

2 Kings 4:1-7

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[0 : 00] Good evening. I was chewing on some verses out of Mark, but that's not where we're going to be tonight.

It'll be in the Old Testament. The book of 2 Kings, chapter 4. Some scripture that we may or may not be familiar with.

It's not brought up as often as, say, John 3.16 is. But the book of 2 Kings, naturally following 1 Kings, which is all about the kings.

But you get to 2 Kings, and you read about some other kings there in the first chapter.

Second chapter, of course, we see Elijah taken up in a whirlwind in a chariot. And Elisha receives the double portion of his spirit and continues on in that ministry.

[1 : 06] Then we get to the third chapter of 2 Kings. And we see another battle taking place. And we see the Israelites going up against the armies of Moab and their king.

And that chapter ends with the Moabite king actually sacrificing his eldest son. I'll say all that to say this.

We got 1 Kings, which is all about kings. We got 2 Kings, which we talked about kings and armies and battles and Elijah getting taken up in a chariot and all these other things.

Then we get to 2 Kings, chapter 4. And it begins with a widow woman. So we've gone from people that are way up the ladder. We've gone down to a widow woman in chapter 4 of 2 Kings.

And that's where we'll be picking up here in just a moment. This account here, these seven verses we're going to go through tonight, is it's got the gospel written all over it.

[2 : 15] And if I stand and don't preach the gospel, I need to sit down. If we read something in Scripture, and particularly in the Old Testaments, and have a hard time applying it to the New Testament church, we've probably interpreted it wrong.

Not all of it, but much of it. So, all that being said, the book of 2 Kings, in chapter 4, beginning at verse 1, it says, Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant, my husband, is dead.

And thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord. And the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee?

Tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels.

Borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out unto all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

[3 : 35] So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, and brought the vessels to her, and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel.

And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came, and told the man of God, and he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

Back to verse 1. Now there cried a certain woman, of the wives of the sons of the prophets, unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant, my husband, is dead.

And thou knowest that thy servant, did fear the Lord. And the creditor has come, to take unto him my two sons, to be bondmen. This woman here, if we put this in the lens of the gospel, if we put this in gospel light, we can see ourselves in this widow woman here.

She was in a desperate situation. She was living in a culture, where everything was coming against her, simply because her husband had died.

[4 : 44] And folks, quite frankly, prosperity preachers, they would absolutely choke on this verse. This man, it says that he was of the prophets. It says that he feared the Lord.

And yet, when he died, he left his wife in debt. So he was in debt as well. And left her in a matter of distress. So this tells me, that just because we serve the Lord, just because we are His, just because we are children of the Most High God, that does not exclude us from suffering.

It does not exclude us from suffering in this life. It doesn't say that this life is going to be a walk in the park, or a cakewalk, or anything else. Suffering will come our way.

The Bible says, Paul wrote to Timothy, See, they that live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. And I understand that suffering persecution is a whole different type of suffering, but it's suffering nonetheless.

But Jesus Christ said that in the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. We can see ourselves as this widow woman here.

[5 : 53] We can see ourselves as lost sinners in a desperate state. Nothing that can be done. The bondmen have showed up, or the creditor has showed up, wanting to make us into bondmen.

Folks, when we were lost, we were already slaves unto sin. We were already slaves unto Satan. We were slaves to the principalities of this world. We were slaves to everything that is evil in this world, and everything that is dark in this world, folks.

And it stands that way today. You are either a child of God, or you are a child of the devil. There is no sitting on the fence. There is no middle ground. There is nothing along those lines.

We either belong to God, or we belong to the devil. We're either heaven bound, or we're hell bound.

We're either going on to glory one day, or we will spend all of eternity paying for our own sins.

In a place called hell, folks. I'm glad that Jesus Christ came to take that debt from me. He came to lift me up from underneath the curse that Almighty God placed on the earth, and everyone, and everything.

[6 : 56] Jesus Christ came, and He died. He paid the penalty. He's the one that suffered my death. He's the one that bled for me. He's the one that suffered the mockery.

