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Elisha's Predecessor

I. Elijah the Prophet thought he was all alone

A. Ahab was a wicked king

1 Kings 16:30-33 And Ahab the son of Omri did **evil** in the sight of the LORD **above all that were before him**. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to **wife Jezebel** the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and **served Baal**, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did **more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel** that were before him.

B. Elijah had confronted Ahab about his wickedness with the power of God to withhold the rain and the dew – it didn't rain for over 3 years

1 Kings 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, **there shall not be dew nor rain these years**, but according to my word.

C. Obadiah was the governor of Ahab's house but feared the Lord and had hidden 100 prophets

1 Kings 18:3-5 And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah **feared the LORD greatly**: For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and **hid** them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

1. Obadiah met Elijah on his journey and Elijah wants him to speak to Ahab and tell him that Elijah wants to see him
2. Obadiah is fearful for his own life thinking that Ahab will find out about the hidden prophets and the fact that he did not detain Elijah
3. Elijah promises him that he will not run, but will that day stand before Ahab

D. Elijah stands before Ahab

1 Kings 18:17-19 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have **forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim**. Now therefore send, and **gather** to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the **prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty**, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

E. Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:20-22 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between **two opinions**? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, **I, even I only**, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

1. The famine had affected the land and sin was the cause
2. Elijah confronts these prophets between their allegiance to the one true God or Baal
3. Elijah thinks he is the only one serving the Lord – at least he thinks he is the only one actively serving the Lord as the others are in hiding

F. The fire of the Lord fell

1 Kings 18:36-40 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And **when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God**; the LORD, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

- G.** Ahab tells Jezebel all that Elijah has done and she threatens to kill him by tomorrow

1 Kings 19:1-3 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by **tomorrow** about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

- H.** Elijah flees for his life and goes into hiding

1 Kings 19:9-10 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and **I, even I only, am left**; and they seek my life, to take it away.

- I.** Elijah keeps telling the Lord he is the only one

1 Kings 19:14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and **I, even I only, am left**; and they seek my life, to take it away.

- J.** God gave Elijah more work to do

1 Kings 19:15-18 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint **Hazael** to be king over Syria: And **Jehu** the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and **Elisha** the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

- 1.** Hazael would be anointed the king of Syria
- 2.** Jehu would be anointed as king of Israel (he would reign after Ahab's two sons)
- 3.** Elisha would be anointed as a prophet
- 4.** There were 7,000 righteous in Israel

Application

- Elijah wasn't truly alone – even though it seemed like that to him – he lived in a wicked culture who did not worship God and celebrated sin
- Elijah had more work to do
- Elijah needed a friend and companion – he had been discouraged
- Elijah needed the hope of a successor – God had someone in place
- Elijah needed to invest in Elisha
- Elijah was part of God's bigger plan – God's work continues beyond one individual

Elisha's Calling

I. Elisha was called of God through the prophet Elijah

1 Kings 19:15-18 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint **Hazael** to be king over Syria: And **Jehu** the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and **Elisha** the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

- A.** Anointed – to pour oil upon someone or something as a sign of consecration and dedication to the Lord – Priests (Aaron) and Kings (David) were often anointed – this is the only instance of a prophet being anointed but it doesn't specifically mention oil being used
- B.** Prophet – someone who was given special illumination and/or power from God to share with others – a spokesperson for God
- C.** Elijah had thought he was the only prophet of God – God would send someone to help him and be his replacement

II. Elijah cast his mantle upon Elisha

1 Kings 19:19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

- A.** Elisha was plowing the fields with 12 yoke of oxen
- B.** Elijah cast his mantle (outer garment) upon him – this was a unique garment that was peculiar to the prophet

2 Kings 1:7-8 And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.
- C.** This symbolic act revealed that Elijah was calling Elisha to join him in his work as a prophet – the mantle was symbolic of the power of the Holy Spirit being upon the prophet

III. Elisha left all to follow Elijah

1 Kings 19:20-21 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

- A. Elisha left his oxen and ran after Elijah and requested time to say goodbye to his parents – it was honorable to at least tell them why he was leaving
 - B. Elijah answers him, what have I done to thee? – This seems to indicate that this was a call of God and not Elijah
 - C. Elisha took the oxen and killed them and shared the meat with the people – he burned the yokes and tackle
 - D. His actions demonstrated that he was willing to sacrifice his livelihood – likely very profitable – and follow Elijah without any thought of returning
- Luke 9:61-62** And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

IV. Elisha committed to following Elijah

- A. Elijah asked Elisha to stay in Gilgal but he would not leave him and went to Bethel – it wasn't a secret that Elijah would be taken to heaven and Elisha wanted to stay close to him as long as possible
- 2 Kings 2:1-2** And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, **I will not leave thee**. So they went down to Bethel.
- B. The sons of the prophets at **Bethel** knew that Elijah would soon be gone
- 2 Kings 2:3** And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, **Yea, I know it;** hold ye your peace.

- C. Elijah asked Elisha to stay at Bethel while he went to Jericho, but Elisha would not leave him

2 Kings 2:4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, **I will not leave thee**. So they came to Jericho.

- D. The sons of the prophets at **Jericho** also knew Elijah would be taken up

2 Kings 2:5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, **Yea, I know it;** hold ye your peace.

- E. Elijah asked Elisha to stay at Jericho as he was going to Jordan – but again, Elisha refused to leave him

2 Kings 2:6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, **I will not leave thee**. And they two went on.

V. Elijah uses the mantle to cross the Jordan River

2 Kings 2:7-8 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

- A. Fifty men of the sons of the prophets watched from afar
- B. The mantle was symbolic of the power of God and was used here to divide the waters of Jordan – just as Moses and Joshua had crossed the Jordan – Elijah and Elisha crossed on dry ground

Application

- The call to ministry is a call from God – God gives you those desires and equips you for His work
 - Elijah wasn't calling Elisha – God was calling Him and Elisha needed to recognize that call
 - Full time ministry isn't a career choice
- God called him to something greater – but God noticed his faithfulness in the ordinary
 - God called Moses while he was tending Jethro's flocks. He called David while he was tending his father's sheep. He called Nehemiah, who had a hugely important job as cupbearer to the king. He called Peter when he

was a fisherman and Matthew when he was a tax collector. He called Elisha when he was plowing the field.

- **Luke 16:10** He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.
- **1 Corinthians 4:2** Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
- Following Elijah and following God requires commitment – for Elisha this meant leaving home, leaving his livelihood, putting his life in danger etc.
 - Abraham left his home to be led of the Lord
 - The love for the Lord must be greater than the love for family
 - **Luke 14:26-27** If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.
 - **2 Timothy 3:10-12** But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
- Elisha needed to learn from Elijah, he wasn't ready at that time, but God was preparing him for what would be ahead – Elisha didn't want to leave Elijah and miss a thing
 - The call to learn of others, to teach others – reproduction
 - **2 Timothy 2:2** And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
 - **Proverbs 13:20** He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.
- Following Elijah meant sacrificing – he gave up his livelihood
 - The blessings of following God may come in the world to come
 - **Mark 10:28-31** Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with

persecutions; and in the **world to come** eternal life. But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

- **John 6:66-68** From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
- Elisha needed to become a great assistant before he could become a great prophet
 - He poured water on the hands of Elijah – a humble servant doing practical things
 - **2 Kings 3:11** But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.
 - **Matthew 23:11** But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.
 - **Mark 10:43-45** But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Elisha Picks up the Mantle

