**Daily Prayer and Encouragement Wednesday 6th January**

(2 Kings 4:2–7)

Elisha replied to her, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?” “Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a small jar of olive oil.”Elisha said, “Go around and ask all your neighbours for empty jars. Don’t ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.” She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another one.” But he replied, “There is not a jar left.” Then the oil stopped flowing.She went and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.”

In this story of compassion and provision the miracle takes place behind closed doors, and Elisha’s instructions are reminiscent of Jesus telling his disciples to go into a room and shut the door when they pray. It is in the private place of prayer that, like the widow, we bring to God not only our own emptiness or neediness but the collective neediness of our neighbours, friends and family – and, as this heart-warming story powerfully illustrates, our own and others’ emptiness or neediness can never exceed God’s unlimited and often miraculous supply.

This story also encourages us to make space in our hearts and lives for God. If we are so full of ourselves and preoccupied with the things of this world that we have no room or appetite for Him, we forfeit the opportunity to receive the abundant blessings that He wants to shower upon us. It is the volume of our emptiness that determines how much of His fullness we experience. Making room for God takes real effort, but the rewards are amazing!

*Lord, help us to make room for you in our hearts and lives, not only when we are in need but at all times. Thank you that you are always willing and more than able to meet all of our needs and fill our empty places.*

Jane Roberts

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