He suffered the shame. He took my guilt. He took everything away, so that I could be made a child of the Most High God. Hallelujah. Praise God.

This widow woman here, she's a reflection of us before we were saved. We were all in a desperate state. We were all in a desperate position. And she was desperate.

And there was nothing that she could do on her own, folks. And there was nothing that you and I could do on our own. We could go on through this life. We could say, I'm not going to lie anymore. I'm not going to steal anymore. I'm not going to fornicate anymore. I'm not going to commit adultery anymore. I'm not going to do this, and I'm not going to do that. But folks, that would never merit our way into heaven.

[7 : 50] We could try to quit lying all we wanted to, try to quit stealing all we wanted to, or any other number of sins that you could think of. But folks, that would not pay your debt. The Bible says, we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of Almighty God.

We have all, like sheep gone astray, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. It took Jesus Christ to pay that sin debt. Not you, not me, or anyone else.

And I thank God that Jesus Christ paid that debt for me. This woman here, in a horribly desperate situation, nothing that she could do of herself. It was just her and her boys.

And the creditor had come to take her sons into slavery, to pay the debt that was owed. There was nothing that she could do. We move on to verse 2. It says, And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee?

Tell me, what hast thou in thy house? In the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house save a pot of oil. Folks, this word save here, this is like a hinge that swings between despair and hope.

[8 : 57] She says, I have nothing in my house save this pot of oil. Save one lowly pot of oil that I have. And folks, I'll tell you now, Brother Sparky was talking about it just before I got up here.

You use what the good Lord has given you. If God wants you to use something else, He will supply you with that thing. Girls, if you want to sing for God, God has supplied you with a voice.

You use that voice. You use it to the glory of God. You use it to bring glory unto God. Preachers, if God has given you a voice and given you a desire to preach the Word, preach the Word of God and preach it to the glory of God.

Man, Moses, he was trying his best to talk God out of sending him to Egypt. He said, How am I going to do this? He said, I'm a man of stuttering lips. I have a stammering tongue. God says, I'll send Aaron with you. He says, What's that in your hand, Moses? Moses says, Arise. He was telling Moses, You use what you've got. He was telling you, Hey, David didn't have nothing but a sling, but God allowed him to use what he had at his disposal.

[10:02] There was a young boy over in the New Testament that didn't have nothing but five loaves of bread and two fishes, but Jesus Christ fed thousands of people with that. You use what God has supplied you with.

And again, if you don't have it and God wants you to use it, He will make a way for you to have it. This widow woman here had nothing more than one pot of oil in her house.

And folks, this pot of oil was going to bring blessing to her. This pot of oil was going to bring a livelihood to her and her sons. And she would go on. We read in the last verse that we read here this evening in verse 7 that they lived the rest of their days off of that one little pot of oil.

Plus what God had multiplied it into. Hallelujah. And God does the same thing for us. Folks, when I first got saved, when I first got saved, when I was born again and the Spirit of God moved in, it was something that I couldn't even recount to you.

I can't tell you the feeling that I had. I'm sure if you're here tonight, you would have the same thing to say. You can't explain the weight that is lifted off of your shoulders. You can't explain the smoke and the darkness that is lifted out of your heart.

[11:12] The moment that you get saved, when God reaches in and He pulls out that cold, stony heart that He talks about in the book of Ezekiel, and He puts in that heart of flesh something that's soft, something that's warm, something that He can mold, something that He can mold into what He wants it to be.

Hey folks, there is no feeling like that on the face of this planet. There's no high that can fix it or that can come close to it. There's no drunk that can come close to it. There is nothing that can compare to that feeling.

And God done that. But, when He moved in and He gave me Himself, He gave me the Spirit, of Almighty God, I am not to keep that to myself.

And I am to multiply that. I am to multiply it just like this oil was multiplied in the vessels. On to verse 3 here. Then He said, Go, borrow the vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels. Borrow not a few. He tells this widow woman, You've got one pot of oil. You just confess that to Me. You go to your neighbors and you borrow these vessels.

