

Basketball Mania Video clip

BILLY GRAHAM
Evangelistic Association

Always Good News.

Franklin Graham
March 2009

Dear Friend,

We are in the midst of the most serious crisis our nation has faced in my lifetime, and I believe unless God intervenes, America will never again be the great country that we have known and loved.

The federal government is on the verge of nationalizing our financial institutions, fundamentally changing the economic engine that has driven our democracy for over 200 years. That would be a giant step toward socialism.

This isn't what I fear most, however. What burdens my heart and soul is that I believe America finds itself in this predicament because we are a nation that has forgotten God. We have rejected God. We don't want Him in the marketplace, our schools, or our government. The moral and spiritual fabric that kept this country strong for so long has almost completely unraveled, and the economic chaos is just one of the disastrous consequences.

We need another great awakening, a fresh revival that puts us on our knees, brings us to repentance for our sins, and turns our hearts back again to worship and obey God.

There is no other way for America to be great again.

In the book of Nehemiah, a remnant of Hebrews who had survived 70 years of Babylonian captivity returned and rebuilt the burned and crumbled walls of Jerusalem. As they gathered around one of the gates of the city, the scribe Ezra stood before the people and read from the book of the law of Moses.

From daybreak to noon, he stood on a large platform and read aloud the Scripture. God's Word was preached and explained clearly.

As the people listened, they wept over their sin. *"They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers"* (Nehemiah 9:2, NIV). They publicly acknowledged that they had forgotten God and that the Lord was just in punishing them.

Our nation is now reaping what we have sown. Our greed, relentless pursuit of pleasure, and abandonment of God's principles have brought us to this historic turning point.

I love my country, but I hate what I see taking place. God may be bringing judgment on us, just like He did on the Israelites. We have sinned openly and repeatedly, and we are in grave danger unless we repent and turn back to God.

This is why we preach the Gospel. This is why we proclaim the message of repentance and faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ, who shed His blood on Calvary's cross for our sins.

People sometimes ask me if I get discouraged as I preach God's Word in city after city, only to see our nation growing darker. Not at all. I'm encouraged, because as I deliver God's Gospel, I see thousands come forward, confess their sins, and turn by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Nehemiah's day, the Hebrews humbled themselves as they heard Ezra preach God's Word.

I believe we can experience this kind of national revival again. I believe we can see the hearts of millions touched by the power of the Gospel.

We must pray. We must come before God every day and ask Him that the riches of His kindness and patience would lead us to genuine repentance (see Romans 2:4). We must intercede for our leaders to turn their hearts to Him.

Please pray for us as we take the Gospel to the heartland of America this summer through Rock the River, an evangelistic concert tour where I will be preaching to thousands of young people. Pray also for Crusades I have coming up this month in Uruguay and in Estonia May 29–31. Pray with us that many lost will respond to the saving message of Christ.

We need your help financially. Working together, the gifts of thousands of believers like you enable this ministry to preach the Gospel through our Crusades, television, radio, and many other evangelistic outreaches.

America is at a crossroads. The need is greater than ever before. The hour is more urgent than ever before.

Let us all remember that, despite our sin, the Lord is a *"forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love"* (Nehemiah 9:17) for all who call upon His Name for salvation. It's never too late to turn back to God. Help us take that message across America—and to the ends of the earth.

May God richly bless you,



Franklin Graham
President

P.S. If you sent us a prayer request of your own in recent weeks, be assured that our staff has been praying. We are honored to partner with you in this way. I greatly appreciate your friendship, your prayers, and all that you do for Jesus.

You Can Make a Difference

God works through people like you to change the world for the sake of the Gospel.

► PRAYER

"History could be altered," my father has said, "if people went to their knees in believing prayer." Will you pray that our leaders will listen to God's voice and that our nation will repent and turn to God? Pray also for us as we vigorously proclaim the Gospel that changes lives and nations.

► TELEVISION

People in every country desperately seek lasting hope, but many won't go to a church to find it. Your gift of \$75, or any amount, will help us bring the World Evangelism Through Television

► ROCK THE RIVER

The future hope of any nation is its young people. We must reach them with the Gospel before it is too late. Your gift can help us bring God's urgent truth to America's youth through Rock the River.

