

# Elisha

Lesson 13 – Famine Predicted  
2Kings 8:1-6

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The Prophet of God

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## 1. Elisha's Prophetic Warning (v.1)

- a. Though God delivered Samaria from the Syrian army, the people of Israel did not turn back to the Lord. The time of hunger in Samaria did not make a lasting impact in drawing them back to God. Remember, any time God chastens, it is always with the goal of restoration.
- b. When God revealed to Elisha that he was about to send a famine to the nation of Israel, Elisha must have planned one of his stops at the Shunammite's **Prophet's Chamber**. Time had passed, and it appears that her husband had now died, leaving her alone with her son. Elisha told her that God was about to send a famine to Israel. The famine would last seven years. He advised her and her household (i.e., including servants) to leave the country temporarily to avoid the famine.
- c. God does not always remove His people before He sends judgment. Millions of Christians have lost their lives due to natural disasters and persecution. However, the woman's departure pictures the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. We believe the Bible teaches that God will take Christians to heaven before He judges the world with seven years of Great Tribulation. Another example is the life of Noah.

## 2. The Shunammite Woman's Response (v.2)

- a. She arose. She did what Elisha said. She went with her household. She sojourned in the land of the Philistines. There is no hint that she complained or grumbled at the inconvenience of leaving home. She seems grateful for the warning. Also, we note that she "sojourned" in the land with no intentions of remaining there permanently.
- b. Her response to the prophet's message is totally opposite to the response of the king's servant at Samaria in the previous story. He mocked the prophet's words. She fully obeyed them.
- c. When we hear God's word, we have a choice to make. We can mock it, ignore it, partly obey it, or fully heed it. Both history and experience tells us that the last choice is the only wise choice.

## 3. The Shunammite's Problem (v.3)

- a. The seven years of famine in Israel had ended. However, when the Shunammite woman returned, either the crown had claimed her property or squatters had taken over her homestead and did not want to

give it back to her.

- b. She wisely appealed to the king for her legal right to the home and land she had left behind.

## 4. The King's Enquiry (v.4)

- a. As she approached the palace to request an audience with the king to seek his help to get back her property, God went before her in a marvellous way.
- b. The king was presently talking with Gehazi (Elisha's former servant), asking him to recount all the great things that Elisha had done.
  - 1) Was not Gehazi a leper? They may have practiced social distancing or his leprosy was a noncontagious type.
  - 2) Why was the ungodly king interested in Elisha's mighty acts? Perhaps God put the desire in him just for this opportunity to help the Shunammite woman and to build our faith.

## 5. God's Perfect Timing (v.5)

- a. At the very moment when Gehazi was telling the king about Elisha raising the Shunammite woman's son from the dead, she stood in the court seeking audience with the king.
- b. Gehazi saw her and her son and exclaimed to the king, "*This is the woman and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.*"
- c. We cannot help but see the loving and mighty hand of God in the timing of this. There are no coincidences with God. God's timing is perfect. (Proverbs 15:23) "*... a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*"
- d. God knew that without this special knowledge about the woman, the heartless king would have sent her away empty. God so loved the woman who had cared for Elisha that He orchestrated the timing perfectly.
- e. Illustration: I eat an apple each morning. A few weeks ago, I ate our last red apple. That day the IGA ads had apples for .99/kg. God is good!

## 6. The Shunammite's Restoration (v.6)

- a. The king asked the woman to verify her identity and she did so.
- b. God used the account of Elisha raising her son to life to soften the king's heart.
- c. He restored her all that had been hers, plus all the fruits of the field since the day she left.
- d. God cares about his faithful children. God's words to Eli were true for the Shunammite and are still true today. (1 Samuel 2:30) "*... for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*"