering prophet who makes unreasonable demands on you. How would you feel?
4. Would you feel any more comfortable after Elijah's promise? (13-14)
5. In spite of verse 9, what kind of faith and courage did the widow need to do what she did? (13)
6. John Wimber used to say that faith was spelled R-I-S-K. To what extent is this relevant to this story?

Personal and practical

7. How much does fear hold us back from giving to the Lord? (Not just money but time, energy, resources and so on.) See Hebrews 13:5, 6.
8. All this woman had to go on was the word of the Lord (9, 13-14). Give examples of situations where that principle applies to us in regard to God's promise. (You may have examples from your own experience.)
9. The Scripture tells us to be generous and to give to others in need (Proverbs 11:24, 25; Matthew 5:42; 2 Corinthians 9:7). God promises that when we do this, we will not run short (Proverbs 19:17; Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:8). Giving is therefore an act of faith. Share testimonies of times from your experience when you (or someone you know) have given generously and the Lord has supplied your need.
10. What needs are you or those near to you facing right now? How does this story encourage you to face those needs?

Memorise Luke 6:38.

Memorising hint: You can do this as a group by repeating phrase by phrase aloud together until you can say the whole text in one hit. Don't forget to learn the reference as well.

About Dr Barry Chant

Barry Chant is Senior Pastor of the Wesley International Congregation in Sydney, Australia. He is a regular speaker at church services, seminars, conferences and conventions. Hundreds of thousands of his books have been sold around the world. He has degrees in arts, theology and ministry, a diploma in education and a PhD in history. He was the initiator and former president of Tabor College, Australia.

Terms of Use

This material is not for sale. You are free to download and reproduce it for personal use or for free distribution to groups such as your local church Bible study group or Christian fellowship. Please include the following acknowledgement:

'This study is copyright © Barry Chant 2006. Reproduced with permission from www.barrychant.com.'

This study is one of a series of nine studies on this theme. The rest can be found at www.barrychant.com.