

Devouring Widows' Houses



I cannot tell you how many times I have heard clerics (preachers/pastors) misuse (twist) scriptures to their own carnal advantage. One of the classic cases that is often misused is found in 1 Kings 17 where Elijah said to the widow woman in Zerephath "... make me thereof a little cake first..." This scripture has often been used to justify the solicitation of funds from widows and poor people, by stating that YHWH will bless you if you give me money first, if you have faith. Such a line of thinking is not only a gross misinterpretation but is taken totally out of context. Let me explain.

First it is important to understand that YHWH gave instructions to Elijah about this specific widow woman (Luke 4:25-26) and that she would be an instrument of the Divine to **sustain** him (Elijah), which meant that YHWH would **sustain** her (the widow and her son) as an incidental blessing for her willingness to share her meager existence with Elijah. This divine insight gave Elijah authority to declare a promise of blessing (a miracle promise) to this widow woman. This is why Elijah was not stymied by her lack. But neither did he ignore her lack as being a valid issue that he had to address and something he would certainly not abuse. Therefore, he gave her a valid promise that was far from empty--it was not some "pie in the sky" promise that might come to pass some day--it was a right-now miracle. The miracle of oil and meal replenishment was an immediate miracle that would meet an immediate need of the widow's house. Elijah did not take from this widow woman without first knowing that YHWH would immediately give many times more back to her and her son (vs 9-17).

And later when her son died, she called Elijah "in on the carpet", and asked if he had come to punish her and raise guilt about her past. Again, Elijah was very sensitive concerning this legitimate issue. Nor, was he insulted by her comments. Elijah immediately sought divine help to address the matter and by divine intervention raised the widow's son from the dead. Again, he avoided the "devouring of widows houses" (vs 18-24). Elijah always gave more than he received--and it was a real value added as in something tangible in the right here and right now.

In 2 Kings 4, I find Elisha exhibiting similar respectful behaviors towards widows and the poor. His view was not, what can I take (devour) from this widow, but "What shall I do for thee?" After hearing the widow's needs, Elisha gave her instructions about what to do at each step, to the completion of a wonderful miracle. He brought enormous wealth to this widow's house, just the opposite of what many clerics in modern times do and apparently what the religious elite did in Yahushua's day (Mathew 23:14; Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47).

Later in 2 Kings 4, I find a similar behavior and attitude toward a great woman. It is obvious that economic status mattered little to Elisha, whether they were rich or poor. Elisha was all about

giving and blessing others with real-time tangible value-added blessings, not taking and consuming. After Elisha had been blessed by this Shunammite woman and her husband that was proffered without solicitation from the prophet, Elisha wanted to bless her, give back more than he had received. So when he found out that she had no child (son) the prophet Elisha pronounced a real-time value-added procreative blessing, a bona fide miracle that would (and did) happen by divine intervention. Again, this is the opposite of what most modern clerics do today.

Long after the Shunammite woman had acquired her blessing from the prophet, her son died. She challenged the prophet and said to him, "did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'" (vs. 28). The prophet was not offended and sought to bless her house again, not to condemn her or criticize her. So he brought the child back to life through divine intervention.

So what is the point? The point is this. Far too many clerics miss the fact that the prophets brought real blessings to the poor (and to others) rather than devour their houses through the exchange for empty promises. A real-time value-added blessing needs to come from the cleric towards the poor and needy, something beyond fancy sermons and unfulfilled promises. Don't put blame and shame on the poor for not having faith, do something legitimate, help meet their needs, both immediate and long term. Something real and tangible needs to go outwardly from the "man of YHWH" to the poor and needy. [Ministry is not about filthy lucre](#) or building kingdoms, it is about ministering to the poor and needy, even as HaMashiyach left His example for us.

[Yahushua practiced what he preached](#) regarding the devouring of widows' houses. And he did not just take funds from the wealthy (Luke 8:3) without giving back. And, there is no record of him taking from the poor, but he obviously gave funds to the poor (Luke 8:1; John 13:29). He also gave to the poor real-time tangible blessings. He gave far more than he received (Luke 7:22) in a multiplicity of ways ranging from helping the poor (materialistic things) to healings, to miracles, and to spiritual teachings to help elevate the soul and living—something far more than empty promises.