



## INTRODUCTION

Elijah was perhaps the most epic prophet in Israel's history since Moses, and Elisha was called to follow in his footsteps. What were the biggest shoes you've ever had to fill? Describe your experience.

## ELISHA FOLLOWS IN ELIJAH'S FOOTSTEPS

### MOAB REVOLTS FROM ISRAEL

**2 Kings 3:1-27** Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. <sup>2</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his father and mother had done. He got rid of the sacred stone of Baal that his father had made. <sup>3</sup> Nevertheless he clung to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit; he did not turn away from them.

<sup>4</sup> Now Mesha king of Moab raised sheep, and he had to supply the king of Israel with a hundred thousand lambs and with the wool of a hundred thousand rams. <sup>5</sup> But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. <sup>6</sup> So at that time King Joram set out from Samaria and mobilized all Israel. <sup>7</sup> He also sent this message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?" "I will go with you," he replied. "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." <sup>8</sup> "By what route shall we attack?" he asked. "Through the Desert of Edom," he answered.

<sup>9</sup> So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After a roundabout march of seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals with them. <sup>10</sup> "What!" exclaimed the king of Israel. "Has the LORD called us three kings together only to hand us over to Moab?" <sup>11</sup> But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD through him?" An officer of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah." <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What do we have to do with each other? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother." "No," the king of Israel answered, "because it was the LORD who called us three kings together to hand us over to Moab." <sup>14</sup> Elisha said, "As surely as the LORD Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you or even notice you. <sup>15</sup> But now bring me a harpist." While the harpist was playing, the hand of the LORD came upon Elisha <sup>16</sup> and he said, "This is what the LORD says: Make this valley full of ditches. <sup>17</sup> For this is what the LORD says: You will see neither wind nor rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you, your cattle and your other animals will drink. <sup>18</sup> This is an easy thing in the eyes of the LORD; he will also hand Moab over to you. <sup>19</sup> You will overthrow

every fortified city and every major town. You will cut down every good tree, stop up all the springs, and ruin every good field with stones.”

<sup>20</sup>The next morning, about the time for offering the sacrifice, there it was—water flowing from the direction of Edom! And the land was filled with water. <sup>21</sup>Now all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come to fight against them; so every man, young and old, who could bear arms was called up and stationed on the border. <sup>22</sup>When they got up early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water. To the Moabites across the way, the water looked red—like blood. <sup>23</sup>“That’s blood!” they said. “Those kings must have fought and slaughtered each other. Now to the plunder, Moab!”

<sup>24</sup>But when the Moabites came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and fought them until they fled. And the Israelites invaded the land and slaughtered the Moabites. <sup>25</sup>They destroyed the towns, and each man threw a stone on every good field until it was covered. They stopped up all the springs and cut down every good tree. Only Kir Hareseth was left with its stones in place, but men armed with slings surrounded it and attacked it as well.

<sup>26</sup>When the king of Moab saw that the battle had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. <sup>27</sup>Then he took his firstborn son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice on the city wall. The fury against Israel was great; they withdrew and returned to their own land.

1.) How would you rate Joram as king? (Cf. Ahab, brother Azariah)

2.) How was Elisha walking in the footsteps of Elijah?

## THE WIDOW’S OIL

**2 Kings 4:1-7** The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.” <sup>2</sup>Elisha replied to her, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?” “Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a little oil.” <sup>3</sup>Elisha said, “Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don’t ask for just a few.” <sup>4</sup>Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.”

<sup>5</sup>She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. <sup>6</sup>When all the jars were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another one.” But he replied, “There is not a jar left.” Then the oil stopped flowing. <sup>7</sup>She went and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.”

1.) How was Elisha walking in Elijah's footsteps? (Cf. the widow of Sidon)

2.) How does God feel about the widowed and the orphan?

### Psalm 146:5-9

<sup>5</sup> Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

<sup>6</sup> the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—the LORD, who remains faithful forever.

<sup>7</sup> He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free,

- <sup>8</sup> the LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.
- <sup>9</sup> The LORD watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

3.) How does this account encourage us to "go big" on God's promises?