► CRUSADES

Uruguay is said to be the most secular country in the Americas, and Colombia is considered among the most violent—but God is opening hearts. Your gift this month of \$10, \$25, or any amount will help us hold

OCTOBER 8 □ DAY 282

MATTHEW 24 -25

Predictions of the King



OVERVIEW Prominent in Jesus' day was the magnificent Temple of Herod. The disciples, duly impressed with its immense splendor, are stunned by Jesus' words that it will one day lie in rubble. This naturally raises questions in their minds regarding how and when such destruction will occur—an occasion Jesus seizes upon to teach them about events even more significant than the conquest of Jerusalem. He goes on to instruct them about his future second coming to earth and the unmistakable signs preceding it.

Chapter 24		Chapter 25
Predictions of Coming Calamity	Preparation for Coming Calamity	Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven
"Beware!"	"Be Watchful!"	"Be Working!"



YOUR DAILY WALK It has been well said, "A person can live forty days without food, seven days without water, and a few minutes without air; but he cannot live one second without hope."

"Hope" is biblical shorthand for "unconditional certainty."

There is no medicine like hope—the expectation that tomorrow will be better than today. And for the Christian, that hope is no idle dream. Your future can brim with expectation because of Jesus' promise, "I will come and get you" (John 14:3). But in the meantime, you need the daily reminder and encouragement that your waiting is not in vain. In Jesus' response to his disciples' questions, he offers several principles to help them—and you—pass the time until his return:

1. Don't get sidetracked (24:4). False christs will abound, but there will be no doubt when Jesus returns (24:24-31).
 2. Don't become a date-setter (24:36). Only God himself knows when that great event will happen.
 3. Do be a wise steward of your time and opportunities (24:14, 45-46). God wants you to sow seed, not scan the horizon!
- On your appointment calendar, pick a date later in October and add this memo line: "It's later than it's ever been before. Am I more prepared than I've ever been before?"



INSIGHT Something Old, Something New
 Chapters 20-23 employ at least eleven quotations from the Old Testament. All together, Matthew contains about seventy-four such quotations and allusions—more than any other New Testament book.

CHAPTER 24

As Jesus was leaving the Temple grounds, his disciples pointed out to him the various Temple buildings. ²But he told them, "Do you see all these buildings? I assure you, they will be so completely demolished that not one stone will be left on top of another!"

³Later, Jesus sat on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said to him, "When will

take place? And will there be any sign ahead of time to signal your return and the end of the world?"

⁴Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone mislead you. ⁵For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah.' They will lead many astray. ⁶And wars will break out near and far, but don't panic. Yes, these things must come, but the end won't follow immediately. ⁷The nations and kingdoms will

Matt. 24:36:

"However, no one knows the day or the hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows."

Matt. 25:13:

"So stay awake and be prepared, because you do not know the day or hour of my return."

Malachi +

Matthew

400 Yrs. of Silence!

15 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield,
your very great reward."

²But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit^s my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

⁴Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." ⁵He took him outside and said, "Look at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

⁶Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

⁷He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."

⁸But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?"

⁹So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon."

¹⁰Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. ¹¹Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

¹²As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. ¹³Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your

descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. ¹⁴But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. ¹⁵You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure."

¹⁷When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. ¹⁸On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river^a of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— ¹⁹the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

Egyptian
Slavery 430
Years!

Genesis
15:
Institution
of the Abrahamic
Covenant
God is
Speaking!

God has
Nations on
A Time Clock
God is moved
by Repentance
(Jonah)

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELISHA

STUDY NUMBER THREE - II Kings 4:1-44

TEXT:

- v. 1 Now a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord; and the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."
- v. 2 And Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."
- v. 3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels at large for yourself from all your neighbors, even empty vessels; do not get a few."
- v. 4 "And you shall go in and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour out into all these vessels; and you shall set aside what is full."
- v. 5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons; they were bringing the vessels to her and she poured.
- v. 6 And it came about when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not one vessel more." And the oil stopped.
- v. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt, and you and your sons can live on the rest."
- v. 8 Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food.
- v. 9 And she said to her husband, "Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually."
- v.10 "Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he can turn in there."
- v.11 One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested.
- v.12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." And when he had called her, she stood before him.
- v.13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what can I do for you? Would you be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the army? And she answered, 'I live among my own people.'"
- v.14 So he said, "What then is to be done for her?" And Gehazi answered, "Truly she has no son and her husband is old."
- v.15 And he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.
- v.16 Then he said, "At this season next year you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant."
- v.17 And the woman conceived and bore a son at that season the next year, as Elisha had said to her.
- v.18 When the child was grown, the day came that he went out to his father to the reapers.
- v.19 And he said to his father, "My head, my head." And he said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother."

