

ELISHA'S POWER



+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

God works through His people to do great things for His glory.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

2 Kings 4–6

+ **SETTING:**

Elijah left the earth by God's appointment, and by God's will, he passed on his title and his spirit to the new prophet, Elisha. This prophet is now filled with the same power as his predecessor and is present in Israel. The majority of kings that follow in Israel are still wicked in the eyes of the Lord, and the people follow them. So Israel still needs a prophet to call them to repentance and obedience to Yahweh. Through Elisha, God continues to demonstrate His power so the kings, people, and nations will know Yahweh is the Lord God. And Elisha remains faithful in obedience to God, following the footsteps of his mentor.

DAY 1

READ:

2 Kings 4:1-37

FOCAL PASSAGE:

2 Kings 4:27-28

NOTES

Our faith finds its greatest challenge in the face of death. Life comes with many struggles and trials, to be sure, but no difficulty compares to death. The grief that comes when someone we love dies is unlike any other pain in this life. Our only hope in the face of death for ourselves or someone near to us is eternal life with Christ for those who follow Him.

Death without the hope of resurrection is completely hopeless. Once you die, there is no way to undo it. And even more desperate is the thought of eternal death, eternal separation from God.

No one wants to dwell on death, yet we cannot have a serious appreciation of eternal life offered to us without an understanding of what we are being saved from. And through that understanding, we see the greatness of God in all His glory, love, mercy, grace, justice, and holiness, all in one.

In Christ, then, death does not have the final say. In Christ, we are saved from an eternal death that keeps us far from the love of God and we are brought near to God, into His loving arms, into the home He has prepared for us.

But first, we must assess: Are we true followers of Christ? Do our actions show faith in the Creator God and trust in Jesus's sacrifice on the cross for us? Or have we simply been going through the motions because going to church seems comfortable as part of our routine?

Assess your walk with the Lord. Have you been living in a way that shows you have complete trust and faith in Jesus Christ? If not, how will you further surrender to the Lord in every aspect of your life?

DAY 2

READ:

2 Kings 4:38-44

FOCAL PASSAGE:

2 Kings 4:42-44

NOTES

Doubt is a tricky thing. In one sense, because we are human, we are always going to struggle with doubt. In another sense, doubt left unchecked can keep us from a life of obedience and can eventually taint our trust in God.

Elisha's attendant was doubtful that God could perform a miracle. Famine was in the land, but a man came with an offering of bread to give to Elisha as an offering to God.

Not only did God prove that He is a God who listens to and provides for those who trust Him, through this story, we're reminded that God can do much with very little. But we do need to offer what we have to Him. The man who offered his bread could have kept it for himself or doubted that it could be of use at all since it wasn't much when so many people were hungry. But he trusted God and knew it was God who gave in the first place. God can do much with our offerings, especially when it comes to the offering of our very lives.

So when we experience doubt, we can let that doubt consume our thoughts, direct our hearts, and leave us uncertain. Or we can bring our doubts to God and ask Him to remind us that He is trustworthy and that He always cares for us and is able to do so much more than we can imagine (Eph. 3:20-21).

The Lord does not abandon us. And even when we struggle to see or understand what He is doing around, in, and through us, we can trust He is at work.

Where are you struggling with doubting God right now? What examples can you remember of times when God has been faithful in your life even when you couldn't see it or understand?

DAY 3

READ:

2 Kings 5

FOCAL PASSAGE:

2 Kings 5:10-14

NOTES

Have you ever heard the phrase, “Delayed obedience is still disobedience”? This is true, but thankfully, it need not be the end of the story.

The Gentile Naaman did not like what Elisha commanded him to do to be healed of his skin disease, so he walked away. Only after his servants coaxed him did he go to the river and obey Elisha’s instructions.

In our lives, we know what God has said. We understand the commands He gives us, but we don’t like them. There may be several reasons why we delay our obedience. Maybe God’s command is inconvenient. Maybe it would require that we give up something we don’t want to. Maybe it seems like it is just too difficult. Or maybe it seems like it is just too easy and beneath us.

Usually our disobedience is because of pride. Ultimately, we want to do what we want to do and we don’t like to do what others tell us. We think we can do things on our own. Our pride and selfishness and ego take over and we pause, take our time, or completely disobey.

No matter our reason for delaying obedience to God, we are still disobedient if we withhold obedience for a time. But thankfully, God is gracious to us and He delights in our obedience even if we reject His Word and commands for us for a time. In Naaman’s case, though he scoffed at Elisha’s command at first, he eventually obeyed and God still healed him in His grace and mercy. And then Naaman turned around, humbled himself, and responded in worship to the one true God.

God desires that all would turn back to Him, so He gives us all opportunities upon opportunities to do so.

What might be causing you to delay obedience to God today? What actions do you need to take right now in faithful obedience to the Lord?

VOICES from THE CHURCH

“All Naaman needed was nothing. It was the one thing Naaman didn’t have.”¹

–Sally Lloyd-Jones

DAY 4

READ:

Mark 6

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Mark 6:41-44

NOTES

In Mark 6, we can immediately sense the similarities between Jesus's feeding the five thousand and Elisha's feeding the crowd of prophets. In both stories, there is a need for food and the people are hungry. One in a famine, one through a long day. In both stories, the prophet/leader tells the servant/disciples to give the people something to eat, and in both stories, the servant/disciples are doubtful and hesitant. Instead of simply obeying, they question how to do so and if it were even possible. In both stories, God provides food from very little. In both stories, all the people present are able to eat. In both stories, God does even more and provides leftovers.

