

# II KINGS 4 – 200<sup>TH</sup> OT BIBLE STUDY

## REVIEW...

- **I KINGS 3 – VICTORY COMES FROM THE LORD...**

- King Jehoram – son of Ahab - went to King Jehoshaphat of Israel...
  - He asked him if he would be willing to join him in battle against Moab...
  - Jehoram had removed the altars of Baal / although not the golden calves...
  - So Jehoshaphat saw a glimmer of hope in Jehoram – and was willing to help...
- The armies marched 7 days into the wilderness – but there as NO water!
  - Jehoshaphat did not panic instead he asked if there was a prophet of God...
    - It turned out Elisha was there in their camp - so the kings called for him!
    - Elisha told the Kings to dig ditches all over the desert floor...
  - Early the next morning – water suddenly began to fill the valley floor...
    - It filled all of the ditches and provided all the water the men needed!
    - The water also reflected the red light of the rising sun – making it look like blood...
    - The Moabites thought Israel and Judah had fought and killed each other...
    - So they rushed down – just in time to be wiped out by Jehoshaphat and Jehoram!

## MIRACLES OF ELISHA... (4 THINGS)

- **1<sup>ST</sup> – SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN MORE POTS... VS. 1-7 READ: II KINGS 4:1-7**

- 1<sup>st</sup> – A certain widow was the wife of a prophet... vs. 1
  - She came to Elisha because although her husband was a godly man...
    - When he died he left her in a lot of debt – and the collectors were coming...
    - Tradition says she was the wife of Obadiah – **I Kings 18:3-6**
    - And the debt that was owed was from feeding the 100 prophets he hid from Jezebel...
    - And now Jehoram was threatening to sell Obadiah's sons to pay for the debt!
    - This was a common practice in Israel to resolve unpaid debt – **Matthew 18:25**
  - God has a heart for widows – and we are called to help them out...
    - If possible a widow should be cared for by her children / or grandchildren...
    - It is the responsibility of the kids to care for their parents – **I Timothy 5:4...**
    - In fact that is why your mom took care of you – put you through college...
    - That is why she wanted you to get a good job – earn lots of money...
    - So that when she got old – you would be able to take care of her!
  - Younger widows – under 60 - should get re-married – **I Timothy 5:14...**
    - There is a stigma in the culture that says a widow should not remarry...
    - But God never intended us to be alone in this life – it is normal to want a husband...
    - If a widow is under the age of 60 - the Bible says she should remarry...
    - **I Corinthians 7:39** – “If her husband dies, she is free to remarry... only in the Lord.”
  - But a true widow is to be taken care of by the church...
    - A widow who trust in the Lord / takes the time to pray to the Lord...
    - A widow who is dedicated to the Lord – dedicates herself to serving the Lord..
    - That kind of a widow – is someone the church should take care of!
    - **James 1:27** – “Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles...”

- o 2<sup>nd</sup> – Elisha wanted to help – so he asked the widow what she had in her house... vs. 2-7
  - But she was VERY poor – and only had a single bottle of olive oil!
    - Elisha had her to go and borrow AS MANY empty containers as she could...
    - She then poured out the oil from her jar - and filled all the empty containers!
    - Only when all the containers were full - did the oil in her jar run out...
    - I bet you she wished she had found more empty containers!
  - So often we come to God for help – with low expectations...
    - When we had the church dedication last month – we had ice-cream after lunch...
    - Most of the kids came up with a little cup – and only got a little ice-cream...
    - Little Quincy came up with a BIG plate – and waited till it was completely filled up!
    - God does not just want to bless us - He wants to fill us up to the very top!
    - He wants to give us His whole kingdom - bless us beyond imagination - **Luke 12:33**
    - But when we come to him with a little cup – not expecting much from Him...
    - When we come full of our own ideas – there is not much room left...
    - We limit what God can do in our lives – instead we need to come with a BIG plate!
    - We need to come to Him empty – ready to be filled up with the oil of the Holy Spirit!
- 2<sup>ND</sup> – A PROPHET’S REWARD... vs. 8-17 READ: II KINGS 4:8-17
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem (*by Mt. Tabor*)... vs. 8-10
    - A rich (*better interpreted Godly*) woman who lived there invited him for dinner...
      - From then on every time Elisha passed by Shunem – he would eat at her house...
      - The Godly woman told her husband she believed Elisha was a prophet...
      - So they made a small room upstairs for him to stay in every time he passed by!
    - We are commanded to care for others – the widows – even strangers...
      - When we take the time to give food the hungry and a home to the stranger...
      - We show the Love of God to others – the goodness of God – **John 13:35**
      - Through which we are given the opportunity to tell them about Jesus!
      - More than that - we when we care for strangers we actually minister to Jesus!
      - **Matthew 25:40** - “[Jesus] will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – One day Elisha was staying in the room... vs. 11-17
    - He decided to do something nice for the woman...
      - He called her up – and asked her if there was anything she needed...
      - Elisha could put in a good word for her with the King of Israel...
      - But her family took good care of her – there was nothing she needed...
      - Yet Elisha noticed she had no children – next year at this time you will have a child!
    - The woman was a bit upset – ‘do not lie to me like that’...
      - Apparently she was unable to have children – so she had a hard time believing Elisha...
      - But sure enough – she became pregnant – and the Lord gave her a son!
      - Our gifts to God - whether given to the widows / or strangers - are like seeds...
      - The more we plant - the more of a harvest of blessing we will reap from God...
      - If we are ‘cheap’ and choose to only plant a couple of seeds - a little harvest...
      - But if we sow bountifully - we will also reap bountifully!
      - We will never out give the Lord - the more we give / the more we will be given!
      - **Matthew 10:41** – “He who receives a prophet... shall receive a prophet’s reward.”