I. Elisha and Elijah cross the Jordan

2 Kings 2:6-8 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, **I will not leave thee. And they two went on.** And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

- A.** Elijah and Elisha had visited several places: Gilgal is where they Isarelites first camped after crossing the Jordan; Bethel is where Abraham and Jacob worshiped God; Jericho is where Isarel got their first victory in Canaan; 15 miles west of Jericho was the Jordan River and possibly the 12 stone memorial was there
- B.** 50 men of the sons of the prophet watched from afar
- C.** Elijah took his mantle and divided the water of the Jordan River and they crossed over on dry ground

II. Elijah's Question for Elisha

2 Kings 2:9-10 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

- A.** Do you have one final request before I am taken away?
- B.** A double portion of thy spirit be upon me – the idea seems to be that he was asking for the double portion that would go to the firstborn son
- C.** The answer is up to God, but if you see me depart, then it will be so – Elisha had already committed to staying close to Elijah – if you stay with me till the end, then this would come to pass

III. Elisha taken up

2 Kings 2:11-12 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw

it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

- A. They went on and talked – and then the conversation was over
- B. A chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared
- C. Elijah was carried away in a whirlwind to heaven
- D. Elisha saw it – he cried out, “my father”
- E. He rent his own clothes as an expression of mourning his loss

IV. Elijah’s Mantle

2 Kings 2:13-14 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

- A. The mantle was symbolic of the power of the Holy Spirit upon the prophet
- B. Elisha picked up the mantle and struck the water just as he had seen Elijah part the waters of Jordan and crossed over
- C. The power of God was now upon Elisha – Elisha recognized that the power wasn’t in Elijah, but in Elijah’s God

V. The View from Across the Jordan

2 Kings 2:15-18 And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

- A. The 50 men watched from afar as Elisha parted the water and came across by himself
- B. It appears that they had seen the chariot as they were concerned about the whereabouts of Elijah

- C. They wanted to send out a search party in case Elijah was stranded somewhere – Elisha disagreed with them
- D. They persisted about the search party and finally Elisha let them search for Elijah
- E. After three days they came back and couldn't find him – Elisha reminded them that he had told them not to go, as they would not find him

Application

- Elijah had the confidence that Elisha would continue on as a prophet of God even when he was gone – he saw his faithfulness and commitment
- Elisha wanted to spend as much time with Elijah as possible – he valued every conversation and moment that he had with him to learn and grow
- They experienced a miracle of God together – imagine the moment that they saw the waters open up and the conversation about how Joshua had seen this very miracle himself
- Elisha repeated the miracle that he had seen Elijah do – sometimes you don't have to come up with anything new but just repeat what you have seen
- The importance of asking good questions and giving good answers – he could have requested anything – he wanted to be used of God just as Elijah was being used
- Elijah said this was a hard request – a request that could only be answered by God – we are reminded that God can fulfill those hard things that we request
- It would seem that Elijah was taken away suddenly – it reminds us to cherish every moment in life with our loved ones
- Elisha mourned the loss of his mentor – surely this was hard – the reality hits you that your loved one is gone and you are now on your own without them – he strengthens himself in the reminder that God has not left him
- Elisha picked up the mantle of Elijah – he was no longer the servant of Elijah, God had prepared him for this moment – even if he didn't feel prepared, God was ready to use him – God's work wasn't finished – He would continue his work through the life of Elisha
- The men saw Elisha cross the river and recognized the power of God on his life – this recognition from God would establish him as being a prophet in his own right
- Those watching from afar don't always have the same perspective – they thought maybe Elijah's body was stranded somewhere

- Elisha was patient with their insistence, they were hesitant to believe Elisha, but they would learn themselves in time – Elisha waited for them for three days
- Elisha was spiritually hungry for God to use him – he couldn't be an Elijah, but he could be another servant of the Lord

Elisha Heals the Waters of Jericho

I. Elisha had replaced Elijah

2 Kings 2:15 And when the sons of the prophets which *were* to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

- A.** Elisha had crossed the river with Elijah (first miracle)
- B.** Elijah was taken up by the Lord
- C.** Elisha picked up the mantle of Elijah and crossed over the Jordan
- D.** 50 sons of the prophet watched from afar as he came back across the Jordan
- E.** They wanted to search for Elijah's body – Elisha told them they would not find him, but he let them search anyway for three days – and they couldn't find him or his body
- F.** The mantle was symbolic of the power of the Holy Spirit upon the prophet – and now the spirit of God was upon Elisha

II. The waters of Jericho are bad

2 Kings 2:19-22 And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.

- A.** There was a group of men part of the sons of the prophets in Jericho
2 Kings 2:5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.
- B.** The men came to Elisha and described the situation of the city as pleasant – from a distance Elisha would think that everything was fine
- C.** What Elisha couldn't see was that the water was bad and the ground was barren

III. Defeat of Jericho

- A.** Jericho was the first city that the Israelites conquered after they crossed the Jordan River in the days of Joshua
- B.** For six days, they marched around the city walls blowing their trumpets
- C.** On the seventh day, they marched around the walls seven times blowing the trumpets and then the people shouted and the walls came down

- D.** All the spoils of the city were to be given to the Lord – Achan was caught in his sin trying to keep some of the spoils
- E.** They burned the city with fire
Joshua 6:24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.
- F.** Rahab and her family were spared from the destruction because she hid the spies
- G.** The city was cursed and not to be rebuilt – it seems the prediction given was that the man who rebuilt the foundation of the city would have great difficulty in accomplishing this task – this would take years starting with the firstborn and not finishing until the time of his youngest son – others suggest that those children would die during the time of the rebuilding of the city
Joshua 6:26 And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it.
1 Kings 16:34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.
- H.** The city was rebuilt possibly 300-500 years after its destruction – and Elisha was present less than 20 years after it was rebuilt – it is possible that the water had always been bad

IV. The waters healed

- 2 Kings 2:20-22** And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.
- A.** Elisha asked for a new cruse or container – a new container symbolized purity of the vessel
 - B.** They put salt in there and dumped the salt into the spring of waters – salt was symbolic of purity and healing

C. The Lord healed the waters that day from death and a barren land
(second miracle)

Application

- Just because something looks good on the outside doesn't mean that there are some serious issues hidden below the surface
- The source of health and life was the water – the city was rebuilt, but they couldn't drink the water and grow their crops – without Jesus in our lives we are missing the source of spiritual life
- In order to solve problems, you can't just treat the symptoms but get to the source

The Bald Prophet Mocked

2 Kings 2:23-25 And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

I. Mocking at Bethel

- A.** These little children coming to mock the prophet were most likely young men – probably mocking him not just for his lack of hair but his position as a prophet of God – this wasn't just teasing him about not having any hair
- B.** Bethel was known for idolatry and spiritual rebellion
1 Kings 12:28-30 Whereupon the king [Jeroboam] took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

II. Elisha cursed them in the name of the Lord

- A.** Two female bears came out of the woods and tore them up – 42 children in all – the text doesn't say they all died, but they were seriously injured for sure and maybe some of them died
- B.** This wasn't Elisha taking vengeance, but the judgment of God
- C.** A great loss that day for the parents of these young people who obviously had not taught their children to honor the Lord and respect His prophets

Application

- Many today tend to use humor or teasing to reveal their rebellion against God and His authority – those who are Christians and stand for the truth are mocked – those who believe the Bible are ridiculed for their beliefs
 - Jokes about old fashioned values in regards to marriage and purity
 - Sarcasm about sin and having a party in hell