Jesus and Elijah in these stories step forward and demonstrate the power of God. They instruct for the people to eat. And one of the most powerful portions of this passage in which Jesus performs this miracle is in the result that everyone ate and had their fill. Not only was there enough food for all of them, but they were satisfied, and there was even food left over.

Can God not do above and beyond what we ask and what is possible? Of course, He can—He is God! And He does much with very little. He can do much with our very little lives.

This is a picture of what coming to Jesus is like. Not only does He feed us with food and bread and the provisions of life, but He satisfies us—with Himself! With Christ, we no longer hunger and thirst; we need not long for anything because He is sufficient for us. He truly is the Bread of Life and Living Water.

What are some ways you can grow in your faith that Jesus is sufficient for all of your needs?

DAY 5

READ:

Philippians 2:1-18

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:9-11

NOTES



ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE #27: GOD'S GLORY

The glory of God is His manifest work, the way He represents His perfect character through His activity. It also refers to His excellent reputation and is given as one of the reasons we are to praise His name. Another sense of the word is the inherent beauty of God, the unbearable brightness and beauty of His being as He radiates His own attributes and characteristics for all to witness. The Scriptures speak of humanity as having "fallen short" of God's glory (Rom. 3:23) because we have rejected the purpose for which God created us—to glorify Him.

Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Elisha—all of these men were incredible and powerful. They performed miracles, listened to God's word, and exuded wisdom unlike anyone else in their day. Yet they are not considered the greatest in history.

These great men did great things with the power of God. They healed, they won battles, they brought God's people back to Him, and they were faithful to God (most of the time). But ultimately, they were not perfect because they were fully human and only human.

Jesus, however, is different. Similar but greater. He lived a perfect life, being truly human and also truly God. He resurrected life and also resurrected Himself. He died that sinners might live. Being God, only He could satisfy our punishment, only He could be a final sacrifice for our sins, only He could forgive us completely and do the impossible in reconciling us to a holy God.

Because of Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection, He is exalted above all others. His name is above all others. And every person, no matter how powerful and renowned they were on earth, will fall at Jesus's feet when they meet Him face to face. He is worthy of all admiration and honor. All of the Bible's historical figures point to Jesus, as He is the plan all along to restore and redeem humankind. In His humbling, in His servanthood, in His obedience, we are made new. And He asks us to follow Him, trust Him, and be like Him. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do so, with His strength overcoming our weakness.

Praise be to God for how He loves us enough to send His Son to die for our sins!

Like Jesus, how can you humble yourself and live in obedience this week to be a servant to others and point them to Jesus, our Savior and Lord?

GROUP

NOTES

VOICES from THE CHURCH

"Humans have been unable to open their own eyes, spiritually, since Adam hid behind the tree in hopes that his hiding from God could save him from God. We've all become very creative at trying to make ourselves see, but we will never succeed . . . [God] will always be doing what no one can: be God. The God who does the miraculous. And we can be sure that the salvation of a sinner is the greatest miracle the world could ever see."²

-Jackie Hill Perry

POINT 1: The man of God brings life from death (2 Kings 4:18-21,32-35).

_____ drove the Shunammite woman to the man of God. Though her son had died, she kept her _____ .

Elisha was a _____ of God's power, and through him, the dead son was raised to life. Jesus is _____ Man of God with the _____ to raise the dead, both physically and spiritually.



How should the reality of God's resurrection power affect the lives and actions of people today?

POINT 2: The man of God multiplies bread for the people (2 Kings 4:42-44).

Elisha's faith led to _____ that the Lord would _____ for the needs of the people.



What are some ways you have seen the Lord provide for your needs?

ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE #27: GOD'S GLORY

The glory of God is His manifest work, the way He represents His perfect _____ through His _____. It also refers to His excellent reputation and is given as one of the reasons we are to praise His name. Another sense of the word is the inherent beauty of God, the unbearable brightness and beauty of His being as He radiates His own attributes and characteristics for _____ to witness. The Scriptures speak of humanity as having "fallen short" of God's glory (Rom. 3:23) because we have rejected the purpose for which God created us—to _____ Him.



What are some ways we can serve the Lord for His glory?

POINT 3: The man of God heals a skin disease (2 Kings 5:1-3,10-16).

The young slave girl demonstrated _____ by _____ with her captors about God and His work through His prophet, Elisha.



What are some ways we can show kindness in the world and point people to Jesus?

God desires that all people in every nation would come to _____ in and glorify Him. He healed Naaman for this and sent _____ for us.

MY RESPONSE

Because we have come to know Jesus as the Word of God and have been forgiven and transformed by Him, we declare God’s Word to those around us with faith and boldness so that God may move others from death to life.

- **HEAD:** How should faith in Jesus, the powerful Son of God, affect the way you think, speak, and act this week?
- **HEART:** How have you experienced the comfort of God’s power in hard times? Praise Him for His love and care for you.
- **HANDS:** What are some ways you will care for people’s physical needs this week? For their spiritual needs, namely, to know Jesus and believe in Him?

NOTES

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“Every effort to change must involve at its core a shift in direction away from dependence on one’s own resources for life to dependence on God.”³

-Larry Crabb (1944-2021)