



1 Kings 17:17–24: Know

(v 18) She said, “What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?”

(vv 21, 24) Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth.”

What caused the change in the poor widow? Was it the miraculous healing of her son, or was it something different, something within her?

It was with what – and Who – she got to know.

Remember, she was a Gentile outcast, with little knowledge of Israel, even less of Elijah, and none of the God of Israel. Her whole life had been a series of attempting to influence events and avert tragedies by performing certain rituals and making sacrifices in order to sway the gods in her favor. Magic amulets, talking to inanimate idols, and endless surrender of needed – and precious – items to unheeding statues were her only connection to the divine. If she was a Baal worshipper, she may have participated in child sacrifice. She knew nothing of God’s love, of His desire that she would know Him not as a feared, judgmental, uncaring entity, but as a loving Father.

To such an embittered woman, with such sad experience with supposed gods, Elijah was sent.

Remember too, that Elijah knew nothing of what God was doing. His words were “O LORD my God, have you brought tragedy also upon this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” (v. 20). While Elijah had the advantage of knowing God and what He had done in the distant past for Israel during the time of Moses, he had yet to know the depths of God’s compassion for not only Israel, but for all the earth.

We can imagine the desperation in Elijah’s voice: “O LORD my God, let this boy’s life return to him!” We can imagine the excitement he felt when the boy began to breathe, when he sprang to his feet and rushed downstairs, shouting “Look, your son is alive!” And we can imagine the shock, the overwhelming wondrous joy the mother felt when she received back her son, alive.

God wants us to go beyond mere imagining. He wants us, in reality, to surrender the old, dead things in our lives so that we can, in reality, receive life-giving treasures instead. Then we can join in the celebratory shout, “Now I know... that the word of the LORD... is the truth!”