

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles to 2 Kings 4

We are continuing our study through 2 Kings – and we find ourselves going through the portion of scriptures that detail the ministry of the prophet Elisha.

And one of the things I have pointed out during the last few weeks is that Elisha was the prophet of grace.

His ministry, the miracles, the way he interacted with people – all point to grace and we saw this in our study last week as Elisha helped the widow – who was about to lose her two sons and her livelihood.

This morning, we are going to finish chapter 4 – and as we do, we are going to look at three other miracles that God did through the prophet Elisha.

Each one different than the other – and as we will see, each one providing a different application for the believer - but most importantly, each one of the miracles pointing to Jesus Christ.

Let's pray...

[2Ki 4:8-44 NKJV] 8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there [was] a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it

was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this [is] a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 "Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there."

As I mentioned last week, one of the things that we see in the ministry of Elisha is the contrast between the individuals that he comes in contact with.

In chapter three, Elisha stands before the king of Judah and the king of Israel when he provides them God's message of a path for deliverance.

In our study last week, the widow was anonymous – we are not given her name, we don't know where she lived – all we are told in scriptures is that she was poor and all she had was a little bit of oil.

Here in our first miracle, Elisha is going to interact with this woman from Shunem.

She is notable – meaning she was someone of great wealth and riches.

But also, she is someone of great benevolence and hospitality.

So because Elisha had this circuit, as he traveled from city to city – this woman from Shunem, asks her husband if they can set aside a room for Elisha so that he can spend the night whenever he passes by them.

During this time, people didn't stay at Holiday Inn when they traveled; it was customary to depend on people asking them to stay in their home.

11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there.

So the room was built and Elisha accepts the invitation.

12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What [can I] do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?' " She answered, "I dwell among my own people."

I first had you make a note of Gehazi his servant.

Because this is the first time we meet him in our study.

Church, I have often pointed out that serving one another is at the heart of the ministry.

That is what ministry is all about.

We don't serve because we want to get recognized by others or because we want the notoriety – we serve because that is what Jesus taught us during His ministry.

[Mar 10:43-45 NKJV] 43 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 "And whoever of you

desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 **"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

Gehazi – as we will see in the coming weeks – is an example of an individual who is in the ministry for the wrong reasons.

So, Elisha wants to recompense the Shunemite woman for her hospitality – but she responds by stating that she is good with the life that she has.

In other words, she was content.

14 So he said, "What then [is] to be done for her?" And Gehazi answered, "Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old." 15 So he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 Then he said, "About this time next year you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!"

Even though the Shunemite woman stated that she was content, Gehazi reveals to Elisha that she has no son and her husband is old.

Now, this doesn't necessarily mean that she was barren –

I tend to believe, based on her reaction that she might have had children(s) in the past that were born with a congenital disorder – and as a result of the disorder, they died when they were young.

That is why when Elisha tells her that she will have a son by this time next year –

Her reaction is one of not wanting a false hope – she doesn't want to go through the disappointment and the heartache over again.

In her eyes, she believes that it is not God's will for her to have a healthy son.

17 But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.

So just like Elisha said, one year later – the Shunemite woman had a son.

18 And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. 19 And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and [then] died.

I want you to look at the father's reaction – this is why I believe that there must have been a congenital disorder with the children.

His reaction to the child saying, "my head, my head" is a passive one.

He doesn't even tell the servant to tell the mother the symptoms of the child.

He just says – carry him to his mother.

Why?

Because he knows what's going to happen – because he has seen this before.

Here we go again.

We don't know how old the son was when he died – but he must have not been that old as he sat on his mom's knees.

21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut [the door] upon him, and went out. 22 Then she called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back." 23 So he said, "Why are you going to him today? [It is] neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "[It is] well."

The Shunemite woman takes the body of her dead son – and instead of preparing his burial, she prepared him for the prophet Elisha to restore his life.

Hebrews 11:35 tells us that by faith, certain women in the Old Testament saw their dead raised again to life.

The Shunemite woman is one of those women.

The Sabbath and the New Moon were considered Jewish religious days when you might expect someone to talk to a prophet – So she goes after Elisha and the husband has no idea of why she is going – he's given up.

It is like the husband telling his wife – “Why are you going to church – it is not Easter or Christmas?”

And instead of sitting down and explaining it to him – she simply tells him – “It is well”

24 Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25 And so she departed, and

went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, the Shunammite woman!

26 "Please run now to meet her, and say to her, '[Is it] well with you? [Is it] well with your husband? [Is it] well with the child?' " And she answered, "[It is] well."

Why does the Shunnamite woman say to Gehazi, “It is well” when things were not???

And the reason is because she knows that time is ticking away and the only person she wants to talk to is the only person that will be able to save her son.

27 Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone; for her soul [is] in deep distress, and the LORD has hidden [it] from me, and has not told me."