[12:17] But He specifies, you borrow empty vessels. You borrow things that have nothing in them. You borrow jars. You borrow bottles. You borrow skins. You borrow whatever you can find as long as it is empty.

But He tells her, Don't borrow just a few. You borrow as many as you possibly can. You borrow 50. You borrow 100. You borrow 1,000. Because Elisha knew that the God, He would be able to fill as many as she could bring in.

Hey folks, the sufficiency of God is inexhaustible. God is all sufficient for your every need. He is all sufficient for my every need. And it does not run out no more than the grace of Almighty God will ever run out.

God is eternal. His grace is eternal. His sufficiency is eternal. His salvation is eternal. Everything about Him is eternal. Hallelujah. And He multiplies it over and over and over again.

The question is, when you bring your vessel, is it empty? Is it empty? Do we bring empty vessels to God?

[13:27] Folks, God will not fill a vessel that is filled with pride, He will not fill a vessel that is filled with sin, that is filled with unrepentant sin.

He will not fill a vessel that is filled with any of those things. Folks, that's not the power of the Gospel. The power of the Gospel is not, I'm going to try harder.

The power of the Gospel is not, I'm going to turn over a new leaf. The power of the Gospel is not, I'll do better or I'll quit sinning, which is impossible.

The power of the Gospel is none of those things. The power of the Gospel is not, I'll attend church three, four, five times a week and I'll throw money in the coffer each service.

The power of the Gospel is none of these things. But the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is shown in a broken sinner that comes to Him empty of self. He comes to Jesus Christ.

[14 : 25] He comes to the foot of the cross begging for mercy, casting Himself at the mercy of Almighty God and He is raised to new life in Christ Jesus.

Hallelujah! That's the power of the Gospel. Many people in this world have the wrong idea about the Gospel. They think, all I've got to do is do better.

I know I've done some bad things. I know I've done some wrong things. I've committed some errors. No, folks, they are sin. According to the Scriptures, it is sin. It is an offense against God.

It is transgression. It is iniquity. It is rebellion against your Maker. That's what it is. It's not just mistakes. And it's not just errors. It is sin.

But when we come to God, before we were saved, when we come to God as an empty vessel, we come to God, we come to the foot of the cross and die to self.

[15 : 23] We die to self. And we die to this world. And we die to the things of the world. And that was when life was imparted unto us. Brother Burns heard me preach it on many a street corner.

Only he who is life has the ability to impart life unto us, unto anyone. And he will do so to anyone that comes to him in faith and repentance.

Anyone that comes to him with faith in Jesus Christ and repentance of their own sin, God will change their heart. God will change their soul. God will change everything about them.

But we must come empty for that to happen. And then after we're saved, what does Christ say? If any man will follow after me, let him deny himself.

Take up his cross daily and follow me. Let him deny himself. Die to self. Mortify the deeds of the flesh. Crucify the flesh. Daily.

[16 : 19] We must do these things. Folks, if it wasn't necessary, it wouldn't be in Scripture for us to do so. But that's a commandment that is given in the Scripture.

You might say, well, Paul said that. Yes, he said that. But folks, this is the inerrant, inspired Word of Almighty God. And if it came from Paul in the pages of this book, it is a commandment from God to crucify our flesh and to do it daily.

Borrow not a few. Don't matter what we bring to God, He can take care of it. Don't matter how many times we come to God, He can take care of us. And He does take care of us. He takes care of His own.

Verse 4, And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons and shalt pour out into all those vessels and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

Folks, some miracles are not meant for public display. That's right. Period. Now, I ain't saying you shouldn't praise God publicly. Don't you hear me wrong. But some miracles are meant to stay behind closed doors just like our prayer life is sometimes meant to be behind closed doors.

[17 : 33] Jesus preached that Himself, did He not? He said, when you pray to go into your closet. Jesus taught that we go in our closet, we pray unto God in secret and He'll reward us openly in front of men.