- Making jokes about the Bible
- Using Jesus name as a swear word
- Stereotyping Christians as dumb and gullible
- Claiming the Bible is out of date
- Laughing about drunkenness, anger stealing etc
- Laughing about those who attend church
- Claiming parents are too strict
- These young people revealed the wicked and sinful culture of their time – their parents failed to worship God and thus the next generation followed in their footsteps
- 42 young people was not a small group of teasing boys – this was a large group of rebellious young men
- God is a just God and punishes sin – this doesn't mean that God is never merciful

Elisha Commands them to Dig Ditches

Introduction

- Three Different Kings
- Digging Ditches

I. The King of Israel – Jehoram

2 Kings 3:1-3 Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

A. Jehoram is the King of Israel – he was the son of Ahab and Jezebel and a wicked king, but not as evil as his father and mother

B. We often try to justify our sins as not as bad as someone else's, but nonetheless, it is still sin

C. The image of Baal was removed but they returned to the worship of Jeroboam's golden calves

1 Kings 12:28-30 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

D. Jehoshaphat was the King of Judah in the south – he was a good King (he is actually a brother in law to King Jehoram of Israel)

II. The Sheep Tax from Moab

2 Kings 3:4-5 And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

A. Mesha was the King of Moab and they were delivering 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams to the Israelites as a tribute or tax

B. When Ahab died, Moab desired to get out of this taxation and rebelled

III. The Response to the Rebellion

2 Kings 3:6-7 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.

- A.** King Jehoram was displeased with the Moabites
 - B.** He asked King Jehoshaphat to join with him in going to battle against Moab – to which they agreed
 - C.** Jehoshaphat had made peace with the King of Israel
- 1 Kings 22:44** And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

IV. The Plan of Attack

2 Kings 3:8-10 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom. So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them. And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

- A.** The King of Judah suggested that they attack Moab from the south through the wilderness of Edom
- B.** It would seem that the King of Edom joined them as their armies
- C.** After seven days of the journey they found themselves with no water and became desperate
- D.** We often find ourselves running to God during an emergency – but is that the only time we seek God?
- E.** The King of Israel was displeased with this plan and thought that God would deliver all three of these Kings into the hand of Moab

V. Is There a Prophet of God?

2 Kings 3:11-14 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy

mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

- A.** They were in a crisis – we should seek the help of the Lord
- B.** Elisha could be called – he was the one who poured water on the hands of Elijah – the word of the Lord is with him
- C.** At first Elijah wanted nothing to do with them – especially the wicked King of Israel
- D.** Because good king Jehoshaphat was present, he agreed to listen to them
- E.** God chose to honor their request because of a good king – God may bless others because of our faithfulness to Him

VI. Elisha's Solution

2 Kings 3:15-19 But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts. And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.

- A.** Elisha was no doubt spiritually minded after being called before these kings, he asked for a musician to come and play some music and soon his mind was ready to receive the message from the Lord
- B.** There seems to be a connection between music and a prepared heart to hear from God
- C.** He told the kings to dig ditches in the valley that could hold water – God would give them water but they wouldn't see wind or rain
- D.** God would give them water, but He would also deliver the Moabites into their hands – their land and cities would be destroyed

VII. Water and Victory

2 Kings 3:20-25 And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water. And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border. And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood: And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country. And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kirharaseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.

- A.** God filled the ditches with water – probably a heavy storm in the mountains that sent a flooding of water down into the valley
- B.** What if they had not dug the ditches? There was work to do in order to receive God's blessings
- C.** God chooses to answer prayers many times in a way that an cannot take credit for
- D.** The Moabites readied themselves for battle in knowing that they were about to be attacked
- E.** When the sun shown upon the water, the Moabites saw the reflection as blood and thought that these kings had began to kill each other
- F.** The Moabites thought they would just go in and take all of the valuables from a weakened army, but instead were overtaken
- G.** It is easy to make assumptions about things without taking the time to verify the information
- H.** The land was destroyed – cities beaten down, stones left in the fields, trees taken down etc.

VIII. Defeat and Death

2 Kings 3:26-27 And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not. Then he took his

eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

- A.** The King of Moab was defeated
- B.** As a last-ditch desperate effort, he sacrificed his eldest son who would have been the next king to his gods, hoping to get supernatural help to win this battle
- C.** Some believe that he was trying to imitate Abraham in being willing to sacrifice his own son to please his God
- D.** The king hoped to manipulate his god for a victory, while Abraham willingly offered his son out of obedience
- E.** Israel returned to their own land – there was great indignation – this anger came from Israel witnessing this human sacrifice or even the Moabites watching their next king die

Elisha and the Pot of Oil

I. The Preacher's Wife

- A. One of the sons of the prophets had died and the creditors were coming to take his two sons as bondmen to pay the debts

2 Kings 4:1 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 is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

- 1. One of the men of the school of the prophets had died

- a) Bethel

2 Kings 2:3 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

- b) Jericho

2 Kings 2:5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

- c) Gilgal

2 Kings 4:38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and *there was* a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets *were* sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

- 2. These men had wives and children – they were not monks

- 3. This man had a testimony that he feared the Lord

- 4. This widow was having a crisis – she was desperate

- a) Loss of a husband

- b) Loss of a father

- c) Loss of income

- d) Debts that are unpaid

- e) Two sons who would be taken as servants to pay off the debt

- B. Elisha came and offered his assistance – he provided oil for her to sell

2 Kings 4:2-7 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 any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee

vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, 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 into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. 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. 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.

1. Elisha came and offered his help – but what could he do?
2. Many times there is a financial need and we hope God will just send us money – many times He sends us opportunities to make money – we have to get to work
3. What did she have? Nothing – well, except a small pot of oil
4. Elisha started out with what she had – only one small vessel of oil
5. God uses what we have in our hand – the lad had a lunch and Jesus multiplied it over and over
Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.
6. Elisha told her to borrow more vessels and pots – as many as she could – this would take faith on her part as she had no idea what they would be used for and couldn't give an answer to her neighbors about why she needed them
7. God asks us to do things that don't seem logical to the human mind
8. The number of vessels she collected was evidence of the amount of her faith
9. She was to close her doors and pour out her oil into those empty vessels – she kept pouring and it didn't run out – they filled every vessel and needed more
10. She told Elisha she now had plenty of oil – he told her to sell the oil to pay her debts and provide for her and her sons
11. She provided oil to those who needed it and in turn they gave her money which she needed
12. God can make a little go a long way

- 13.** This is a picture of the great debt that we owe because of our sins – through faith in Jesus Christ our sins have been paid for by His death on the cross

Application

- God hears the cries of the widows and orphans – the poor and the needy
Psalms 34:17-18 *The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*
- Don't be afraid to ask when you need help – her asking the prophet revealed that she was desperate, but also that she also trusted in the Lord and that God could help her
Psalms 37:25-26 *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.*
- Obey even when you don't understand why
Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*
- Increase your faith – how many pots can you gather?
2 Corinthians 9:6 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*
- Faith requires action – start pouring out – God will keep filling you up
Malachi 3:10 *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*
- This was a quiet working of the Lord for this family – God didn't do this for everyone who was poor and needy
- She needed help for her debts – God gave her money for her debts and money to live on as well
Ephesians 3:20-21 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*
- God's riches are unlimited
Philippians 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Elisha and the Prophet's Chamber