Elisha is a man who has an incredible gift of the word of knowledge.

God is constantly showing all kinds of things to him.

Ultimately, God is the one who knows everything.

He's the one who decides what we should know and what we shouldn't know.

And sometimes God just wants you and I to talk to the person!

Sometimes ministry is much better when you sit down and allow the other person to pour out their heart.

And instead of saying anything – all we do is listen.

28 So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"

29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child."

Notice that the Shunemmite woman doesn't provide the details of what happened to her son.

But Elisha was able to discern and sends out Gehazi to return to Shunem and lay Elisha's staff on the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said, "[As] the LORD lives, and [as] your soul lives, I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her.

The Shunemmite woman is not satisfied that Gehazi has gone – she wants Elisha to go and she is not leaving until he goes.

Listen carefully church,

The way that the Shunammite woman looked toward Elisha during desperate times, the way she sought Elisha as soon as her son died, the way she clung to his feet because she understood Elisha was God's ambassador.

In the same way, we must not take our eyes off of Jesus and seek Him constantly and cling to Him and not let go.

31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but [there was] neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."

Gehazi follows the instructions of Elisha but nothing happened – the son is still dead.

32 When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed.

33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the

LORD.

Turn with me to 1 Kings 17

Because here we have an account of the other individual in the Old Testament that God gave the power to bring someone back to life.

And this was the one who Elisha served – Elijah.

[1Ki 17:19-23 NKJV] 19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. 20 **Then he cried out to the LORD** and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" 21 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, **I pray**, let this child's soul come back to him." 22 Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. 23 And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "**See, your son lives!**"

So, one of the things that we see Elisha doing here with the Shunamite woman's son is that he is following the patten of Elijah.

And we see many similarities between what we just read in 1 Kings 17 and what Elisha does here.

But the first thing that they do is – pray.

34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on

him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Pick up your son." 37 So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.

I want you to notice how much Elijah and Elisha labored as they brought these two sons back to life.

The stretching themselves upon the child – Elijah did it three times, Elisha did it twice.

The walking back and forth by Elisha.

The fervent prayers by both of them.

The two most powerful prophets in the Old Testament – labored at it.

But when Jesus revives Jairus' daughter (Mark 5) and Lazarus (John 11) – He did with a command.

To the little girl – Jesus says, "get up" and to Lazarus, He says "Lazarus, come forth"

The reason – is that Jesus is more than a great prophet – He is Messiah.

He is the Lord of life.

[Rom 14:8-9 NKJV] 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end

Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Now, let's take a look at the last two miracles -

38 And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and [there was] a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets [were] sitting before him; and he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." 39 So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced [them] into the pot of stew, though they did not know [what they were]. 40 Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, "Man of God, [there is] death in the pot!" And they could not eat [it]. 41 So he said, "Then bring some flour." And he put [it] into the pot, and said, "Serve [it] to the people, that they may eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

At first glance it would appear that the lesson here is – Stay away from wild gourd soup. That is not the case.

The key is that there was famine in the land – this will be the key to the last miracle as well.

Elisha commands his servants to feed the sons of the prophets and they proceed to make a stew that was inedible.

Elisha adds flour to the pot – and the stew becomes edible.

Here is the lesson –

Our lives are like that “poison pot”, and we need to add “flour” (the Word of God) into our lives in order to bring healing to that poison pot.

Notice that Elisha didn’t tell the guys to simply remove the wild gourds from the stew – because they were already cut up and the poison had already permeated the soup.

The only solution was to ask God for help.

To rely on His grace and His transformative power to turn the poison into something would bless others.

42 Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, "Give [it] to the people, that they may eat." 43 But his servant said, "What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?" He said again, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: They shall eat and have [some] left over." 44 So he set [it] before them; and they ate and had [some] left over, according to the word of the LORD.

Once again, the key here is that there was still famine in the land.

Food was scarce yet, this individual brings forth his firstfruits.

He could have easily made a killing in selling it –

But instead, he demonstrates his obedience to the Law.

[Lev 23:10 NKJV] 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

So this man brings this bread and Elisha then commands Gehazi to feed the men there with this bread.

Gehazi does the calculation and he figures that 20 loaves are not enough for 100 men.

And Elisha tells him, it will be enough because the Lord said not only will it be enough, there will some left over –

So once again we see a preview of a greater Prophet and a mightier miracle that takes place in the gospel of John 6 – when Jesus feeds the 5000 men with only 5 loaves and two fish.

The lesson here is that God is generous to the generous.

Both the man and Elisha were being generous and giving to the people.

And in response, God let there even be leftovers!

(2 Co 9:6–8 NKJV) —6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each

one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

This is another lesson for us to offer what we have to God, even when it doesn't seem like much.

He takes the little we have, and turns it into incredible blessing

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