But folks, some miracles are not meant for public display. And this is one of those cases. When thou art come in, when you've come back into your house, after you've gone out, after you've done what I said there in verse 3, you've gone out to your neighbors, you've borrowed not a few vessels from them and you've borrowed empty vessels from them.

When thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons and shalt pour out into all those vessels. What's she going to pour out?

We don't have a count here in Scripture how many vessels she had, how many she borrowed. But she's going to pour out the one pot of oil that she had into those vessels. Folks, God does that with you and I.

God does the very same thing with you and I. God has poured His Spirit into you. He has placed His Spirit into you. If you're sitting here tonight and you are born again, you have the Spirit of God dwelling inside of you.

[18 : 46] But we are not to keep that to ourselves. We are to go out into the world and preach the Gospel to every living creature according to the Scriptures, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

One of the best church marquees I ever saw in my life said keep the faith, just don't keep it to yourself. And I give that a big hearty amen. Folks, we are not to keep our faith to ourselves. We are to go out as lights in this world.

We are called to be sought in light in this world. We are called to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we don't tell the world about the Gospel, who is going to?

I encourage you today, you spread the Gospel. You tell people about Jesus Christ. You tell people about the goodness of God. You tell people that although they be a sinner, God is a wonderful, marvelous, mighty, able, and willing Savior.

And He saves those which are lost. He saves those that are desperate like this widow woman that we are reading about here in the Scripture. He saves those that need saving.

[19 : 52] Jesus said, I came to seek and to save that which was lost. Jesus taught, they which are not sick have no need of a physician. Folks, we all have sickness. We all have sickness and there's one Savior that can do something about that.

There's one Savior that can do something about sin sickness. When thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons and thou shalt pour out into all those vessels and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

She's going to take this one pot that she's got, this one pot of oil and she's going to fill all of these other vessels with this one pot. And folks, when we go out into the world and we spread the gospel of Jesus Christ and we are sharing our faith such as you all say that you're going to do tomorrow night, folks, not everyone's going to be receptive to that.

In fact, there may only be a handful. There may only be one or two. There may not be anyone that is receptive to that. But folks, we are not called to make people receptive to the message.

We are called to preach the message of repentance, to preach the message of salvation and Christ and Christ alone. We get so discouraged.

[21 : 02] We go out and we preach and nobody comes. Nobody makes a profession. Nobody confesses Christ as Lord. And that's discouraging to see that.

But folks, it's not in us. It's not in us to save. And thank God it's not given to us in the Scripture that we are to save. But it is given us in the Scripture to go out and to preach the message.

To go out and to tell the world about Jesus Christ. You tell the world about Him and about His sacrifice. About His death. About His burial.

About His resurrection. About the ascension to the Father. About how He intercedes on behalf of all of those that have ever repented of their sins and believed on His Gospel. That is our job.

Amen. One of the most encouraging things I ever found in Scripture when I first started preaching. I was very discouraged. I couldn't understand why people weren't flooding the altars and getting saved left and right.

[21 : 58] I didn't get that. And I'd read over it many times. But I finally read it in Romans chapter 1 and it clicked with me where Paul says, For I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation. That is what's the power of God. And that's what gave me relief. That's what really the verse that showed me I preach the Gospel but God does the saving.

God does the drawing. God does the cleaning. God does it all. He just uses me as a simple vessel to go out and spread the word of His Son.

Thou shalt set aside that which is full. Verse 5 So she went from Him and shut the door upon her and upon her sons who brought the vessels to her and she poured out.

Folks, we can learn a lot from this widow woman. Yes, sir. Elisha gave her specific instructions of what to do. Now, Elisha was not God.

[23 : 05] And Elisha was not Christ. But in the Old Testament, who did the people go to? They would go to the nearest man of God they could find. The Israelites went to Moses.

And so on throughout the Old Testament. This woman went to the man of God, Elisha and made her petition to him. He being a man of God.