- v.20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her lap until noon, and then died.
- v.21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind him, and went out.
- v.22 Then she called to her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and return.
- v.23 Then he said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." And she said, "It will be well."
- v.24 Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, "Drive and go forward; do not slow down the pace for me unless I tell you."
- v.25 So she went and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel. And it came about when the man of God saw her at a distance, that he said to Gehazi his servant, "Behold, yonder is the Shunammite.
- v.26 "Please run now to meet her and say to her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'" And she answered, "It is well."
- v.27 When she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to push her away; but the man of God said, "Let her alone, for her soul is troubled within her; and the Lord has hid it from me and has not told me."
- v.28 Then she said, "Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"
- v.29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, and go your way; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if anyone salutes you, do not answer him; and lay my staff on the lad's face."
- v.30 And the mother of the lad said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." And he arose and followed her.
- v.31 Then Gehazi passed on before them and laid the staff on the lad's face, but there was neither sound nor response. So he returned to meet him and told him, "The lad has not awakened."
- v.32 When Elisha came into the house, behold the lad was dead and laid on his bed.
- v.33 So he entered and shut the door behind them both, and prayed to the Lord.
- v.34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child became warm.
- v.35 Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth, and went up and stretched himself on him; and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes.
- v.36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Take up your son."
- v.37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and she took up her son and went out.
- v.38 When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

- v.39 Then one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, for they did know what they were.
- v.40 So they poured it out for the men to eat. And it came about as they were eating of the stew, that they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And they were unable to eat.
- v.41 But he said, "Now bring meal." And he threw it into the pot, and he said, "Pour it out for the people that they may eat." Then there was no harm in the pot.
- v.42 Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat."
- v.43 And his attendant said, "What, shall I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, 'They shall eat and have some left over.'"
- v.44 So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.

P. 352

INTRODUCTION:

Thus far in our series of studies we have seen Elisha take over for the prophet Elijah, after he was taken into glory. In our first study he performed three miracles in the crossing over of the Jordan River, whereupon the prophets witnessed him as the one upon whom the spirit of Elijah now rested; and the changing of the waters from bitter into sweet in the city of Jericho; and the cursed pronounced upon the young men who were harassing him on the outskirts of Bethel.

In our last study he was consulted by the kings of Israel, Jerusalem, and Edom. On this occasion the Lord brought deliverance for the armies of the three kings against the Moabites miraculously, by providing water for them to drink and also a deceptive measure whereby the Moabites thought that a slaughter had taken place, which only eventually led to their own defeat.

God still judges Nations! Moab

This now brings us to Study Number Three in II Kings 4:1-44.

- v. 1 Now a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord; and the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."

As we turn now to chapter 4 and the furthering of the biography of Elisha, we are going to notice that this chapter contains 5 miracles which are performed by our prophet.

We don't know -4- which of the three schools he was enrolled.

Here in verse 1 we have the woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets who comes to Elisha. Evidently Elisha had known her husband, and she reminds him that her husband was a true believer. When he died, he had left an unpaid debt which the creditor had now come to collect.

If a borrower did not have personal property as security, his own person and that of his dependents would serve as security. Therefore, the creditor could legally take the widow's sons as a payment.

First thing we will observe in verse 1 is that this a very serious matter. The woman just did not come to speak to the prophet, but she cried out to Elisha, which would indicate to us the pressure of her grief and earnestness of her request to the prophet.

v. 2 And Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."

Elisha asks two questions. First, "What shall I do for you?" and then, "What do you have in the house?"

Her response to these two questions was to point up her real destitution. when she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."

v. 3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels at large for yourself from all your neighbors, even empty vessels; do not get a few."

Evidently this widow lived in Gilgal because this was the other school of the prophets which had been founded during the 10 years prior to Elijah's departure unto glory. They had founded schools in Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho.

She is commanded to go and borrow vessels from as many people as she can, that is, empty vessels, and then he tells her not to get a few. Get as many as possible. As you make plans so will be your provision.

v. 4 "And you shall go in and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour out into all these vessels; and you shall set aside what is full."

He now commands her, once they have acquired as many vessels as possible, to go into the house and shut the door, and with her sons, pour out into all these vessels the oil which she has in the jar, and you will set aside what is full.