I. Generous Hospitality

2 Kings 4:8-10 And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

- A.** Elisha would travel often – needing rest, food and lodging
- B.** Great woman – remarkable, outstanding, exceptional
- C.** She often provided food for him during his travels
- D.** She recognizes that he is a man of God
- E.** She suggests to her husband that they could do more than just a meal, they should make a room for him to stay – a prophet's chamber – a room, a bed, a table, a light, a seat
- F.** How might we show hospitality to others who serve the Lord – meals, lodging etc. – it doesn't have to be much – you don't have to seek reward or recognition

II. God-Given Gift of a Son

2 Kings 4:11-17 And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

- A.** Elisha wanted to return some kindness to his special woman

- B.** Gehazi is the servant of Elisha and would travel with him and care for him
- C.** Elisha could give her some public recognition for her kindness to him – the suggestion is that he could speak to the king and get them a better place to live – she is content to live where she is
- D.** Elisha asks his servant for ideas – he says she would love to have a child but her husband is old
- E.** She didn't ask for a son, but God knew what her desire was – God answered her prayer that she had given up on
- F.** Her response to Elisha reveals that she has been told many times that someday she would have a child and she has been relatedly disappointed – don't lie to me she says – don't let me get my hopes up
- G.** God is the giver of life and God gave her something that she thought she would never have

III. Grief that is Overwhelming

2 Kings 4:18-21 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.

- A.** This young boy grew up and would have known Elisha very well
- B.** This was her miracle child – the one she never thought she would be able to have
- C.** This sudden sickness came upon him without notice – we all face difficult times, losses and heartbreak
- D.** This child died in her arms after just a few hours
- E.** She knew that this child was a miracle of God and she knew that God could raise him up again – that would seem impossible – but she knew that her just having this child was impossible without God
- F.** She surely was sad and heartbroken, but she didn't panic – she sought the man of God
- G.** Her faith in God moved her to find Elisha – God wasn't going to give me a child and then take him away

IV. A Great Hope

2 Kings 4:22-30 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, **It shall be well**. Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, **It is well**. And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

- A.** She insisted that she go to Elisha – he husband didn't understand – she may not have even told him the child died
- B.** She told her husband all would be well – trusting in God that all can be well with your soul even when all is not well in this world
- C.** She told the driver she was in a hurry – move it
- D.** Elisha saw her coming but sent out the servant – is everything ok with you, your husband and your child? He obviously observed that she was coming in a hurry
- E.** She didn't want to speak to the servant – she came and grabbed the feet of Elisha
- F.** Elisha knew she was upset but still didn't know what had happened
- G.** She reminded Elisha of his words – don't like to me about God giving me a son
- H.** Elisha sent Gehazi to lay his staff on the face of the child
 - I.** This woman wasn't leaving without Elisha
 - J.** We must not give up praying until God gives us an answer

V. A Glorious Healing

2 Kings 4:31-37 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

- A.** Gehazi arrived first – but the child was dead
- B.** Elisha went into the room and prayed by himself
- C.** He lay on top of the child and warmed his body
- D.** He continued pacing throughout the house
- E.** He stretched himself over the child again and he sneezed seven times and came back to life
- F.** Elisha didn't have power to bring this child back – he too needed faith that God was powerful enough to raise the dead
- G.** There are only three people who were raised from the dead as recorded in the Old Testament – Elija and Elisha each raised a child and one man was raised after touching Elisha's bones in the cemetery

Similar story to Elijah

1 Kings 17:12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 Kings 17:17-24 And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out

of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and **laid him upon his own bed**. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he **stretched himself upon the child** three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.

Elisha Provides Food during the Famine

I. Famine in the Land

2 Kings 4:38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land

- A.** Dearth – famine and hunger
- B.** We know little today here in the United States about a drought, famine or being hungry
- C.** This was a serious situation where they relied on each other to grow food and crops for their food supplies
- D.** The famine in Egypt lasted 7 years – and people came from all over to find food out of desperation
- E.** Naomi and her family left Bethlehem because of a famine

Ruth 1:1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

- F.** There was a famine the days of Elijah and Ahab that lasted for 3 years – no rain

1 Kings 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

- G.** There was a famine in the days of Elisha for 7 years

2 Kings 8:1 Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

- H.** God can bring seasons of famine to increase our faith and trust in Him
- I.** God still provides during times of famine – we may have to adjust to the quantity and quality of our food
- J.** During times of famine, we must be more generous and caring for those without

II. Sons of the Prophets

2 Kings 4:38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him

- A. The sons of the prophets were a group of men who were taught by the prophet of God – not actual sons but spiritual sons who desired to know God and hear from Him
- B. These groups were a place of learning, training, teaching, and fellowship
- C. There were several groups of men in Elisha's day

- 1. Bethel

2 Kings 2:3 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

- 2. Jericho (the place where Elisha healed the bitter waters)

2 Kings 2:5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

- 3. Gilgal

2 Kings 4:38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

- D. The Men of the School of Prophets

- 1. They had a desire to learn spiritual things
 - 2. They had placed themselves under a good teacher
 - 3. They surrounded themselves with men of good influence
 - 4. They were there to help each other

III. Food in the time of Famine

2 Kings 4:38-41 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they

cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.

- A. Elisha suggested they prepare some food for the group
- B. The great pot – let's heat some water and see what we can flavor it with
- C. Seethe – boil
- D. Pottage – soup
- E. Add some herbs and wild gourds (vegetables with seeds)
- F. No one knew that the soup was poisonous until after it was prepared and they began to eat it
- G. How frustrating to be hungry, and then wait for dinner to be ready, and then not being able to eat it
- H. They cried out to Elisha, the man of God – what do we do?
 - I. Elisha commanded them to bring some flour and put it in the pot
 - J. Their soup became gravy and God removed the harm from their meal
- K. There wasn't anything done here that was intentional – imagine how those gathering the herbs must have felt – we should learn to give people grace when accidents happen

IV. Bread for Everyone

2 Kings 4:42-44 And there came a man from Baalshalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servitor said, What, should I set this before an **hundred** men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.

- A. A man came and brought a firstfruit offering to the man of God of 20 loaves of barley and ears of corn
- B. This must have been quite the treat for this group during the time of famine
- C. This wasn't a great amount of food and it wasn't enough to feed 100 men
- D. The servants were hesitant to pass out the food as they knew there wouldn't be enough for everyone – Elisha insisted that they hand out the food

- E. They passed out the food and there was more than enough for everyone plus food that was leftover
- F. God can take a little and multiply it

V. Types

A. A type is a person, event, or symbol in the Old Testament that points to and foreshadows a future reality in Christ

B. Elijah was a type of John the Baptist

1. Preparing the way for Jesus

Matthew 3:1-4 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

2. Bold and confrontational

Matthew 3:7-8 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

3. Pointed to Jesus

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

C. Elisha was a type of Jesus

1. Began his ministry at the Jordan

2. Raising the dead

3. Feeding the multitude

4. Healing the leper

5. Demonstrating compassion and kindness

6. Power in the grave

Elisha and Naaman

I. Naaman's Prestige

2 Kings 5:1 Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was a leper.*

- A.** Captain of the army of the King of Syria
- B.** Great – important – probably second in command
- C.** Honourable man – great recognition for giving Syria victory in battle
- D.** Mighty – very strong and powerful, a champion

