



Theme	Jubilee – Year of Compassion
Topic	For the Poor and the Lost
Speaker	Elder Low Kok Guan
Date	13 th & 14 th June 2015

Message Summary

Spiritual Objective: To Remember the Poor and the Lost

The church is called to many things, but in the midst of our busyness, we must remember the poor – we must know the heart of our Father God. He cares for the poor – not just the financially poor but also the spiritually poor. He meets their needs, He pursues their souls and He uses us to do so in the same way that He used Elijah.

Key Text: 1 Kings 17 Elijah had proclaimed a drought on the land that lasted several years. At first, Elijah ate food from ravens which the Lord sent and drank from a brook which the Lord guided him to in Kerith. But the brook dried up and the Lord told him to leave and go to a widow at Zarephath. This was difficult. The journey was long and would take him into enemy lands, to a Gentile widow – a poor non-Jew, but God said go, so Elijah went.

Be God's Supply to the Poor (v10 – 16)

At the gate of Zarephath, Elijah meets the widow and asks her for water and bread. She tells him she only has a handful of flour and a little oil, just enough for their last meal. When Elijah first tells her, "Do not be afraid." (v13), he addresses her deepest need. The widow was clearly afraid – she spoke out of the overflow of her heart. With the oil and flour running out, she was afraid of the death that awaited them. Then Elijah says, "But first", he tells her to put God first even though she is afraid and an unbeliever. Finally, he promises God's unlimited provision to the widow, and asks her to trust in the Lord. God used the widow to provide for Elijah, but He also sent Elijah to proclaim provision for the widow and her son.

We do not need to be rich to be God's supply to the poor. His principles of provision are beyond our earthly version of mathematics. In times of need, will we put God first and obey Him by remembering the poor? Or are we so afraid, so overwhelmed by our own needs that we forget them? Elijah had nothing except the promises of God and yet he was God's supply to this widow. Trust God, obey Him and He will give us the capacity to help and remember the poor.

Be God's Spokesperson to the Lost (v17 – 24)

Sometime later, the widow's son dies. Having already lost her husband, losing her son is her darkest fear and deepest pain. In her deep sorrow, she lashes out at the man of God, blaming Elijah. She forgets the years of provision from the Lord, she forgets the Lord is for her and not against her. Unlike the widow, Elijah knew the heart of the Lord, and in his distress, Elijah turns to the Lord for help. The Lord hears Elijah's cry and restores the boy to life. The widow now believes and addresses God as the LORD (v24). God was reaching for their souls and their salvation and Elijah was His mouthpiece to bring Him glory.



The widow knew then, that Elijah's God was the LORD, but do the people around us know that we serve the living God? In difficult times, we need to know the heart of God and remember that God is for us and not against us. Are we willing to be God's spokesperson to the lost and point people to Christ?

Be a Servant

The names of the two places Elijah was directed to are hints as to what God was doing in Elijah's heart. Translated, Kerith means to cut away and Zarephath means refining. Watchman Nee said, "God has frequently changed His means of supply to keep our eyes fixed on the source." Elijah learnt to trust God at Kerith, where, in accordance to God's directions, ravens brought bread and meat. Elijah learnt the power of prayer at Zarephath, where, at the boy's bedside, God heard Elijah's cries and the boy returned to life. In 1 Kings 38 at Mount Carmel, God directed fire to consume only Elijah's offerings and when Elijah prayed, the rain came.

It was during these years that God prepared Elijah for the great victory where Elijah stood against Baal and his priests. As God's servant, Elijah was used to provide for the widow's physical and spiritual needs. But he was also being prepared for service and for victory in God's kingdom. In the same way, when we consecrate ourselves to God and answer His call, He will cut deep into our hearts and refine us to become servants of God.

Conclusion

We do not have to be rich to do great things for God, but we need to fully consecrate ourselves to Him. As we give our all to Him, even with the little we have, we will experience the great joy of the Lord and His transforming power. Elijah had nothing, he only had one life but He answered God's call to be His supply to the poor, His spokesperson to the lost and His servant to the Lord. If Jesus is Lord, then we must answer His call.

Questions

Share one thing from the sermon that you clearly remember or which you feel strongly about.
(Fill In Answer Here)

Think about the widow of Zarephath who had material and spiritual needs, and the role Elijah played in meeting those needs. Is there anyone in your life who needs material and spiritual help? Share about how you can be God's supply or spokesperson to them.



(Fill In Answer Here)

From this sermon, God used Elijah to minister to the widow and her son, but He also used them to work in Elijah. Share about one time when you saw God work in you when you helped someone else.

(Fill In Answer Here)