

# It is what it is?

Week of September 27

“Will I always be broke?” Many of us ask this question, and because we know ourselves all too well, resign to the mindset: “It is what it is—I have too little money, and too many bills. I buy too much on credit, because I keep pulling out that credit card. I’m stuck in this vicious cycle. I’m in a mountain of debt and I cannot see my way out. So yes, I will probably always be broke.” But the truth is you and I do not have to live this way. There is a way out of the downward debt spiral. First, we must be willing to ask for help; second, to be obedient; and third, ready to shut the door on destructive behavior.

In the Old Testament, there is a widow facing a mountain of debt. In fact, this woman owes so much money that her creditor comes knocking at the door, threatening to take her two sons as slaves in order to pay off the amount. What is she to do? Her late husband had been studying in one of schools of prophets (sort of like seminary in Old Testament times), and the leader (mentor, teacher) of this group of prophets quickly comes to mind. The woman thinks, “This man knew my late husband. He knows my husband was a true servant and feared the Lord.” And so, in desperation, she asks the prophet Elisha for help.

## Read 2 Kings 4:1-7

This woman swallowed her pride and asked for help. The lives of her two sons were at stake! But notice, the moment she was ready to do whatever it took to be set free (and save her sons!) was the moment her miracle was set in motion.

### 1. What keeps you from asking for help?

Perhaps there’s been a time you were in a desperate situation and you *did* ask for help. Did you follow through with the counsel that was given you?

Elisha was ready to help her: “What can I do to help you?” Elisha asked. “Tell me, what do you have in the house?” At first the woman replies, “Nothing at all...” but then remembers a flask of olive oil (v2). The woman may not have mentioned the flask of oil right away, perhaps because she didn’t think it was worth much—at least not enough to pay her creditor and save her sons. Yet Elisha immediately sees this olive oil as a valuable commodity—a resource at her fingertips. Notice Elisha doesn’t merely give her a handout, but shows her how she can partner with God in climbing out of her mountain of debt.

### 2. Trace the step-be-step instructions Elisha gives to this woman.

A) First, what does Elisha instruct the woman to do? (v3)  
(Notice this first instruction gets the woman moving and asking for help *again*, this time from friends and neighbors)

B) Second, what does Elisha tell her to do once she obtains the empty jars?  
“Then \_\_\_\_\_ into your house with your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ behind you (v4a).

C) Third, once the woman and her sons are safe inside the house, Elisha says:

“Pour \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ from your flask into the \_\_\_\_\_, setting each one aside when it is \_\_\_\_\_” (v4b).

Throughout the Bible there are times when God’s people must decide to get serious about closing the door to the outside mindset of this world—skepticism, unbelief, indifference to God’s Word, wickedness, deception. In a world where fame-seekers “air and bare” just about anything in order to flaunt their own gods; where enemies are bent on destruction; where people want to give allegiance to just about anything but the One who gives us breath—we must understand that one day the evil that surrounds us will be brought down. So why do we keep aligning ourselves with the mindset of this world? We must decide where we will go for refuge when the day of trouble comes. Will we look to God or will we keep seeking the things of this world?

God is found in the secret place. “Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalm 91:1). Going into our prayer closets and shutting the door on a daily basis will prepare us for times of desperation—times when gathering our family and fellow believers “into the house and shutting the door” is crucial. The following Scriptures speak to the seriousness of God’s judgment toward sin. As we trust God instead of mammon, He will keep us and protect us.

3. Read the following Scriptures and consider what it means to “shut the door” to the destructive mindset and behaviors of this world. Think about these questions: Will I be obedient and trust God when times of desperation come? How are the lives of my family and loved ones at stake? What is the Lord showing me through this message/lesson and the following Scriptures?

Genesis 7:13-16

Exodus 12:21-23

Joshua 2:14-21

2 Kings 4:8, 14-21, 32-33

Isaiah 26:20

Matthew 6:5-6

John 20:19-26

The woman and her sons followed Elisha’s instructions completely. They were obedient at every turn and the moment they shut the door and began to pour the oil was the moment their miracle began. Notice the oil did not stop flowing until each jar was filled. If you believe it’s true that the Lord knows your every need and promises to provide accordingly, what is keeping you from trusting His goodness? Shut out the lies, the unbelief, the notion that stuff will make you happy—and never be broke again. Christ will move you and me from a place of desperation to a place of inspiration, from a place of greed to a place of generosity. The wealth of this world has nothing on the rich way God wants to work *for* you and *through* you.

4. I commit today to shut out the following lies and destructive behavior:

I am willing to swallow my pride and ask for help from the following:

I don’t want a handout because I have resources at my fingertips. Here is what I “have in the house” that I have been overlooking:

In a word, this is how I will start partnering with God today:



**Text: 2 Kings 4:1-7**

## **The Plain Truth: When you “shut the door” God moves us from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.**

**When God wants you to “Shut the door”  
He usually has two things for you:**

- 1) To protect \_\_\_\_\_.**
- 2) To \_\_\_\_\_ for you.**

**Life Application: 10-10-80**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ ten percent**
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ ten percent**
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ on eighty percent**

### **One Year Bible Reading**

Sept. 27: Isaiah 51:1-53:12, Ephesians 5:1-33, Psalm 69:19-36, Proverbs 24:7  
 Sept. 28: Isaiah 54:1-57:14, Ephesians 6:1-24, Psalm 70:1-5, Proverbs 24:8  
 Sept. 29: Isaiah 57:15-59:21, Philippians 1:1-26, Psalm 71:1-24, Proverbs 24:9-10  
 Sept. 30: Isaiah 60:1-62:5, Philippians 1:27-2:18, Psalm 72:1-20, Proverbs 24:11-12  
 Oct. 1: Isaiah 62:6-65:25, Philippians 2:19-3:3, Psalm 73:1-28, Proverbs 24:13-14  
 Oct. 2: Isaiah 66:1-24, Philippians 3:4-21, Psalm 74:1-23, Proverbs 24:15-16  
 Oct. 3: Jeremiah 1:1-2:30, Philippians 4:1-23, Psalm 75:1-10, Proverbs 24:17-20

**From the general budget offering on October 3 and 4, we will tithe 10 percent right off the top to support our Strategic Partners.**

**September 26 & 27, 2015**