II. Naaman's Problem

2 Kings 5:1 Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was a leper.*

- A.** He was a leper – he had some kind of skin disease (there is much discussion and speculation about how to describe Biblical leprosy)
- B.** Leprosy was not necessarily highly contagious – it is doubtful that you could contract leprosy just by being near someone
- C.** Two chapters in Leviticus (13-14) discuss leprosy, and how it was determined to be leprosy as well as declaring someone unclean or clean
- D.** Leprosy had a social weight that you had to bear – it could be seen as a judgment or punishment from God, the Jews were isolated who had been declared unclean by leprosy
- E.** There didn't seem to be a cure for leprosy but many believed that God could provide that healing

III. Naaman's Potential Cure

2 Kings 5:2-3 And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

- A.** A young Jewish girl had been taken captive by the Syrians and was serving Naaman's wife

- B.** She believed in God and understood that the prophet in Israel could do miraculous things including healing Naaman of this leprosy
- C.** This young girl kept her faith in God even though being captured and taken as a slave, she spoke up about her faith and offered a solution

IV. Naaman's Payoff

2 Kings 5:4-7 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, *Am I God*, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

- A.** This suggestion made its way through the family to the king of Syria who was willing to send Naaman to Israel asking to see the prophet for a cure
- B.** Naaman came to Israel with quite a payoff – silver, gold, clothing, and letters from the king
- C.** The king of Israel didn't know what to do – he had no faith in God like the little maid – he had no power to cure leprosy
- D.** He thought maybe this was a trap set by the Syrians – he rent his clothes

V. Naaman and the Prophet

2 Kings 5:8-10 And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

- A.** Elisha the prophet heard about the king and ordered the king to send Naaman to him – since the king didn't believe in God's power on the prophet, maybe Naaman could be healed so that the king would turn his heart toward God

- B.** Naaman comes to the door of the prophet expecting to be seen at once
- C.** Elisha sent a messenger to the door with a simple message – go wash 7 times in the Jordan River and you will be clean

VI. Naaman's Protest

2 Kings 5:11-12 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

- A.** Naaman became angry – could the prophet not at least come out and meet him – after all he was a prominent person in Syria sent by the king
- B.** He complained about the Jordan River – the Damascus rivers were much cleaner
- C.** He left in a rage – burning anger and indignation

VII. Naaman's Persuasion

2 Kings 5:13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done *it*? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

- A.** Could anyone talk any sense into Naaman?
- B.** His servants appealed to him and persuaded him to at least try
- C.** If he had asked you to do some great thing, then you would have done it for sure
- D.** Sometimes we don't like the simple answers to problems – just because we have a complicated problem doesn't mean the solution is also complicated

VIII. Naaman's Pessimism

2 Kings 5:14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

- A.** With hesitation and pessimism, he went down to the Jordan River
- B.** He dipped 7 times just like the prophet said – I'm sure he looked each time to see if he was clean

IX. Naaman's Praise

2 Kings 5:15-16 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant. But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

- A.** He returned to thank the man of God – he acknowledged that the God of Israel was like no other God
- B.** He wanted to reward Elisha, but Elisha refused

Application

- The Jews expected Jesus, the Great Physician to heal everyone, but Jesus reminded them that few would find a miraculous healing
Luke 4:24-27 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.
- Naaman thought he had a physical problem, but what he really had was a spiritual problem
- Naaman expected much because of his position, wealth and accomplishments – but money couldn't buy what he needed
- The young Jewish girl tried to help as well as Naaman's servants convincing him to wash in the Jordan – Naaman had a hard time taking advice
- God's solutions come in unexpected ways
- God wanted Naaman to humble himself before healing came
- God's ways are not usually logical or convenient – this reminds us that God is the one who is doing the healing

Elisha's Servant and His Greed

I. Naaman is Healed

2 Kings 5:14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Naaman learns about obedience and humbling himself before God

II. Naaman returns to offer thanks

2 Kings 5:15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

- A.** He could have just left and gone home (probably a 30 mile trip)
- B.** He returned to acknowledge that he had been healed and to give a thanksgiving offering in return
- C.** Surely his attitude had changed greatly by now
- D.** He acknowledges that there is only one God in all the earth – the God of Israel who had healed him
- E.** *Giving thanks and praise to the Lord for what He has done*

III. Elisha Refuses an Offering

2 Kings 5:16 But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

- A.** Elisha would not take any offering
- B.** Even after more urging, he refused
- C.** Elisha wasn't in the business of healing everyone, and he wanted to be sure everyone knew he wasn't for hire
- D.** Elisha didn't want credit for something that God did
- E.** He didn't want Naaman to think his healing had anything to do with an offering
- F.** *There is a time for hard work and reward, and there is also a time to serve the Lord for no earthly reward*

IV. Naaman wants some dirt

2 Kings 5:17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD.

- A. Naaman asked for a few loads of soil from the land of Israel to take home
- B. Many believed that the gods were connected to the land – some might believe in God if he brought some dirt home with him
- C. He promised to only offer sacrifices and offerings only unto the Lord
- D. Naaman had the right heart and intent even if he hadn't fully matured in his faith and relationship with God
- E. *We cannot expect too much of a young believer – discipleship is a process*

V. Naaman asks for Forgiveness

2 Kings 5:18-19 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

- A. Naaman asks for a pardon and forgiveness for something he knew would happen when he returned home
- B. The king would require him to gather in the house of Rimmon to worship and offer a sacrifice – Rimmon was equivalent to worshipping the idol Baal – Naaman's refusal might have been loss of position or even death
- C. Elisha sent him away in peace
- D. *There are challenges that believers must face when living out their faith in a sinful world*

VI. Gehazi's Greed

A. Previous actions

1. Harsh with the Shunammite woman

2 Kings 4:27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul *is* vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.

2. Not able to raise the child – a lack of faith

2 Kings 4:31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was* neither voice, nor hearing.

Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.

B. Sin of covetousness

2 Kings 5:20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

1. He felt that Elisha should have taken something from this rich man – he had offered to pay generously

2. Covetousness is a sinful desire that begins in the heart and mind, marked by discontentment and a longing for what belongs to someone else. It reflects a lack of trust in God's provision and a restless craving for things that are not ours

Exodus 20:17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

3. Jesus spoke about covetousness – a desire for material possessions, wealth, or status symbols

Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

4. Paul told Timothy to beware of the love of money

1 Timothy 6:6-10 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

5. *Covetousness is not just wanting more—it's wanting what God hasn't given us and being willing to sin to get it*

C. Sin of lying – a false witness

2 Kings 5:21-24 So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me,

saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

1. Is everything well? – it wasn't well in Gehazi's heart
2. My master sent me – no he didn't
3. Two young men of the sons of the prophets have a need – nope
4. He hid these things in his house
5. *Lying leads to more lies and then covering up lies*

D. Another lie

2 Kings 5:25-27 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

1. Where have you been Gehazi? – nowhere special
2. Elisha knew what he had done
3. This wasn't a time to receive money, garments, oliveyards, vineyards, sheep, oxen, menservants and maidservants
4. He was punished with leprosy and his children would also be lepers – it happened instantly
5. Covetousness and pleasure caused him to lose his job and the quality of his life

2 Timothy 3:1-4 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

The Lost Axe head

I. The Need for Spiritual Teaching by the Prophet (Training)

- A. The school of the prophets was a group of men who were taught by the prophet of God – spiritual sons not actual sons
- B. Elijah and Elisha had several groups that they taught – these schools were a place for learning, training, teaching and fellowship
- C. They had groups in Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal

