

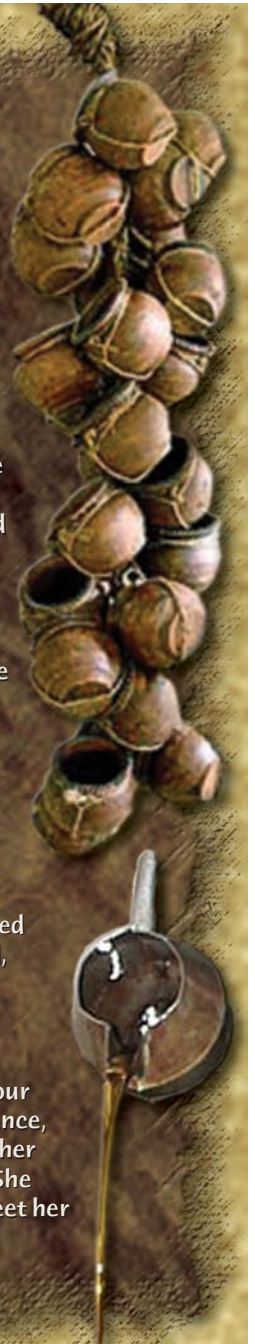
Pouring the Oil

It was late on Christmas night of 1973. My brother's family and mine were traveling together, back to our respective church fields from a family gathering. It was the time of the gas crisis, when shortages of oil caused long lines at service stations. Gas was frequently just not available. We kept worried eyes on the fuel gauge and scanned the offramps for an open station. There were none. It was, after all, Christmas night.

We began to joke nervously about the miracle of the pouring of the oil. Remember the story in 2 Kings 4:1-7? The woman with a small jar of oil who was told by Elisha to collect large jugs, "not just a few," and fill them from the small jar. She was in a desperate situation, and in that desperation she was required to demonstrate her faith. All the jugs she collected were filled from that little jar. Then, when there were no more empty jugs, the oil ran out. "Let's just hope the Lord blesses our gas tank!" we told one another. When the gas needle stopped dead on empty, still many miles from home, we were no longer joking. We were praying.

We drove 80 miles that night on empty, praising God for every mile. Laughing with delight at God's deliverance, we turned into the subdivision and glided up into my brother's driveway. There the car gasped, coughed, and quit.

Sometimes it is a test of our faith in God to give to him. It's a struggle to part with that few dollars we think we need to survive the week. But it's often in our desperations that God can demonstrate His deliverance, if we trust Him for it. Jesus praised the faith of another widow who put into the temple coffers all she had. She knew, as He knew, that God would meet her need. Do you know that?



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