***1 Kings 17:8-16 Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 9“Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” 10So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.” 11And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” 12So she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.” 13And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14For thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.’15So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. 16The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.***

This morning, we’re in a town called Zaraphath, located in what is now Lebanon. The town was known for it’s metal working. Elijah has gone to this area because God told him to, during the drought God brought upon Israel. Elijah is well into this 42 month drought, the streams have dried up and the crops have failed. Elijah was living beside the Brook Cherith, and God had the ravens bringing him food, but now the brook has dried up and God commands Elijah to move from this place of comfort, just as He commands us.

Verses 8-9 *Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 9Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.* God commands Elijah to arise, go. In our message on Ananias and Paul, from Acts 9:11, God told Ananias to Arise and go. God tells us arise, go. Are we faithful? God further says there is a widow there so we are going to go meet her.

Verse 10 *So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.”*Elijah trusts God. Elijah obeys God. He came to this city and, indeed, there she is, just as God promised. He calls to her – please bring me water. Water is scarce. This is a large request, from a unknown man, that will require faith on the widow’s part.

Verse 11 *And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”* Her Faith has set her in motion. Water, she can do that. Then – *and a morsel of bread*. Now, her faith is put to God’s test. Let’s hear her answer.

Verse 12 *So she said, As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.* She has no bread. In fact, she and her son are starving. This man has just asked her for everything. Bring me bread, the bread that your precious son and you are about to eat. Let’s pause. God said He had commanded her, but notice her response. God did not send a letter, or write it in the sky. He has placed it in her spirit. Likewise, God asks of us. Lead this ministry. Call this person. Support this cause. He speaks it into our hearts, commands us, but we can say no, quenching the spirit. It may not be flour and oil, but time, so little time. God says I need that time. Will we be faithful?

Verses 13-14 *And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14For thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.* She thinks she knows how much flour is in that bin, how much oil is in that jar. God, through Elijah, says, Do Not Fear! Trust! Obey! The God of flour and oil, money and time will never allow the resources of His Faithful to run dry. Go do for God FIRST, He will provide. The flow will not end until His purpose is accomplished. God extends in measure to our obedience. Money goes further, things last longer, talents grow sharper, time more efficient, when God comes first. God tells us – Honor Me first, seek Me first, and with everything you have, and watch Me work.

Verses 15-16 tell us she trusted and obeyed. *So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household* ***ate for many days****. 16The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.* She did as God commanded her spirit. Can you imagine the praise in her heart each time she picked up that bin that should be empty, that jar that should have run out, and knows that God provided another day? Can you imagine her tears? She gave her all to God first, and He multiplied it. It is His eternal promise, to a widow picking up sticks by the city gate, and faithful followers today. Does this mean everyday was easy, no challenges came her way, that she had bread cooling in very window? No. God provided perfectly, just as He promised.

This week, let’s start everyday giving our all to God. We have no idea how many minutes are left in our bin, how many breaths in our jar. In prayer, let’s give to God our full day first! God, this is my only day, a gift straight from You, and I pass it back to You for Your use. Multiply my impact, command my spirit, that I may do Your will. May we trust, obey, and praise God with the only thing we have to offer, our all. He will make great use of our Faith.