II. The Need for a Larger Meeting Place to Gather (Tools and Timber)

2 Kings 6:1-2 And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

- A. This group was probably in Jericho which was close to the Jordan
- B. The meeting place for these men was too small and they suggested that they build a larger place – this place was for meetings, meals, fellowship, learning, teaching, etc.
- C. They suggested that they go to the Jordan river and each man would secure some wood in order to build this place
- D. This was hard work felling trees and cutting wood and clearing land
- E. These godly men saw the need and were determined to do something about it – see a need and take the lead
- F. They had a plan and needed many hands to accomplish this large task
- G. Elisha gave them permission to go – he didn't initiate this work or lead them
- H. You don't have to be the leader to initiate something

III. The Need for the Spiritual Leader's Presence and Guidance (Teacher)

2 Kings 6:3-4 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

- A. They wanted Elisha to come with them – it would seem that Elisha wasn't a skilled craftsman
- B. The idea of being content was to convince or strongly persuade Elisha to join them
- C. This wasn't just a construction project, this was a spiritual project and they wanted the power and blessing of God on this project

- D.** Elisha accompanied the men for help, spiritual encouragement and moral support

IV. The Need for Shared Labor in the Great Work (Teamwork)

2 Kings 6:4-5 So he went with them And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.

- A.** They needed many men – some would have been skilled with tools in their hands, some would be laborers and helpers
- B.** While using an axe, one member lost his axe head as it flew into the water
- C.** He was quite distraught about this as it was a borrowed axe – it was lost and there was probably no money to replace it

V. The Need for Supernatural Help in Crisis (Trust)

2 Kings 6:6-7 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

- A.** He quickly told Elisha the situation who cut a stick and threw it in the water
- B.** The axe head floated on the water and was retrieved

VI. The Need for Practical Application Today (Truth)

- A.** These men desired to learn, to fellowship together and to work together – Elisha was willing to pour himself into them
 - 1.** Spiritual men – wanted to under the teaching of the prophet
 - 2.** Observant men – knew they needed more room
 - 3.** Submissive men – put themselves under spiritual leadership
 - 4.** Hard working men – felling trees
 - 5.** Honest men – return what was borrowed
 - 6.** Humble men – recognize your own limitations and know who to go to for help
- B.** When there was a need, they all worked together and participated to meet that need
- C.** These men wanted Elisha to go with them – Elisha represented the power of God – we are not able to do anything without the power of God
- D.** The man was very concerned about the lost axe head that he had borrowed – he couldn't afford one of his own and he was obliged to

return it to the owner – God has made us stewards – everything belongs to Him and we should treat things as such

- E.** When the man lost the axe head, he went right to Elisha – he was in need of help and wasn't afraid to ask
- F.** Elisha went to the very place that he lost the axe head – he cut a stick and threw it in the water – Elisha wanted them men to know that God could retrieve the axe head – God does things that are not logical and we have to put our faith and trust in Him
- G.** God cares about the little things – He recovered what was lost and the men could get back to work
- H.** It's ok to go to God for what might seem as small or trivial things
- I.** Where did you lose it?
 - 1.** Recognize you lost something
 - 2.** Go back to where you lost it
 - 3.** Retrieve it and get back to work
- J.** The axe is only good if:
 - 1.** You use it for what it is intended
 - 2.** You keep it maintained and sharp
 - 3.** You have it in your hands

There is a Traitor Among Us

I. The king of Syria intends to go to war against Israel

2 Kings 6:8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

- A.** This king may have been Ben-hadad who is mentioned in verse 24
- B.** They were making secret plans on how to ambush the Israelite army plotting to overtake them in certain places
- C.** God is guarding us and protecting us even when we are unaware of the enemy

II. Elisha sends a warning to the king of Israel

2 Kings 6:9-10 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

- A.** Elisha wasn't necessarily interested in helping the wicked king of Israel, (Jehoram, son of Ahab) but he knew it would be far worse if Israel was taken captive by the Syrians
- B.** God gave Elisha the plans of the Syrian king and he relayed this information to the king of Israel – not once or twice, but multiple times

III. The Syrian king was troubled, and sought to find out who the traitor was – who was sharing their secret information with the Israelites

2 Kings 6:11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?

- A.** The only way that the Israelites could know all of our movements is if someone is leaking this information to the Israelites
- B.** They were determined to find out who was helping the Israelites

IV. It is revealed that Elisha the prophet is the source of this information

2 Kings 6:12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

- A.** No one was breaking loyalty on the Syrian side – it is the prophet who is telling the king of Israel our locations

B. Elisha knows all the things that you are secretly saying in your bedroom

V. The Syrian king wants to take out Elisha

2 Kings 6:13-14 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

A. They went to Dothan to find Elisha

B. They came by night and surrounded the city with horses, chariots and a great number in their army

VI. Sunrise reveals that they are surrounded

2 Kings 6:15-16 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

A. Elisha's servant got up and was fearful – we are surrounded

B. Elisha's response was that there were two armies present – the one for us is greater than the one against us

VII. Elisha's prayer

2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

A. Elisha prayed that his servant could see what was really there

B. There were horses and chariots of fire sent from heaven to protect them – more than the armies of the enemy

VIII. The enemy approaches Elisha

2 Kings 6:18-20 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria. And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the

eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

- A. Elisha prayed that God would blind the eyes of the enemy – they were seeing something very different than what was reality
- B. Elisha told them they were in the wrong place, and that he would lead them to the man they were seeking
- C. He led them 10 miles away to Samaria – probably right into the hands of the Israelite army
- D. He prayed again that the Lord would allow them to see clearly

IX. The king of Israel was ready to smite them

2 Kings 6:21-23 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

- A. Elisha's response was very different, no, we won't kill them, let's feed them and send them on their way
- B. The enemy returned to Syria and the ambush was over

X. Application

- A. Warnings of danger are given – either we don't see them or heed them
Ephesians 6:11-13 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- B. There is nothing done that is a secret to God
Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.
- C. Fighting against the armies of God is foolish
1 Corinthians 10:22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

- D.** What do we do? This question arises many times before we seek the Lord and He reveals to us what we should do
James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.
Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.
- E.** May God give us eyesight to see by faith how we are protected from evil and spiritual battles
Psalms 34:7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.
- F.** Opening our eyes by faith silences the fear in our hearts
Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.
- G.** May we see clearly what God would have us to see
John 9:39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.
- H.** The enemy was treated with kindness
Proverbs 25:21-22 If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.
Romans 12:19-21 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
- I.** Another lesson for Israel and King Jehoram – there is a God watching over you, even if you have forsaken Him
2 Chronicles 20:5-12 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over **all** the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not **power** and **might**, so that **none** is able to withstand thee? Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for

thy name, saying, If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; **neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.**

Extreme Situations Call for Extreme Measures

I. Syria besieges Samaria

2 Kings 6:24-25 And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.

- A.** This was sometime later than the previous account of Syria desiring to attack Israel – probably several years later
- B.** The king mentioned is Benhadad
- C.** He besieged Samaria – he endeavored to starve them out by surrounding the city and forcing them into submission
- D.** There was also a great famine in Samaria at the time
- E.** They were selling donkey's heads and dove's dung for food – only the rich could even afford to buy

II. A desperate mother's cry for justice

2 Kings 6:26-28 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow.

- A.** This desperate woman cried out to the king for help – not so much for food as there wasn't any, but for justice for giving up her own son
- B.** This woman had agreed with another woman to eat her son on one day and then they would eat the other woman's son the next day

