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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELISHA

STUDY NUMBER SEVEN - II Kings 8:1-15

p. 373

TEXT:

- v. 1 Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go with your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the Lord has called for a famine, and it shall even come on the land for seven years."
- v. 2 So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God, And she went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.
- v. 3 And it came about at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went out to appeal to the king for her house and for her field.
- v. 4 Now the king was talking with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please relate to me all the great things that Elisha has done."
- v. 5 And it came about, as he was relating to the king how he had restored to life the one who was dead, that behold, the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealed to the king for her house and for her field. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."
- v. 6 When the king asked the woman, she related it to him. So the king appointed for her a certain officer, saying, "Restore all that was hers and all the produce of the field from the day that she left the land even until now."
- v. 7 Then Elisha came to Damascus. Now Ben-hadad king of Syria was sick, and it was told him, saying, "The man of God has come here."
- v. 8 And the king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, 'Will I recover from this sickness?'"
- v. 9 So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift in his hand, even every kind of good thing of Damascus, forty camels' loads; and he came and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Will I recover from this sickness?'"
- v.10 Then Elisha said to him, "Go say to him, 'You shall surely recover,' but the Lord has shown me that he will certainly die."
- v.11 And he fixed his gaze steadily on him until he was ashamed, and the man of God wept.
- v.12 And Hazael said, "Why does my lord weep?" Then he answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel: their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword, and their little ones you will dash in pieces, and their women with child you will rip up."
- v.13 Then Hazael said, "But what is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?" And Elisha answered, "The Lord has shown me that you will be king over Syria."

- v.14 So he departed from Elisha and returned to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me that you would surely recover."
- v.15 And it came about on the morrow, that he took the cover and dipped it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died. And Hazael became king in his place.

INTRODUCTION:

Tracing the life of Elisha through its various episodes we have seen him at the Jordan River receiving the mantle from Elijah his master, who had been taken home in a whirlwind. And then immediately move into a ministry by striking the waters of the Jordan, which parted for his crossing; the healing of the waters in Jericho; and also the pronouncing of a curse upon the young rebels who are dogging his path on the way up to Samaria through Bethel.

In our second study we witnessed the three kings, Jehoshaphath of Judah, Jehoram of Israel, and the king of Edom, asking for wisdom from Elisha with regard to their present need for water and the outcome of the battle against the Moabites; of which Elisha predicted that they would have water the next day and victory over the Moabites, which took place.

In our third study we witnessed several beautiful things happen as he provided oil for one of the widows of the prophets so that she could pay her bills and have some retirement income. He also promised the woman at Shunem that she would have a son. At a very young age the boy died, and Elisha has the privilege of seeing the Lord work to restore his life. He also provided food for the prophets in changing a poisoned stew into something that was edible. He took the loaves of barley and the ears of grain and sustained a hundred men of the prophets, and they also had some left over.

In our fourth study we witnessed the healing of Naaman the leper, who was a general of the Syrian forces. And we also witnessed the greed of Gehazi as he pursued Naaman to get some of the benefits which Naaman wanted to offer for his cure.

In our fifth study we saw the expansion program for the seminary because of the tremendous popularity of Elisha, and the accident that took place with the axe-head falling into the river. We also witnessed the international situation as the king of Syria tried to come down and apprehend Elisha in Dothan.

In our last study we saw the people in a time of great famine and poverty, and witnessed the four lepers going into the camp of Syria; and with the Lord's intervention, they were able to find the camp completely abandoned with all of the abundance of food necessary to meet the needs of the children of Israel.

As we come to today's study, we see how quick the people of Israel are in forgetting God's marvelous deliverance and His provision by the fact that they returned once again to their sin, their idolatry, and their immorality.

As a result of this, they just again suffer the judgment of a famine.

One is reminded of (Isaiah chapter 1) when the Lord says:

"Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth, for the Lord speaks: Sons I have reared and brought up, but they have revolted against Me. An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master's manger, but Israel does not know. My people do not understand. Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity; offspring of evil doers, sons who act corruptly. They have abandoned the Lord. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They have turned away from Him. Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is nothing sound in it. Only bruises, welts and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil. Your land is desolate. Your cities are burned with fire. Your fields, strangers are devouring them in your presence. It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers."

v. 1 Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go with your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the Lord has called for a famine, and it shall even come on the land for seven years."

Elisha had evidently been up on Mount Carmel communing with the Lord, and as he returned back to the city of Samaria, he stopped off at the home of the Shunammite where oftentimes he was sustained by good hospitality in having a home-cooked meal. She and her husband had prepared a prophet's chamber where he had the privilege of spending the night if he so desired.

While he was there on the prior occasion, the woman was miraculously given by God a son, and that son had died. Elisha had asked the Lord to restore his life, and the son was restored.

Elisha now has a message from the Lord. It is a message of judgment upon Israel for their unwillingness to return to Him and to become obedient. So Elisha says, "Arise, and go with your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the Lord has called for a famine, and it shall even come on the land for seven years."