Now, Elisha has given her instructions. You go to your neighbors. You get vessels. You get empty vessels. Don't borrow just a few. Get many of them. And he tells her what to do. He says, when you come in, you shut the door behind you.

Shut the door on your sons and you pour out into those vessels. Verse 5, So she went from him and shut the door upon her and upon her sons who brought the vessels to her and she poured out.

Folks, this was simple obedience. And we could learn so much from this. When you and I learn to obey the Word of God. When you and I learn to do what the Word of Almighty God says, the

blessings will flow forth.

[24 : 08] I'm not saying God's going to put a Rolls Royce in your driveway. I'm not saying you're going to be eating at fancy restaurants or taking vacations every other week or anything along those lines.

But I can promise you, when you learn to obey the Word of God, like this woman did, the blessings will come forth. And they will come forth abundantly.

And I'm still learning how to do that. I'm not pointing a finger at you all. As was said before, I ain't here to condemn anybody. I can't condemn you. This book condemns every one of us. And it shows us that we're condemned.

But don't leave us there, praise God. It also shows us the Savior we have in Jesus Christ. She obeyed and she poured out. She done exactly what Elisha told her to.

How would Elisha have known what to tell this woman had God not shown it to Elisha? Had God not inspired Elisha somehow? So what he told this woman was from God.

[25 : 08] And she obeyed the Word of God. She obeyed. Folks, you read further back in the Old Testament about the Israelites. What got them in trouble the most?

Running from God. Disobeying God. Running to other idols. Whoring after idols. Whoring after other nations. Whoring after other cultures. This is what got them in trouble instead of simply obeying the Word of God.

When they obeyed, when they obeyed, the blessings came forth. When they did not obey, God sold them into slavery. He sold them into bondage. He sold them into sin.

He sold them under rulers. He done all of these things. But when they obeyed, when they cried out to God for mercy, God showed up. God showed up. And she poured out.

Verse 6, And it came to pass when the vessels were full that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more.

[26 : 06] And the oil stayed. The oil stayed. Hey folks, what God has given you, He's not going to revoke from you. What God has placed within you, He is not going to revoke from you.

When the vessels were filled here, the oil stayed. When God filled my vessel, the oil has stayed ever since. And it's not because I have perfectly obeyed the Word of God.

It's not because I have lived a perfect sinless life. It's not because I have done this or done that. It has nothing to do with me. It took God to save my soul.

And it will take God to keep me saved. Period. It has nothing to do with me. Folks, the oil stayed. The oil will stay inside the vessel.

When God does the filling, folks, this was not her taking from many vessels and filling many vessels. This is her taking from the one pot of oil that she confessed that she had in the second verse that we read tonight.

[27 : 11] And she filled these other vessels. Folks, that was a supernatural feeling. And it was a supernatural feeling that you and I got at the moment of salvation.

And that's why the oil stayed. That's why it didn't go anywhere. It's just like the woman in 1 Kings 17 that Elijah, hey, her barrel didn't run empty.

Her crucible didn't run empty. And it wasn't because of anything that she did. That was Almighty God doing this. Folks, and that woman knew just because God was acting on her behalf, it didn't matter how bad it got for her and her family.

It didn't matter how rough things got. If she could crawl her way back to the barrel, if she could make her way back to the cruise, there would be enough oil there and there would be enough meal there to feed her.

Hallelujah! And folks, I encourage you to do the same thing. God will allow the oil to stay. He won't remove that oil. Sometimes we've got to make our way back to it.

[28 : 15] Sometimes we've got to get our way back to God. Sometimes we're the ones that steps out of line. Sometimes we're the ones that go to the left or the right when we know it's a straight and narrow path.

Sometimes that's us. And we have to get back on that straight and narrow. And we have to get ourselves back to God. But God did not remove the oil here. And God won't remove it from one of His own.

Now, blessings are a whole different story. We can have blessings taken away from us. We can have blessings. I've encouraged many people. Brother Burns heard me preach it before.

