

Funds are already in the hands of those who are God's appointed stewards sufficient to send every missionary who ought to go, and evangelize every people as yet unreached by the gospel. Why, then, does not money flow in a steady stream into the treasury of the Lord, until there is enough and to spare? There is only one answer: God's people are weak in faith. They have not yet risen to that height of daring confidence in God to which this Phœnician proselyte attained, under and less luminous dispensation of God's truth and love. We, who have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, are actually behind many to whom that sight was never given in the confidence of our faith, in our consecration, in our spirituality. We prefer ourselves as creditors of our accounting with God. We must take care of "number one," whether God's prophet is cared for or not. When we are not wholly selfish in our administration of our substance, we are timid, calculating, overshadowed. The lesson taught us by the Zareptan widow is the lesson of a wise daring in the surrender of what, unless God were, and were true, it would be the rankest folly to give.

The money question is, after all, a spiritual question so far as missions are concerned. The question of finance, also, is a question of the Holy Ghost. Given Pentecostal blessing, and Pentecostal consecration of property will follow. No one but the Holy Spirit can overcome the natural and ingrained avarice of some of the members of our churches. No one but the Holy Spirit can incite souls to that degree of faith which will lead them to set at defiance the dictates of selfishness, the maxims of worldly policy, the suggestions of over-cautious prudence. If we are to dare for Jesus as He deserves, in the surrender of our substance, our minds must be illumined, our hearts inflamed, our wills impelled by the unselfish Spirit, part of whose glory as a divine Person is, that He prefers the Son to Himself in His administration of His own powers, in the manifestation of His own life.

What, finally, of the issue to which this widow's testing came? The sacrifice made was abundantly rewarded. As Bishop Hall says, once more:—

"Happy was it for this widow that she did not shut her hand to this man of God; that she was so niggard of her last handful. Never corn or oil did so increase in growing, as here in consuming. This barrel, this cruse of hers, had no bottom. The barrel of meal wasted not, the cruse of oil failed not. Behold! not getting, not saving, is the way to abundance, but giving. The mercy of our God crowns our beneficence with the blessing of store. Who can fear want by a merciful liberality when he sees the Zareptan had furnished if she had not given, and by giving abounded?"

Here, then, is our third lesson: God rewards the faith of His prophets and their supporters by gifts which enlarge still further the disposition towards its exercise. "There is that scattereth

and yet increaseth." "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over." God delights to meet faith with supernatural response, to bestow upon it ultra-natural reward. She who gave a cake when she was about to starve, and preferred God's prophet to herself and her son, found that God would not leave her without a witness of His power and love in another and even darker extremity. She who pinched herself and her son for the kingdom of God, received her son back again from the dead, at the prophet's hand.

Still there is reason to expect the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open unto you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." So that the converse of what was before said is true. The way to secure a new Pentecost is to enlarge our gifts. Those of us who are in any degree partakers of the Spirit of Power, must put God to the proof for a wider, a larger blessing. If we expect Him to grant us, for the sake of the church yet unconsecrated and the world unsaved, some new and surprising access of spiritual power, we must make to Him some demonstration of our faith, daring in its heroism, splendid in its measure, uncalculating in its generous denial of self. Are we ready to do it? Shall the centennial of modern missions furnish the occasion?

THE CONTRAST.

A STORY FOR WOMEN.

NO CONTRASTS are more striking than those which describe the condition of women in the heathen and in Christian countries.

The *Religious Herald* thus speaks of women in China, India and Japan: "They carry coal in baskets for the supply of steamboats lying in the harbor; they carry baggage and heavy loads of merchandise on their heads; they gather offal and remove sewerage from the open streets of great cities; they creep in mud and water six inches deep, pulling up the weeds between rows of rice in the paddy fields, and breathing the odors of sewerage with which the gram is watered from the town. They even carry strong men in chairs supported by bamboo poles resting on their shoulders. They climb, panting for breath, under such burdens, up the steep sides of mountains and receive a small string of copper cash for the hard service."

The condition of women among some of our still savage Indian tribes is no better. There she is counted, and called "a dog," she is a beast of burden: she must build, plant, she must walk carrying a load of blankets while her lord and master proudly rides his pony, she may not sit at his table, although required to prepare the meal, but she must take the remnants with the dogs when he has finished.

Christian woman, "who maketh thee to differ" from these? And what art thou doing to give others that Gospel which has done so much for thee.