III. The king's lament

2 Kings 6:29-30 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.

- A.** This woman had given up her son, but now the other woman had hid her child

- B.** The king couldn't believe what he was hearing
- C.** This had been prophesied in Deuteronomy as a curse for disobeying the Lord

Deuteronomy 28:48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

Deuteronomy 28:52-53 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

IV. The king blames Elisha

2 Kings 6:31-33 Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?

- A.** The king blamed Elisha for their predicament
- B.** The kings sent someone to come for Elisha
- C.** Elisha instructed the elders to not let the messenger into the room knowing the king would be right behind him
- D.** The message revealed that they were blaming God for this predicament
- E.** It seems that Elisha had told King Jehoram to wait on the Lord and he was tired of waiting

V. Elisha promises food

2 Kings 7:1-2 Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then

a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

- A.** Elisha promises an abundance of food the very next day
- B.** One man standing by didn't quite believe Elisha and his word – he suggests that the only way this could happen is if God opened heaven and poured out food
- C.** Elisha promised for this man that he would see this food but he wouldn't partake of any of it

VI. Four lepers and their predicament

2 Kings 7:3-5 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

- A.** These four lepers sat at the gate of the city
- B.** They knew there was a famine in the city – they could starve there or sit here and die or take their chances with the Syrians – maybe they would live
- C.** In the middle of the night they went to the camp of the Syrians and found that everyone was gone

VII. The Syrians are gone

2 Kings 7:6-8 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it.

- A.** The Lord made the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots, horses and soldiers and they fled in fear – God had used blindness to the truth before and now He used their senses of hearing
- B.** They thought that the king of Israel had hired the Hittites and the Egyptians to come after them
- C.** The lepers rushed into the camp and found plenty of food, drink, clothing, gold and silver
- D.** They thought they should hide the wealth that they found so that it wouldn't be taken away from them

VIII. This is a day of good tidings

2 Kings 7:9-11 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

- A.** They couldn't keep all of this food for themselves – there was plenty to share with all of Israel
- B.** They were afraid if they waited till morning that the Syrians would return
- C.** They rushed to the Israelite city and told the porter all that they saw for themselves

IX. It's a trap

2 Kings 7:12-15 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And they went after them unto

Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

- A.** The king of Israel thought this was a trap and that the Syrians would soon come back and overtake them – he was given another chance to trust in the Lord and believe the word of Elisha
- B.** One of the servants wanted to send someone out to see for themselves – it seemed they only had 5 horses left in the city – if we stay here we are going to die – what harm is there sending them out to see if what they had been told is true
- C.** They took two horses and set out to see what had really happened and they found everything that the Syrians had left behind as they fled

X. Food for everyone

2 Kings 7:16 And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.

- A.** Just as Elisha had said – there was plenty of flour and barley for sale
- B.** God had answered their prayers

XI. Only if God has windows in Heaven could this happen

2 Kings 7:17-20 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

- A.** The man who doubted Elisha was put in charge of the city gate
- B.** The crowds were so great that they trampled him and he died
- C.** He saw it with his eyes, but he didn't get to partake himself

XII. Application

- A.** Sin causes us to face the judgment of God – think of the prodigal son who fell into sin and then became hungry
- B.** Trusting God during extreme circumstances instead of taking things into your own hands
- C.** Do we believe the Word of God or do we often doubt it's truth – the king wouldn't believe Elisha nor would he wait for God's answer – those who didn't believe God about the land of Canaan did not enter
Hebrews 3:16-19 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.
- D.** Blaming God for our problems when it just might be judgment for our own sin
- E.** Four lepers learned that God had blessed them, but there was enough to share
- F.** God can do that which is extraordinary and unbelievable
- G.** Elisha doesn't seem to panic in spite of this situation – he was patiently waiting on the Lord
- H.** Tomorrow is another day – imagine what just the difference of one day was for the people of Israel – God can do that
- I.** Being able to see the blessings but not partake of them for yourself

Elisha in Times of Crisis

I. Elisha's Care for the Shunammite Woman

- A. We are taken back to 2 Kings 4 where Elisha met a wonderful family
 - 1. He would often pass by and they would invite him to their table
 - 2. They built a prophet's chamber for him and invited him to stay in their home
 - 3. Elisha wanted to show kindness to them and God gave them a son
 - 4. At a young age the son died in the mother's arms and she rushed to go to Elisha
 - 5. Elisha's servant Gehazi arrived at the home first with Elisha's staff
 - 6. The mother refused to leave until Elisha came himself
 - 7. When Elisha arrived, he prayed and labored over the child – and God raised him from the dead

- B. Elisha still cared for this family and sent them away due to the coming famine

2 Kings 8:1-2 Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

- 1. He encouraged them to leave their home as there would be a famine for 7 years
- 2. They left Israel and lived in the land of the Philistines during the 7 year famine
- 3. It would seem that her husband was no longer alive
- 4. She was obedient to the man of God – this would have been quite hard to leave – who knows if a famine would last that long – we always live thinking tomorrow will be better – it was best for her to obey

- C. She returned to Israel and had to go before the king to petition him for her rights to her land

2 Kings 8:3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

- 1. Her land could have been taken by neighbors, friends or relatives

2. Her land most likely was taken over by the king
- D.** We are reminded of Elisha's former assistant Gehazi who had leprosy
2 Kings 8:4 And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.
1. Gehazi was greedy and wanted compensation from the rich Naaman who had been healed of leprosy
 2. Elisha had refused compensation and because Gehazi intervened, he was made a leper
 3. The king (Joram, second son of Ahab) was fascinated with Elisha and his miracles and wanted to hear the stories from Gehazi
- E.** Coincidence or Providence
2 Kings 8:5-6 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.
1. Gehazi was speaking to the king about Elisha raising a young boy from the dead – surely a story that many wanted to hear
 2. At that exact moment, the woman and her son came before the king
 3. Gehazi must have been surprised to see this family
 4. The king surely wanted to verify the story with this mother
 5. The king restored the land to this woman – revealing that it was likely taken over by the king and now restored to her
 6. God restored to her what was lost – He keeps track
 7. There are no coincidences with God, but divine appointments according to His marvelous plans

II. Elisha's Mourning for the Nation

A. Benhadad was the king of Syria and he was sick unto death

2 Kings 8:7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.

1. Benhadad had tried to ambush Israel several times – each time God had intervened – Elisha leading the blinded army – God removing the army surrounding Samaria because of the sounds in their ears
2. Elisha must have been respected by this Syrian king because of the power of God on his life

B. Hazael was an advisor to the king sent to visit Elisha

2 Kings 8:8-9 And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

1. Elisha was in town and the Syrian king wanted to know if he would recover from his disease
2. Benhadad sent his advisor Hazael with gifts for Elisha and to seek information and most likely divine healing
3. The gifts composed of 40 camel's worth of stuff – mostly likely refused by Elisha

C. Elisha's response

2 Kings 8:10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

1. Elisha said that he would recover from the disease
2. Elisha also said that God had shewed him that he would die

D. Elisha's staredown

2 Kings 8:11 And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

1. Elisha stared at the man for sometime
2. It was as if God was showing him the future destiny of this man
3. Elisha began to weep

E. Elisha reveals what he saw

2 Kings 8:12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

1. Elisha weeps for Israel
2. He sees what Hazael will do to Israel – burning their cities, killing their young men, destroying the children and pregnant women