Because Israel is going to be under this time of judgment, Elisha wants to return the favor for all the provisions that the Shunammite woman has made for him; and suggests that she go and sojourn somewhere outside the boundaries of the land of Israel, where she can be sustained during this time of famine.

Generous
Good
Godly
Gracious
Spiritual
Submissive
Sensitive
Servant's heart

The prophet promised the woman God would give her a son.

It is interesting that during the time of Elijah, when the famine arose, the Lord chose to sustain the widow at Zarephath right in the land, as well as sustaining Elisha. In this case, however, he asks her to go and sojourn where she can outside the boundaries of the land.

Jacob & His Family with Joseph in Egypt.

The extent of this famine is going to be twice as long as the one during Elijah's ministry and Ahab's reign, for it was only 3½ years. It only goes to point up the fact that as we resist what the Lord is doing in our lives, there is an increasing severity that takes place in the circumstances that are used by a loving God to get us to respond to Him.

Should have learned from Father's experience !!

I think it is very important for us to realize that the Lord can use natural phenomenon to chasten and to discipline His people.

v. 2 So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God, and she went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

This woman exercises faith in the message of Elisha. And she immediately obeyed. She arose and did according to the word of the man of God, and she went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines 7 years.

50-60 Mi. S.W. of Shunem to the Med. Coast!

It is a miracle in itself that this woman is able to stay in the land of the Philistines for seven years, since they have been enemies of the children of Israel during all of their history. We now have this Shunammite woman and her family finding refuge in their land. It is a miracle of God's grace.

v. 3 And it came about at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went out to appeal to the king for her house and for her field.

When the famine was over and the seven years had been accomplished, then this woman returned to her old homestead. She evidently found somebody living on her land.

She then went to appeal to the king for her house and for her field.

v. 4 Now the king was talking with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please relate to me all the great things that Elisha has done."

Jehoram & Gehazi:

How God providentially orders the circumstances to prepare the king for fulfilling this woman's request is unreal.

The king at this time is talking with Gehazi, the former servant of Elisha, who had been stricken with leprosy.

Great things God has done !!

The Prodigal

Keeps getting worse
Tribulation period

Picture of the Church
escaping God's wrath upon His people !!

① Timing
② God Thing

Circum Chastening Come Home

Naomi + Elimelech and Two Boys
Go down from Bethlehem to the Moabites
Boys Marry
Girls Birth Orphan Ruth Boaz Messianic Line

- ① Jordan
- ② Jericho
- ③ Bethel
- ④ Oil
- ⑤ Stew
- ⑥ Food
- ⑦ Reproof
- ⑧ Son
- ⑨ Life

The request of the king at this point is: "please relate to me all the great things that Elisha has done." And so their conversation centered around many of the marvelous things that Gehazi had witnessed during the time that he had the privilege of serving as the servant of Elisha.

Could well have been one of the lepers in the previous account

v. 5 And it came about, as he was relating to the king how he had restored to life the one who was dead, that behold, the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealed to the king for her house and for her field. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."

How perfect is the timing of the Lord, because as Gehazi was relating to the king how Elisha had restored life to the one who was dead, at that moment the woman whose son he had restored to life, came and made an appeal to the king for her house and for her field.

Gehazi recognizes the woman and her son and turns to the king and says, "This is the woman and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."

v. 6 When the king asked the woman, she related it to him. So the king appointed for her a certain officer, saying, "Restore all that was hers and all the produce of the field from the day that she left the land even until now."

How gracious is the Lord to make such an abundant provision. For the king takes steps, not only to restore unto her all that is hers, but all the produce of the field from the day that she left the land even until now; which would not be very much due to the time of famine, but at least it would help her to get settled and get things going once again.

v. 7 Then Elisha came to Damascus. Now Ben-hadad king of Syria was sick, and it was told him, saying, "The man of God has come here."

Evidently, Elisha's ministry had expanded greatly because he had the freedom to go into Damascus. It is at a time when Ben-hadad the king of Syria is sick.

Here we have another experience in the life of Elisha that is very remarkable. You will remember, I am sure, in one of our previous studies how the king of Syria had attempted to apprehend Elisha because of the fact that he was making known to the king of Israel all the movements of his troops, and he wanted to apprehend him and take his life.

We now have this king who is old and sick, and Elisha comes to Damascus.

v. 8 And the king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, 'Will I recover from this sickness?'"

Ahab & Jez.
Naboth's Vineyard

"Miracle in
Getting out +
Miracle Getting
Back in"...

Elisha Fed
Them And
Let them
Go !!

The king is doing a similar thing here as that of Naaman, in that he is providing a climate for Elisha to heal him of his sickness, and to provide him an extended life; and as a result of that, wants to give him a gift.

v. 9 So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift in his hand, even every kind of good thing of Damascus, forty camels' loads; and he came and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying 'Will I recover from this sickness?'"