You be careful what you put in front of God. You be careful what you're using as an excuse to miss church. And I know that's kind of contradictory being as I'm preaching to people that are at church. But I'll encourage you. You be careful what you use. Well, my kids. Well, my husband. Well, my wife. Well, my parents. Hey, God can take them out of the picture real fast.

[29 : 12] And then you'll be left without an excuse and you'll have to find an actual reason. We use a lot of excuses. As human beings, we find a lot of excuses to not do things.

God can take blessings out of the picture. I ain't saying He'll remove the oil no more than He did here. But God can remove the blessings that came forth because of the oil.

He can certainly do that. And He said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.

Verse 7, Then she came and told the man of God. And He said, Go, shall the oil and pay thy debt and live thou and thy children of the rest.

Folks, God paid this debt for this woman. Plain and simple. Again, this was supernatural what was going on here. I read nothing about an olive tree that was planted there in her home.

That the oil was just oozing out of that was filling those vessels. I read nothing about her neighbors bringing more vessels of oil or more oil of any kind.

[30 : 21] I read nothing along those lines. And I didn't read anything here about her going out and getting more oil from anywhere. But I read here, Then she came and told the man of God and He said, Go, sell the oil and pay thy debt and live thou and thy children of the rest.

Go and sell the soul that God has supplied for you. Folks, we cannot sell Jesus Christ. And that's not what I'm saying here, but I am saying that Almighty God in His sovereign power paid this debt for this woman.

Paid the debt so that her boys would not be sold into slavery to pay the debt that her husband left behind. He paid the debt that she could not. Just as it is in salvation, Jesus Christ paid the debt that you and I could not.

Jesus Christ suffered the debt that you and I could not. He died for us. He suffered for us. He bled for us. He took everything upon Himself.

Took the very wrath of Almighty God upon Himself so that you and I would never know what the wrath of God would feel like. Hallelujah!

[31 : 33] And God did that through Jesus Christ. And it wasn't a plan B. And it wasn't a plan C. It was that way from the very get-go.

That way from the very get-go. Genesis 3, verse 15. It is promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. That's the first promise of a Messiah that we have in the Scripture.

In Genesis 3! In Genesis 12, God promised Abraham that from His seed all the nations of the world would be blessed. All the nations of the world would be blessed.

It was not a plan B. The gospel of Jesus Christ was a plan that God had from the very get-go before the foundation of the world was ever laid.

You can read over in the book of Revelation, John the Revelator said that He saw Jesus Christ as a Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. It was a plan that has been in place before you and I were ever dreamed of by our parents.

[32 : 36] Before the world was ever formed, God had this plan. And folks, that is the majesty. And that is the sovereignty. And that is the wisdom. And that is the power.

And that is the love. And the mercy. And the graciousness. The graciousness. And the patience. And the long-suffering of the God which we preach. To know that man would rebel against Him. And still make a plan to redeem Him. That is graciousness. And that is grace. Period. It's not of works lest any man should boast.

You and I could not do enough to merit the grace of God in our lives. Not now. Not ever. Not anything we have done could do or ever will be able to do.

But God in His goodness made a way in Jesus Christ that you and I could be saved. Are you like this widow woman? Are you in despair?

[33 : 35] Are you desperate? Is there nothing that you see that you can do? Folks, I know a man that can. Jesus Christ can. He can do what we cannot.

He came and died to do what we could not. Man tried for centuries for centuries to reach God and to get in right standing with God.

But they failed. And they fail even nowadays. But Christ has come to reconcile us back to our Maker. That we could have a right relationship with God.

And folks, that's what God wants with His creation. He wants to commune with His creation. He came down and walked through the garden with Adam and Eve. He wants to commune with us. And that's amazing in itself. The very one that created the universe. The very one that holds the sun and the moon and the stars in His hand. And He knows every one of the stars by name!

[34 : 35] Amen! He wants to commune with me. And He wants to have a relationship with me. And He wants to do the same with you. God bless you all. That's the message for this evening.

I appreciate y'all's attention. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.