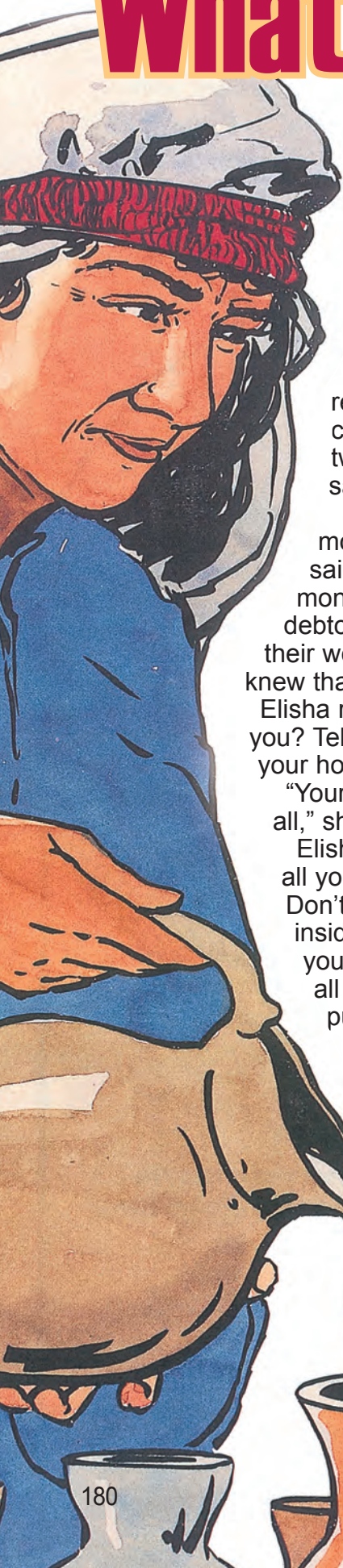


What can I do for you?



Knock, knock! Elisha hurried over to see who was at the door. He recognized the woman immediately; she was the widow of one of his friends. "What's going on?" Elisha asked.

"Your servant, my husband, is dead, and you know that he revered the Lord. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves," she said.

Her husband owed a lot of money when he died. The law said that people who were owed money were allowed to take the debtor's family as their slaves, until their work paid for the debt. Elisha knew that the widow had no money. 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 little oil."

Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors 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."

The widow thought to herself, "What will this little bit of oil do for me now?"

But, she closed the door and gathered her sons and told them what Elisha had told her. They went from house to house asking their

neighbors for all of the empty jars they could get. Once they were back at their house, the widow asked her sons to please bring her a jar. As they brought the jars to her, she kept pouring. She told them that as each one got full to move it aside so that it didn't get in the way.

The sons saw how many empty jars they had all over the house and said, "How is it possible that with so little oil we could fill all of these?" But they obeyed their mother's instructions anyway. One of the sons passed a jar to his mother and attentively watched how she took what little oil they had and started to fill the empty jar. When it was full of oil, the other son took it away to make room for another jar that his brother brought.

They filled jar after jar. Their mother kept pouring the oil into every empty jar she got. "Bring me another jar." But her son replied, "There aren't any 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."

