

## What have you got? August 3, 2014

I want to continue on the subject that I spoke of last week in my sermon concerning the talents that the master left to his servants. I believe that many times people have things that they don't even think about as being an answer to their problems or a key to working out their situations. Often God uses what we have at hand to bring our attention to his faithfulness in providing for his children.

In 2 Kings 4:1-7 there is a beautiful story. A man who was a son of a prophet unto Elisha died and left his wife and children in dire straits. The widow came to Elisha and was distraught because the bills had piled up; the creditors were harassing her and threatening to take her sons as bondservants to pay off the debts. This poor lady was beside herself because she had no answers. There was nothing that she had that she could use as payment for the mountain of debt that she was responsible for now that her breadwinner was deceased.

She came to Elisha and reminded him that her husband had been a God-fearing man and now she was in deep financial trouble. In verse 2, Elisha asked her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" She answered, "I have nothing except for a pot of oil." Elisha told her that she and her sons were to borrow vessels from the neighbors as far away as possible, empty vessels and make sure that they had plenty, not just a few. When they had borrowed every last one that was available, they were to enter the house, close the door and begin pouring out the oil and fill the vessels to the brim. The woman sent the sons to gather the empty pots and they brought them to her as they were available. She began pouring out and when the last vessel was filled, she asked for more and the sons told her that there were no more to be found and the oil stopped flowing. She then hurried to the prophet and told him what had transpired. He instructed her to go sell the oil and pay the debt. With the rest of the money that she would have, she would be able to take care of herself and her two sons.

In Exodus chapter 2, God has appeared to Moses who was hiding out in the mountains taking care of sheep. If you read the previous chapters, you will notice that God has spoken to him from a burning bush and got his attention. Then he told him that he was going to be sent to deliver God's people from the bondage of Pharaoh. Moses begins to get real nervous. He argues with God and tried to get God to send someone more suitable than he is to do the job. At the beginning of chapter 4, Moses said, "Behold, the people will not believe me nor hearken to my voice for they will say, The Lord has not appeared unto you." God said, "What is in your hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." God said, "Cast it on the ground." Moses obeyed and it became a serpent and Moses fled from it. The Lord told Moses to grab it by its tail and when he did, it became a rod again. The Lord proceeded to show Moses his power by causing his hand to become leprous and then causing the leprosy to disappear. God explained that the Egyptians would let the people go after God dealt with them by his mighty power. When Moses still hesitated, God brought Aaron onto the scene to go with Moses and be his mouthpiece.

When young David, the shepherd boy went to the battlefield to give food to his brothers, he heard the boast of a giant, Goliath shouting over the mountainside. "Who dares to fight me? Come, send me your best man; if he fights me and kills me, we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, you will be our servants." 1 Samuel 17:8-9.

David convinced the king to let him take on Goliath. Saul put his armor on David, but David left it behind because he hadn't proved it. He had never used this type of weapon. He had his slingshot in his hand and he chose 5 smooth stones. Goliath laughed when he saw David approach him and it took him off guard. He threatened to feed David to the birds and the fowls of the air, but David replied, "You come to me with a sword and a spear! I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts!" He put his stone into the sling and God directed that rock to the center of Goliath's forehead and the giant tumbled to the ground and there was victory in the camp of Israel.

In Matthew 17, 24, the tax collectors came and asked Peter to pay the tax due for him and Jesus. When Peter would have entered the house, Jesus stopped him and explained to him that he didn't owe any tax, but in order not to offend them, he sent Peter fishing. Take a line and hook and the first fish that you pull up out of the water, open his mouth and you will find a coin. Take the money and pay the tax collectors for you and me.

Jesus took a few fish and some small loaves of bread from the hand of a lad, looked up into heaven, blessed it, broke it, and then gave it to his disciples to distribute it to 5000 men plus women and children. The most amazing part is that they gathered 12 baskets of left overs.

When Jesus came to the grave of Lazarus, he didn't need the help of people for he knew what he was going to do. However, he involved them by saying, "Roll away the stone!"

Martha said, "Lord, by now he stinks! He's been dead four days."

Jesus said, "Didn't I tell you that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?"

Jesus said a prayer of thanks to his heavenly Father and then he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth." He that was dead came forth bound from head to foot with grave clothes and his face was bound about with a napkin and Jesus said, "Loose him and let him go! Jesus brought him forth, but he commanded the people to remove the grave clothes."

What have you got that you can offer to the service of the Lord? God will do amazing things with the little bit that we offer him. Only believe! Only believe! All things are possible if you only believe."

Thinking back on my childhood, my parents taught us to pray about everything. One day in the autumn a young person came to our house and asked if we could go to Pea Cove Camp meeting. My mom told all of us that we would have to pray as she didn't have money to buy gasoline for the car. We all prayed and Jimmy Smith asked Mom, "Phyllis, what do you have in the house?" My mom answered, "I have some pumpkins." Jimmy took charge and we scouted around the neighborhood selling pumpkins and it wasn't long before we were packed in the car and headed to camp meeting. Praise God for his blessings and if you have faith, God will answer the prayers of his people. Don't be surprised if you hear, "What is in your hands?"