## THE SHUNAMMITE & HER SON

**2 Kings 4:8-17** One day Elisha went to Shunem<sup>1</sup>. And a well-to-do woman was there, who urged him to stay for a meal. So whenever he came by, he stopped there to eat. <sup>9</sup> She said to her husband, "I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God. <sup>10</sup> Let's make a small room on the roof and put in it a bed and a table, a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us."

<sup>11</sup> One day when Elisha came, he went up to his room and lay down there. <sup>12</sup> He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite." So he called her, and she stood before him. <sup>13</sup> Elisha said to him, "Tell her, 'You have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you? Can we speak on your behalf to the king or the commander of the army?'" She replied, "I have a home among my own people." <sup>14</sup> "What can be done for her?" Elisha asked. Gehazi said, "Well, she has no son and her husband is old." <sup>15</sup> Then Elisha said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood in the doorway. <sup>16</sup> "About this time next year," Elisha said, "you will hold a son in your arms." "No, my lord," she objected. "Don't mislead your servant, O man of God!" <sup>17</sup> But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

1.) Sometimes we hold our deepest wants close to our chest and won't let them out. Why do we behave so?

2.) If God already knows what we need before we ask him (cf. Matt. 6:8), why wait? Why make the Shunammite (and us) let it out?

## THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE

**2 Kings 4:18-37** The child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers. <sup>19</sup> "My head! My head!" he said to his father. His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother." <sup>20</sup> After the servant had lifted him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died. <sup>21</sup> She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and went out.

<sup>22</sup> She called her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and a donkey so I can go to the man of God quickly and return." <sup>23</sup> "Why go to him today?" he asked. "It's not the New Moon or the Sabbath." "It's all right," she said. <sup>24</sup> She saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Lead on; don't slow down for me unless I tell you." <sup>25</sup> So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. When he saw her in the distance, the man of God said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the Shunammite! <sup>26</sup> Run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'" "Everything is all right," she said.

<sup>27</sup> When she reached the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone! She is in bitter distress, but the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me why." <sup>28</sup> "Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't raise my

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<sup>1</sup> A village located about 15 miles southwest of the Sea of Galilee.

hopes’?”<sup>29</sup> Elisha said to Gehazi, “Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy’s face.”

<sup>30</sup> But the child’s mother said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So he got up and followed her. <sup>31</sup> Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the boy’s face, but there was no sound or response. So Gehazi went back to meet Elisha and told him, “The boy has not awakened.” <sup>32</sup> When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch. <sup>33</sup> He went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the LORD. <sup>34</sup> Then he got on the bed and lay upon the boy, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. As he stretched himself out upon him, the boy’s body grew warm. <sup>35</sup> Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out upon him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. <sup>36</sup> Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, “Call the Shunammite.” And he did. When she came, he said, “Take your son.” <sup>37</sup> She came in, fell at his feet and bowed to the ground. Then she took her son and went out.

1.) How do we react when our most precious blessings are taken away (v.27-29)? While God fully understands our grief (cf. Jesus weeping at Lazarus’ tomb), what would be a more spiritually profitable response to loss?

**Job 1:20-21** At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship <sup>21</sup> and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”

2.) The only resurrections in the Old Testament are tied to Elijah and Elisha. We see them again with our Lord Jesus and his Apostles. How were the resurrections performed by Jesus (widow of Nain’s son, Jairus’ daughter, Lazarus) superior to those of the earlier prophets?

## DEATH IN A POT

**2 Kings 4:38-41** Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these men.” <sup>39</sup> One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine. He gathered some of its gourds and filled the fold of his cloak. When he returned, he cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were. <sup>40</sup> The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, “O man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it. <sup>41</sup> Elisha said, “Get some flour.” He put it into the pot and said, “Serve it to the people to eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

## THE FEEDING OF 100

**2 Kings 4:42-44** A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. “Give it to the people to eat,” Elisha said. <sup>43</sup> “How can I set this before a hundred men?” his servant asked. But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the LORD says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’ ” <sup>44</sup> Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the LORD.

1.) Since the whole Scripture points to Christ, how did Elisha serve as a shadow of Christ?

## PRAYER