Elisha recognizes his responsibility to help this little family. The Mosaic Law insists that widows and fatherless children be cared for.

v. 5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons; they were bringing the vessels to her and she poured.

Died with
out A piece
of the Rock

Seminary
student

She is just
About to lose
Everything

How often
the Lord takes
what we have
And Multiplies
it And Meets
our Needs

Widow of
Zarapheth
multiplies
the meal

Boys brought the jars + she started pouring.

You can get the picture now that once they got inside they shut the door and she instructed them to bring the empty vessels and she would begin to do the pouring.

v. 6 And it came about when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not one vessel more." And the oil stopped.

They had a veritable oil well going inside the house. After all of the vessels were full that they had accumulated, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said, "There is not one vessel more." And that point the oil stopped.

As Your Vision So Your Provision

This little pot of oil reminds us of John 6:9 where the five barley loaves and the two fish seem to be so small and insignificant to meet the needs of the 5,000 people who are waiting to be fed. But when they are in the hands of the Lord, He is pleased to use it. + Has some left over

12 Baskets left over

How oftentimes we limit God by our own unbelief and our lack of expectancy. Elisha had told her to borrow not a few. God actually wanted to do more for this woman than he did. Bring me yet a vessel, she said to her son. There was not a vessel more.

It is always a lack of human vision that sets limitations on what God does in us and for us. And when we review what God has done with us in the past, we often realize we could have had much more from him if we had been willing to expect more.

v. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt, and you and your sons can live on the rest."

She is very excited. Instead of crying to the man of God she came in her enthusiasm and told the man of God what had happened. He then responds with a series of commands. ① Go, sell the oil, and ② pay your debts, and ③ you and your sons can live on the rest."

* John 10:10 "I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

* Ephesians 3:20 "Now in him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

* Romans 8:32 "He who did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things?"

v. 8 Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food.

*Expect
Attempt
William Carey
Expect Greater
Things From
God Attempt
Greater
Things For God*

We are now introduced to another woman in the passage. She is a very gracious woman who entertained Elisha and was given to the gift of hospitality, whenever he passed through their town of Shunem.

- There is an interesting study to contrast these two women. ① In the former case the woman's place of residence is not given, but here it is, in Shunem. ② The first is a widow, and this woman's husband is alive. ③ The first woman was financially destitute, and this one is a woman of means. ④ The one sought out Elisha the prophet, approached the other. ⑤ Elisha provided for the former, this one ministered unto him. ⑥ The widow had two sons, but the married woman was childless. ⑦ The one was put to a severe test, the other was not.

It is believed that Shunem lay in the road between Samaria and Carmel and this would be a road which Elisha would often travel.

This woman was one of substance or wealth, as is intimated by the servants her husband had, and their building and furnishing a room for the prophet. God has his own among the rich and noble. This woman was also great spiritually. She was great in hospitality and discernment, perceiving that Elisha was a holy man of God. In meekness by owning her husband's headship in thoughtfulness for others, the care she took in providing for the prophet's comfort, in contentedness and wisdom, realizing Elisha would desire retirement and quietness, and in faith confidently counting upon God to show himself strong on her behalf and work a further miracle, as we shall see.

v. 9 And she said to her husband, "Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually."

When he stopped off there for several meals, and they had had conversations, she discerned that he was a holy man of God.

v.10 "Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he can turn in there."

She feels because he is a man of God, she wants to make a place for a prophet's chamber. It will be a room with a bed and a table and a chair and a lampstand. Then when he comes he can relax, rest, study, pray, and regain his strength before continuing his work and ministry.

J. Vernon McGee points out "since then there have been many believers who have in their homes what they call the prophet's chamber. As I have traveled about from place to place holding Bible conferences, I have stayed in many prophet's chambers. I could tell you about people all across this country today, wonderful Christian folks, who have a room where preachers and missionaries are entertained and feel at home. You do not know what that means in the lives of many of God's men today."

Motel 6 Motel Well leave the light on For You!

Tours: 4 Nights A week out!

Sun - Mon - Tues - Wed. Triple Car Garage !!

Many
Prophet's
Chambers
in our land

v.11 One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested.

While he was there in the upper chamber resting, his thoughts turned towards this woman and what he might do for her.

v.12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." And when he had called her, she stood before him.