- **3<sup>RD</sup> – RAISING THE DEAD... vs. 18-37** **READ: II KINGS 4:18-21 / 32-35**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – One day the son of the Godly woman had a head ache... vs. 18-20
    - He was helping with his dad in the harvest – and had to be sent home...
      - Perhaps overcome by sun stroke (*hot in Israel*) / or perhaps an aneurism...
      - By noon the young boy had died in the arms of his mother...
      - She brought his body upstairs - laid him on Elisha's bed – and shut the door...
      - I am sure there was a temptation to be bitter – as if Elisha / God had failed!
    - But God was not taking away her son – he was testing her faith...
      - If you go to the Market and want to buy some mangos – you want good ones...
      - Problem: how to know which are best - the outside might look good...
      - But unless you test the fruit you do not know what it is like on the inside!
    - The same is true of our walk with Jesus...
      - We can say all the right words – we can make the outside look really good...
      - Cause when things are going well – no problems – it is easy to look like a Christian...
      - But to really know what we are made of - we need to be tested...
      - When things get difficult – that is when we see who we really are!
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – The woman asked her husband to take her to Elisha... vs. 21-26
    - He was confused – why did she want to go - he did not know his son was dead...
      - The wife simply told her husband that 'everything was all right'!
      - So she made the 6 hour journey to Mt. Carmel as quickly as she could...
    - Elisha saw her in the distance – and sent his servant to greet her...
      - He asked the woman what was wrong – again she said – 'everything was all right'!
      - The Lord had given her a son – and she was confident God would make it all right!
      - When I was a kid my father gave me toy for Christmas – I LOVED that toy...
      - But one day I was playing a little too rough – and the toy broke – I was devastated...
      - Until I took that toy back to my Dad – and he was able to fix it up like new!
      - If we focus in life on our problems – we will quickly become discouraged...
      - Joy does not come as a result of our situations – how good or bad things are...
      - Joy is when we get our eyes off our problems – and focus on our Father in heaven...
      - Because He is the one who can pick up the pieces and make everything like new!
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> – The woman fell down at the feet of Elisha... vs. 27-28
    - Elisha could tell something was wrong – but the Lord had not told him what...
      - The only way Elisha knew what was wrong – was because the woman told him...
      - Men are pretty famous for being oblivious – we tend to miss things...
      - When Jen is not happy about something – it can take me forever to notice!
      - Yet we do tend to expect others to know when we are hurting...
      - People expect a their spouses / pastors to somehow read their minds...
      - But in truth we need to learn to be honest – and tell people what is going on inside!
    - The woman reminded Elisha – 'I did not ask for a son'...
      - The moment she said that Elisha realized what had happened...
      - Although we cannot read minds – that does not mean we should not pay attention...
      - When we see people who are acting 'funny' – ask them what is going on...

- **With a little bit of effort – we can be the lifeline to help people in their time of need!**
- o 4<sup>th</sup> - Elisha sent his servant ahead – had him lay his staff on the boy's face... vs. 29-37
  - This seems a bit unusual – why lay a staff on the face of the boy...
    - The common assumption is Elisha wanted to check if the boy really was dead...
    - Possibly the mother over reacting – perhaps the boy just fainted / or was faking...
    - So by laying the staff on his face – it might 'wake him up'...
    - But the servant obeyed - and there were no signs of life!
  - Elisha quickly followed and found the boy lying in the upper room – dead!
    - He laid down on top of the boy – mouth to mouth / eyes to eyes / hands to hands...
    - And the body of the boy began to grow warm again (*he had been dead for hours*)...
    - Essentially Elisha was performing CPR – trying to resuscitate the boy...
    - **When God heals He often does so in very natural ways...**
    - **He gives wisdom to the doctors / he gives knowledge to the pharmacists...**
    - **Yet even though it is not 'supernatural' – it is no less God doing the work!**
  - Elisha got up and walked around – then laid down on the boy again...
    - This time the boy sneezed 7 times – then opened up his eyes!
    - Elisha called the mother – and she came in and picked up her little boy!
    - **If doctors and meds can not heal someone – it does not mean there is no hope...**
    - **God is not limited to the natural – He does not have to use hospitals...**
    - **God does not even have to do things in a way that we can explain...**
    - **Sometimes God chooses to do something 'supernatural' – even raise the dead!**
- **4<sup>th</sup> – A FAMINE IN THE LAND... vs. 38-44** **READ: II KINGS 4:39-44**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – One of the prophets prepared a stew for dinner... vs. 38-41
    - So he gathered some herbs from the field – and a handful of wild gourds...
      - What he did not know was that they were poisonous...
      - So when the prophets tried to eat it – they cried out 'there is death in the pot!'
    - Elisha put some flour in the pot – and asked them to try again...
      - Miraculously the poison was gone – and they were able to eat the soup!
      - It was not the flour that made the food safe – it was giving thanks to God...
      - **All God asks us to do is give thanks for providing – 'Say Grace' - I Timothy 4:4-5**
      - **Therefore eat whatever you want to – food is meant to be eaten!**
      - **I Corinthians 6:13 – "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food."**
      - **Not that I recommend eating poison food – but certainly God can protect you!**
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – A man brought a 20 loaves of bread for the prophets... vs. 42-44
    - Elisha told him to use it to feed over 100 hungry prophets (*there was a famine*)...
      - The man balked – 20 loaves was not nearly enough for so many men!
      - Elisha assured him it would be enough – and there would even be some left over!
    - Not accidentally - very reminiscent of the feeding of the 5000...
      - **Because when we care for widows and strangers...**
      - **And when we take the time to find out why others are hurting...**
      - **We are going to find that our lives become more and more like Jesus!**