F. Truth or Deception

2 Kings 8:13 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

1. Hazael seems to indicate that he himself is a nobody – how could he do these horrible things
2. Elisha reveals that God told him he would be king of Syria
3. It would seem that Hazael already had his plans and schemes in his mind

G. Hazael returns to King Benhadad

2 Kings 8:14-15 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover. And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

1. Hazael returns to his master and tells him that Elisha said he would recover
2. The very next day, he suffocated him to death and killed him
3. Surely, he lied about this to the people and probably proclaimed that Benhadad had died of his disease and wished him to take over in his stead

III. Demise of Ahab and His Descendants

A. God's message to Elijah

1 Kings 19:15-17 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint **Hazael** to be king over Syria: And **Jehu** the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and **Elisha** the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou

anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

1. Elisha carries out several of these tasks – first, calling out that Hazael would be king of Syria and then declaring that Jehu would become king of Israel
2. At the close of Elisha's ministry
 - a) Hazael is king of Syria oppressing Israel
 - b) King Joram, the second son of Ahab is king of Israel and is replaced by King Jehu – eliminating the line of Ahab from the throne
 - c) King Joram son of Jehoshaphat who is married to Ahab's daughter Athaliah was a wicked king, he is replaced by his son Ahaziah who reigns for only one year

B. King Jehu would eliminate the family of Ahab

2 Kings 9:1-3 And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramothgilead: And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.

1. Elisha sent someone to anoint Jehu to be king of Israel
2. Anoint him king and then leave – he was to smite the house of Ahab and Jezebel and their descendants

2 Kings 9:6-10 And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: [and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel:] And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and *there shall be none to bury her*. And he opened the door, and fled.

3. King Joram of Israel was injured at the time and healing of his wounds from fighting the Syrians
 4. King Ahaziah of Judah came to see him (he is his nephew)
 5. King Jehu is charging in and they both flee – Jehu kills them both
- 2 Kings 9:21** And Joram said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And **Joram** king of Israel and **Ahaziah** king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.
- 2 Kings 9:24** And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.
- 2 Kings 9:27** But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. *And they did so* at the going up to Gur, which *is* by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.

C. Death of Jezebel

2 Kings 9:30-37 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

1. Jehu called out to Jezebel from her window
2. Her own servants threw her out the window and they rode over her with their horses – the dogs ate her flesh and all they had to bury was her bones

1 Kings 21:23 And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

D. Jehu killed the remaining sons of Ahab

2 Kings 10:7-11 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel. And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning. And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who slew all these? Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah. So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

E. Jehu's legacy

2 Kings 10:28-33 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin. In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

Application

- God's judgment will come (Elijah had spoken these words)

1 Kings 21:25-29 But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all *things* as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. And it

came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: *but* in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

- Elisha served God during difficult days in Israel
- Elisha was faithful to the Lord all his days
- God used Elisha to speak to His people but also neighboring nations
- God's plans continue – He uses various people for His will
- Those who were close to Elisha received God's blessings

Elisha's Bones

Introduction

- Summary of Kings during the time of Elisha
 - **Kings of Israel**
 - **Joram**, son of Ahab killed by Jehu reigned 12 years
 - Jehu anointed by Elisha reigned for 28 years
 - Jehoahaz, son of Jehu reigned for 17 years
 - **Joash** son of Jehoahaz reigned for 16 years (visited Elisha on his deathbed)
 - **Kings of Judah**
 - Jehoram, married to Ahab's daughter died of a bowel disease
 - **Ahaziah**, killed by Jehu ruled 1 year
 - Queen Athaliah, mother of Ahaziah
 - Joash, secret child of Ahaziah hidden in the temple who was the last surviving heir of King David reigned for 40 years

I. Death of Elisha

2 Kings 13:14-20 Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And **Joash** the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

- A.** The approximate age of Elisha at his death is near 80-90 years old as he interacted with 4 different kings of Israel

- B.** We are reminded that sometimes God allows someone to die because of sickness – the body becomes weak and can no longer sustain life
- C.** Again, we are reminded of the respect that evil kings had for Elisha – king Joash came to see Elisha on his deathbed
- D.** The king repeats a phrase that Elisha said about Elijah
2 Kings 2:12 And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.
- E.** Elisha wanted to remind him that he wasn't the strength and might of Israel, but that God was
- F.** God would still deliver Israel, Joash needed to shoot the arrows in faith – those arrows represented the Lord's deliverance of Israel over Syria
- G.** They should attack the Syrians at Aphek
- H.** Elisha then asked him to take some arrows and smite the ground with them
- I.** King Joash smote the arrows three times – Elisha was angry as he told him he should have smote them five or six times – if he had they would have smitten the Syrian and destroyed them but no they would only have three victories in battle
- J.** Keep shooting arrows
- K.** Elisha died and he was buried

II. Elisha's Bones

2 Kings 13:21-25 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet. But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet. So Hazael king of Syria died; and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

- A.** It seems that Elisha had just been buried – his tomb wasn't fully closed up

- B. Another man had died and was being buried, but there was a band of men that looked like trouble and so they just lowered this man into the tomb of Elisha
- C. As soon as this man touched Elisha's bone, he became alive again
- D. Some will take this verse and suggest that there is power in relics
 - 1. Relics refer to the human remains or to their personal effects
 - 2. Relics might include Jesus' burial clothes, a piece of the crucifixion cross, a chalice from the last supper
- E. This passage does not teach that we should worship a dead body, pray to a dead body etc.
 - 1. Scripture does not say that the dead man was brought to the tomb of Elisha with the purpose of bringing him back to life
 - 2. What happened at the cemetery was a matter of emergency in these men running for their lives and avoiding danger
 - 3. Following this event, they did not exhume Elisha's bones and put them on display or purpose to have them raise anyone else
- F. It is God's power that must be attributed to a miracle
 - 1. The power to perform miracles is found in God and not in any man or woman
 - 2. Elisha was dead – he didn't say any special words or prayers to raise this man
- G. A reminder of Elisha's prophecy that Israel would have victory over Syria – even though Elisha was dead, Elisha's God was alive – Elisha's prophecy didn't die with Elisha
- H. A picture of a future resurrection – God has the power over death
- I. A reminder that God's work did not end with the death of a prophet

Conclusion

Elisha's primary miracles and accounts of God's supernatural power

- Crossing the Jordan River with Elijah's mantle
- Healing of the bitter waters near the Jordan
- The bears attacking the young mockers
- Filling the valley with water for the army
- Defeat of the Moabites by confusion
- The widow's oil that kept pouring out

- Giving the Shunammite woman a son
- Raising the Shunammite's son
- Healing the poisonous soup
- Feeding 100 men with 20 barley loaves
- Healing of Naaman the leper
- Cursing Gehazi with leprosy
- Floating axe head
- Revealing the secret locations of the Syrian army
- Opening the eyes of his servant to see God's armies
- Blinding the Syrian army
- Foretelling the end of the siege of Syria around Samaria
- Predicting seven years of famine to the Shunnamite woman
- Fulfilling Elijah's prophecies of anointing Hazael and Jehu
- Elisha's bones raising a dead man

Final Thoughts

- Elisha's miracles remind us that God's power is greater than any obstacle
- Elisha was faithful to serve the Lord among evil kings – he earned their respect
- Elisha mentored many of the sons of the prophets and taught them to trust the Lord and obey his commandments