Elisha feels the need to do something special for this lady. So he commands Gehazi to call her. When he had called her, she came and stood before him.

v.13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what can I do for you? Would you be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the army? And she answered, "I live among my own people."

Elisha had, evidently, acquired a great amount of influence as a result of the victories of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom over the Moabites. Even though he wouldn't ask anything for his own personal use, he would be willing to show his gratitude on her behalf and make any petition that she might want to present.

Her response seems to indicate that she is quite satisfied with the portion that God has given to her. She does not desire a change or an improvement in it.

It is Matthew Henry who says, "It would be well with many if they did but know when they are well off, but they do not. A roving spirit takes possession of them and they suppose they can improve their lot by moving from one place to another, only to find as the old adage says, 'A rolling stone gathers no moss.' The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. But it should be far otherwise with the people of God. It is much to be thankful for when we can contentedly say 'I dwell among my own people.'"

v.14 So he said, "What then is to be done for her?" And Gehazi answered, "Truly she has no son and her husband is old."

Her contentment with the present circumstances leads Elisha to ask the question of Gehazi, "What then is to be done for her?" And the servant answered that the one thing that probably is a real burden to her is that she has no son and her husband is now old.

One is reminded of the plight of Abraham and Sarah, with the promise of God that they were going to have a son, and now when she reaches 99 and Abraham is 90, they finally, miraculously, through God's intervention, are given a child, whom they named Isaac.

Battle with infertility

"I was burning candles to our lady of impossible conception" - Erna Bombeck

v.15 And he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.

v.16 Then he said, "At this season next year you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant."

* One is reminded of the account in Genesis 18 when the angel of the Lord told Abraham that Sarah his wife was going to have a son. Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.

"Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age. It has ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women, and Sarah laughed to herself saying, 'After I have become old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?' And the Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, saying, "Shall I indeed bear a child when I am so old?" Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you at this time next year and Sarah shall have a son.'

This prominent lady in our passage is overwhelmed and realizes that Elisha has spoken something which is impossible. And so she responds because the prophet has hit a cord in her own heart: 'No, my lord, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant.'

v.17 And the woman conceived and bore a son at that season the next year, as Elisha had said to her.

The God of Hannah and Sarah still exists and provides a child for this very gracious and generous woman.

v.18 When the child was grown, the day came that he went out to his father to the reapers.

What a glorious occasion this is with the smile of the heavenly Father upon this woman, in giving her a son. And now this son is beginning to grow up.

The child has now reached an age where he can go with his father out into the fields.

He still is, however, just a very young lad.

v.19 And he said to his father, "My head, my head." And he said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother."

The boy was evidently stricken with sunstroke or with a fever of some sort, and is stricken with great pain. The father realizing the emergency of the situation, says to the servant to carry him to his mother.

too excited
to be real

- ① Gracious
- ② Generous
- ③ Godly

Didn't
think it
All that
Serious !!

If such were the case, it would be difficult to reconcile the fact that this is still in the morning, and that the real danger of sunstroke would be much later in the day.

v.20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her lap until noon, and then died.

Evidently the father did not feel like this was anything terribly serious, apart from the fact that maybe he was stricken with a fever or something, and needed to get in with his mother and be comforted and taken care of, else the father would have left his work in the field and taken the son himself.

It seems too that the mother felt like this was a passing thing because she held him on her lap as he suffered until noon and then he all of a sudden expired.

What a tragedy to see this child who was such a precious provision to this woman who had been faithful to walk with God, and now the child is taken from her arms. How easy it would have been for her to have cried out and said, 'God, why have you done this to me in giving me a child, and now taking the child away. Would it have not been far better from my loving Father's point of view to have let me continue childless rather than to have experienced the joy of bearing a child, and now to have him taken from me.'

v.21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind him, and went out.

She is responding properly to this trial, in that she does not raise questions, but she goes immediately to the prophet's chamber and puts the child there on the bed, and then she went out.

It might be very possible that she also was aware of what happened to the widow at Zarephath, when Elijah gave back life to the widow's son who was stricken in a like manner.

v.22 Then she called to her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and return."

(Go Quickly) (N.I.V.)

What a beautiful illustration of submission and respect for the husband's leadership and authority when she tells her husband that she would like to be sent with one of the servants and one of the donkeys to the man of God and return.

v.23 And he said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." And she said, "It will be well."

Sub-Duro
Hematoma

why me?
why my
boy?

Can You Turn Your Face heavenward & say:
it will be well!?