J. Vernon McGee points out: "that Hazael went to meet Elisha. He is the captain of Ben-hadad's hosts. There was a reference to him in I Kings 19:15 which says: 'And the Lord said unto him (that is, Elijah) Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria.' So Hazael had been anointed king many years earlier. He is just waiting around for old Ben-hadad to die. You can well understand that it would be very difficult for the king's successor, whether it be a son, a general, or someone else, to shed very many tears at his funeral because it was his funeral that would bring him to power. So Hazael went out to meet Elisha, but I don't think he went with a great deal of enthusiasm. He took an impressive gift to Elisha, which was from the king."

When he arrives with this great gift, he says to Elisha, "your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying 'Will I recover from this sickness?'"

I hope not !!

v.10 Then Elisha said to him, "Go say to him, 'You shall surely recover,' but the Lord has shown me that he will certainly die."

The disease from which your master is suffering will not produce a fatal end. Nevertheless, the Lord has shown me that his death is imminent by violence, another proof that the Lord God reveals His secret unto His servants, the prophets.

Naturally, Hazael is confused by this seeming double talk. Probably, disappointed by the fact that he is going to recover, but encouraged by the fact that he will certainly die.

v.11 And he fixed his gaze steadily on him until he was ashamed, and the man of God wept.

Elisha knew what was in the heart of Hazael, that he was looking forward to becoming the king of Syria, and how he had hoped for the natural course to take place, so that he could step into the position of power and privilege of leading Syria. Elisha, with his all-knowing eyes, looked deep into the eyes of Hazael, until he was ashamed.

Jhn 2:28 The plans of Assassination were Already A Part of his brooding!

David Anointed by Samuel when he was a Teen-ager + began to reign when he was Thirty!

Then Elisha began to weep.

sin selfishness in heart of Hazael!
 Jesus cries Jerusalem - Lazarus - Garden - Parable

v.12 And Hazael said, "Why does my lord weep?" Then he answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel: their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword, and their little ones you will dash in pieces, and their women with child you will rip up."

Elisha is weeping here because of what Hazael is going to do to the land of Israel, when he does come to the throne.

Not A Son but A Usurper - Power Grab!

v.13 Then Hazael said, "But what is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?" And Elisha answered, "The Lord has shown me that you will be king over Syria."

Although Hazael denies the fact, Elisha knows what the Lord has revealed to him about the future for Israel and its relationship to Syria. And Elisha answers, "The Lord has shown me that you will be king over Syria."

woman at the well !!

What a tragedy, for Hazael to stand and have to look away in shame as Elisha fixes his gaze upon him.

One is reminded of that passage in I John 2:28 when John challenges the young believers by saying:

Rev. 2:4

"And now little children, abide in Him, so that if He should appear, we should have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."

v.14 So he departed from Elisha and returned to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me that you would surely recover."

McGee points out on this verse: "This is what Elisha foresaw. In substance he had said, 'Of course the king will be glad to hear he is going to recover; and that's what you are going to tell him, but you won't let him recover.'"

"Hazael, Son of Nobody Seizes The Throne!"

v.15 And it came about on the morrow, that he took the cover and dipped it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died. And Hazael became king in his place.

Proverbs 15:3 "The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, Keeping watch on the wicked and the good."
 Jeremiah 16:17 "My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes."

12 LESSONS

CONCLUSION:

From this particular study there are a number of lessons that we can derive for our own personal benefit.

LESSON #1: How gracious is the Lord to provide through Elisha blessing upon the household of the Shunammite woman during the time of famine.

LESSON #2: We see God's providential dealings with the king and Gehazi to meet the Shunammite woman's needs upon return to the land after the famine.
Ph. 1.4:19

LESSON #3: How exceeding abundantly does the Lord provide for His own.
Epl 3:20 For the king also said that the produce of the field from the day that she had left the land even until now shall be hers.

LESSON #4: How fickle is the heart of man when Ben-hadad in one moment is seeking to kill Elisha, and on another occasion is seeking a favor from him.

LESSON #5: All of the events of our lives are certainly known to the Lord.

① Thoughts ② words ③ Deeds

LESSON #6: Elisha manifests his love and compassion for the wayward nation of Israel through his tears. Lord Jesus - How Oft.

LESSON #7: How literally does the Lord fulfill the prophecy in the death of Ben-hadad, and the assuming of the throne by Hazael who became king of Syria.

Lesson #8 Picture of the Rapture in Shunammite woman's escaping Judgment

Lesson #9 Things keep getting worse As we resist what God is doing in our lives. 7 yrs.

Lesson #10 Supreme Selfishness of the human heart in Hazael, to stoop to murder for desired objectives.

Lesson #11 Contrast Hazael & Shunammite woman on God's timing & provision

Lesson #12 Tears in eyes of Lord Now !!
" " our eyes later !!

Francis & Belva

#513 whiter than Snow!
(All five verses.)