Come Along with me! The best is yet to be!!

① Saved the best!
② All the way to glory
Manifest unsaturated
Faith in the future
God will write
still Another Chapter

She keeps this heart-breaking trial to herself. She does have an opportunity to put the burden upon her husband at this point when he asks the question, 'Why will you go to him today?' She just simply responds, 'It will be well.' This had got to be an act of real faith, believing that this trial is a test of her faith and will enable her to be more effective and fruitful for the Lord in the days that are ahead. She has the eye of faith to look beyond the present circumstances and simply to reply: 'It will be well.'

v.24 Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, "Drive and go forward; do not slow down the pace for me unless I tell you."

This is a very urgent need and a time for moving quickly, and so she instructs the servant not to slow down the pace at all unless she would tell him that her discomfort was so great that she was unable to continue at the rapid pace.

v.25 So she went and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel. And it came about when the man of God saw her at a distance, that he said to Gehazi his servant, "Behold, yonder is the Shunammite."

This little trip is over 20 miles, and she has made it very quickly.

Elisha immediately recognizes her as he sees her at a distance. Then he says to his servant, "Behold, yonder is the Shunammite."

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

You will notice in verse 23 she said 'It will be well' and in verse 26 she is saying 'It is well'. The Lord has ministered to her needs during this 20-mile trip, and she has a renewed confidence that everything is okay. Especially now that she is w/ the prophet.

v.27 When she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to push her away; but the man of God said, "Let her alone, for her soul is troubled within her; and the Lord has hid it from me and has not told me."

When the Shunammite woman comes to the man of God, she just falls at his feet in real grief and brokenness of heart over the trial which she has been bearing by herself since the death of her son. She has had no one to tell and no one to share her burden, until now she meets the man of God, who was the one who had prayed for this special favor to be hers, and that to have a child. And now this child is taken.

Gehazi the servant comes near and endeavors to push her away, but the man of God, Elisha, says, "Let her alone". The reason he gives that command is her soul is troubled within her, and the Lord has hid it from me and has not told me what has happened to this woman.

It will be well!! It isn't right now but All the story hasn't been written!!

"It will be well" v.23
"It is well" v.26

the time for
Flashing lights
& sirens
is An emergency

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v.28 Then she said, "Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"

With her two questions, Elisha understands what the problem is. ^① Did I ask for a son from my lord? And the answer to that question is "no." And did I not say, Do not deceive me? And the answer to that is "yes!" And now Elisha realizes that the burden and concern of this Shunammite woman is the same as the widow of Zarephath, and that is, her son has been stricken.

v.29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, and go your way; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if anyone salutes you, do not answer him; and lay my staff on the lad's face."

Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, Elisha sends Gehazi, and sends him urgently, with his staff. He is to go as quickly as possible and lay Elisha's staff upon the lad's face.

v.30 And the mother of the lad said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." And he arose and followed her.

The mother of the lad spoke to Elisha and said that she was not going to leave him until such time as the trial had been passed, and the boy's life had been restored. You can sense her frustration, in that her only hope is that the man of God might do the same as Elijah had done for the widow at Zarephath. And so with her plea, he arose and followed her.

I knew
Where is the blessedness when first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul refreshing view of Jesus and His word?
What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still.

Now
But ~~know~~ I feel an aching void
The world can never fill.

v.31 Then Gehazi passed on before them and laid the staff on the lad's face, but there was neither sound nor response. So he returned to meet him and told him, "The lad has not awakened."

Gehazi is an interesting study in himself. ^② His name means 'denier'. The various references to his character and conduct seem to bear this out. ^③ First, he is seen thrusting away this poor woman when she cast herself at Elisha's feet. And then, ^④ the nonsuccess of his efforts here. He eventually gives away to a lack of confidence in the power of Elisha in verse 43; and ^⑤ finally his love for money gets him in chapter 5 when he followed Naaman to get some personal advantage, and then he is eventually stricken with leprosy for this deception.

See his disqualification for
Ministry Next week !!

It is a mystery why Elisha would have such a servant, but when we realize that there was a similar situation among the Twelve in Judas Iscariot, we do not call to question divine sovereignty and providence in these matters.

v.32 When Elisha came into the house, behold the lad was dead and laid on his bed.

This is exactly the situation when the woman had departed to go in search of Elisha earlier.

v.33 So he entered and shut the door behind them both, and prayed to the Lord.

This is probably something that Gehazi did not do. He just came and laid the staff on the lad's face and then departed. Sort of went through the ritual and did not spend any time calling upon the Lord for his intervention in the situation to restore the boy to life. And as he prayed to the Lord, he is asking the Lord to give life to the lad.

v.34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child became warm.

This is a very similar situation to Elijah's conduct with the widow at Zarephath and her dead son.

* I Kings 17:20-22 "And he called to the Lord and said, 'O Lord my God, hast thou also brought calamity to the widow with whom I am staying by causing her son to die.' Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the Lord and said, 'O Lord, my God, I pray thee, let this child's life return to him.' And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived."

v.35 Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth, and went up and stretched himself on him; and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes.

After his first encounter with the child, he went back again and stretched himself upon the lad, and he sneezed and opened his eyes.

v.36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Take up your son."

What a precious and tender moment this must have been, as Elisha reveals to the woman that God has been faithful in giving back her son once again into her arms.

Fell At His
Feet in Green
Weeping
Now in Gratitude

v.37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and she took up her son and went out.

First she fell at Elisha's feet in humble gratitude and praise for what he had done, and then she took up her son and went out.

The history here closes her chamber door upon her, but as we pass softly by it, we hear sobs within, as it appears partly of joy and partly of distress, with broken words, words of supplication, of homage and of grateful praise. Here then let us be content to leave her for surely she is prostrated with her child at the Lord's footstool, renewing the surrender of her heart to the God of her salvation, dedicating her child to him as an eternal possession and casting all that she has before the foot of His throne.

How sacred and impressive is such a moment of sacred retirement, into which further we can no intrude. Let us, however, rejoice that the Lord has thus published his name so gloriously abroad in the earth, and that upon those that love him and whose names are written in the book of life, his mercy endureth forever.

v.38 When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

Coming back to the seminary at Gilgal, he finds that there is a famine in the land. There is not enough food for those concerned at the time of distress. And so he, as he finds the sons of the prophets sitting before him, and they obviously are manifesting a hunger for physical food as well as for spiritual food. He said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil some stew for the sons of the prophets."

v.39 Then one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, for they did not know what they were.

In a frustrating search for herbs for the stew, they found a wild vine and gathered a lap full of wild gourds and came and put these in the pot of stew because they didn't know what they were.

I am sure the prophet who went out to find herbs, when he found these gourds, felt like he had been led of the Lord to this prosperity and wanted to share it with everyone else.

One is reminded of the fact that in a time of famine there is always plenty of wild gourds. And so it is in our day, with the famine of the teaching of the word of God, Satan makes sure there are plenty of wild gourds for folks to feed upon. They look so much like the real

Husks The Hogs were eating!

thing. One is reminded of 2 Cor. 11:13-15 - ✱✱

"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light; therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose ends shall be according to their deeds."

v.40 So they poured it out for the men to eat. And it came about as they were eating of the stew, that they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And they were unable to eat.

Immediately the prophets, in tasting the stew, recognize that these wild gourds were poisonous.

v.41 But he said, "Now bring meal." And he threw it into the pot, and he said, "Pour it out for the people that they may eat." Then there was no harm in the pot.

Elisha now performs a miracle in Gilgal. He provides not only spiritual food for his prophets, but physical food miraculously through this act of putting the meal in the pot.

It is interesting to note that Elisha has now performed miracles in reverse.

First, he struck the waters of the Jordan and walked across on dry ground.

Secondly, he purified the waters in the city of Jericho.

And third, he pronounced a curse upon the young men in Bethel.

And now, he heals this pot of stew here in Gilgal.

The meal was soon provided for Elisha and Elisha cast it into the pot without pomp or ceremony, in the fullest reliance upon him who worketh alike by things great and small. He then says to his servant, "Pour it out for the people that they may eat." And they hesitate not but eat in faith.

Faith is never put to shame. Those only are made ashamed who trust in their own strength, but faith shall see the glory of God. The disciples ate and their was no harm in the pot. The pottage was savory and good and the poison they had already swallowed was rendered perfectly innocuous. Thus a handful of meal in the hand of the Almighty sufficed to disarm death, to disappoint hell, to preserve the salt of the earth, and to sustain his prophets in the world.

Let none be afraid who have the God of Jacob for their help. He who has all power in heaven and in earth and works all in all can render everything subservient to his pleasure.

He can take the mess of poisoned pottage and use it in his service.

How beautifully Elisha, empowered by God, is able to cover over the mistake of this servant who has put the gourds in the pot.

So often times do we find that Christ by his miraculous power can cover our mistakes--mistakes that we all make, in his service, and still use us for the glory of God.

v.42 Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat."

This man from Baal-shalishah is a believer and he is fulfilling his responsibility of bringing the first fruit of his harvest to the man of God. He wants these provisions to be used to feed the prophets.

The man from Baal-shalishah must have been a most welcome visitor, not merely on account of the value of his gift, but because as the first fruits of the new harvest, it was a joyous intimation that Jehovah would again smile upon the afflicted land. His arrival in Gilgal with the bread, like that of Joshua and Caleb with the grapes of Eschol in the Hebrew camp, and the dove with olive branch in the ark of Noah, must have chased the gloom from their desponding minds and opened the future to their view in bright and promising prospect. Thus in our days of spiritual dejection and bareness, we breathe more freely and indulge a more cheering hope if we meet with a person whose life manifests a healthy glowing and joyous faith. The exalted piety of such a person affords us clear evidence that heavenly grace is not withheld.

We seem to recognize in it the first indication of a general Pentecostal visitation. We indulge the hope that our community may soon be the scene of a revival. The mere thought of which raises the very soul and brightens the dim light of our heavenly existence with a cheering dawn.

I am sure there are a number who say, 'Alas, when is this misery to cease?' We have escaped the poison only to die of hunger. Of what profit is it to trust God?' And then the Lord makes this glorious provision.

v.43 And his attendant said, "What, shall I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, 'They shall eat and have some left over.'"

The one who is in charge of food service has real questions about how far twenty loaves of barley and a few ears of corn will go with a hundred men who are very hungry.

One is reminded of John chapter 6 when Andrew, bringing the five loaves and a couple of fish, would say, "What is this among so many?" when Christ is confronted with a hungry multitude of 5,000 +

The command is given by Elisha - 'Give them to the people that they may eat. For thus says the Lord, They shall eat and have some left over.'

Contrary to the present circumstances that seem impossible, the message of the Lord is: Eat and you'll have some left over.

v.44 So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.

What a graphic illustration of the results of obedience. They set it before them, even though it seemed so small, and they ate. And after everybody had been fed, they had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.

This, too, was like John chapter 6, as a result of everyone eating, each disciple is given a basket and he fills completely his basket with the fragments that were left over after the entire multitude had all that they could want to eat.

CONCLUSION:

There are a number of lessons from II Kings chapter 4 that we'd like to underscore at this time:

LESSON #1: The Lord often multiplies what we have to make provision for us in the hour of our need. This is seen in the jar of oil in the first part of the chapter, and in the twenty barley loaves and the ears of grain in the last part of the chapter.

LESSON #2: The Lord's provision is always exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think because every vessel was filled.

LESSON #3: The Shunammite woman is seen as being great because of her spirituality, her sensitivity, and her submission, *Servant's heart.*

LESSON #4: The Shunammite woman is also another version of the principle recorded in Psalm 37, and that principle is 'delight yourselves in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.'

LESSON #5: Many times the Lord puts his hand upon the provision that he has made previously to test us to see whether or not that gift has become more important than our relationship to him.

Sometimes to draw us more closely to Himself.

10 LESSONS

Chapter opens in Abundance

+ Closes in Abundance

Both using what they had + multiplying it.

LESSON #6: The Lord often tests our faith through the trials that we pass.

*Pom 8:28
"Together"*
LESSON #7: The Shunammite woman never loses her confidence in God through the entire trial. And as a result, is rewarded for her faith and trust in God's ability to work all things together in this situation.

LESSON #8: It is necessary for Elisha to have personal contact with the dead child, even as Elijah did in I Kings 17. The great principle here, according to J. Vernon McGee is: "that when we are dead in trespasses and sins, personal contact with Jesus Christ brings life. In him we have life: He is life."

LESSON #9 Elisha first ministers to the spiritual needs of the prophets at Gilgal, and then to their physical needs.

LESSON #10: The Lord's provision of the barley loaves and the ears of grain was totally adequate for the situation, although it did not seem so from a human point of view.



① It was well
Historical

② It shall be well
A- when you come through
B- when you fulfill
my agenda.
C- I am giving you
one last chance

③ It is well
A- I surrender
B- you are on the throne
C- King of Kings