

2 Kings 4

Clay Vessels

I. Elisha and the Widow's Oil: Pour it Out

1 A certain woman of the **wives of the sons of the prophets** cried out to Elisha

- Sons of Prophets? Seminary Students. Learning word of God under Elijah/Elisha
- **Wife** of Sons of Prophets cries out to Elisha?

Can/Should Men in Positions of Spiritual Leadership Marry?

- **Marriage in general for believers...**

1 Corinthians 7:7 [Read] ...I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. **8** But I say to the **unmarried** and to the **widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am...**

Paul was not married Good to remain unmarried focus all attention on Lord

- **Paul was formerly a Pharisee**
 1. Norm for Pharisees to be married
 2. Required for Rabbis to be married...**which Paul likely was**
 3. Evidence suggests Paul became a widower [or wife left after conversion]
 4. **After Salvation Experience given gift of celibacy**
- **Paul's instruction:**
 1. Everyone that can stay unmarried do so
 2. Use the gift of celibacy to build the Kingdom

...9 but if they [unmarried] cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. **For it is better to marry than to burn with passion...**

- If it is natural for you; i.e. gift of God...**remain unmarried**
- If it seems unnatural...**get married**
- Married/Unmarried same priorities; i.e. keep an Eternal Perspective
 1. Jesus
 2. Spouse
 3. Children
 4. Church
 5. Extended Family
 6. Others
 7. Self

...29 But this I say, brethren, **the time is short**, so that from now on even those who have wives should **be as though they had none**, **30** those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did

not possess, 31 and those who use this world as not misusing it. For **the form of this world is passing away.** [Stay]

- Married should be as if they were not?

Jesus must remain primary love...in order to love spouse correctly

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

- In relation and comparison to his/her love for Jesus

We try to find balance between Lord/Family but is balance what the Lord desires?

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Psalms 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. **4 Delight yourself** also in the Lord, And He shall **give you the desires of your heart.**

Lord and Family? Not balance but perspective.
The scales must be tilted in favor of Lord for both to work

1 Cor. 7 [Cont.] ...**32** But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried **cares for the things of the Lord**—how he may please the Lord. **33** But he who is married cares about the things of the world—**how he may please his wife.** **34** There is a difference between a wife and a virgin [unmarried woman]. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may **please her husband.** **35** And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you **may serve the Lord without distraction.**

- Some people have gift of celibacy; **most don't**

Matthew 19:11 [Jesus] "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: **12** For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have **made themselves eunuchs** for the **kingdom of heaven's sake.** He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

- Honorable/Beneficial to be unmarried and dedicated to Lord if you are called

SUMMARY: Marriage for believers in general:

- **If you have** the gift of celibacy it is better for you/kingdom to **stay single**
- **If you don't have** the gift of celibacy and burn with passion then **get married**

God says marriage is good

Picture of Christ and His Bride: Husbands love/die. Wives Respect/submit

- Old Testament Priests were married
- **What about Apostles, could they marry?**

Matthew 8:14 [Peter pre-apostolic] Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his **wife's mother** lying sick with a fever. [Mark 1:30, Luke 4:38]

- Later Peter would take his wife while serving as Apostle...

1 Corinthians 9:5 [Paul of post-apostolic Peter and others] Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

- **What about Elders and Pastors?**

1. **Titus 1:6** Husband of one wife
2. **1 Timothy 3:2** Husband of one wife

- Any group forbidding marriage is demonically motivated/disastrous repercussions

1 Timothy 4:1 [Read] Now the Spirit expressly says that in **latter times** some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 **forbidding to marry**, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

- Forbidding marriage to those not called to celibacy is cruel/demonic
- Leads to guilt, perversion, child molestation

- **SUMMARY: Instructions to all believers including Spiritual Leaders:**

If you have the gift use it if not get married. Period

1. Unmarried **with gift** of celibacy: Stay unmarried
2. Unmarried **without gift** of celibacy: Get married to avoid sin
3. To both Eternal perspective

Our Eternal Perspective does not negate out temporal obligations...

- **A wife of a son of a prophet cries out to Elisha...**

1b... "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves."

- My Husband/Your student...is dead.
- Feared God and left us in debt?

**Is it possible to fear God and leave family in debt?
Unless unforeseen tragedy...No**

1 Timothy 5:8 ...if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has **denied the faith** and is **worse than an unbeliever**.

- **Husband/Father** who does not provide

1. Has denied the faith
2. Is worse than unbeliever

- **Debt for a believer?**

Proverbs 22:7 ... the borrower is servant to the lender.

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another

Husband dead and left family in debt...Lenders on way to take my two sons

- Spiritual Leaders are required by God to take care of wife and children

1 Timothy 3:4 [Elder/Pastor must rule] his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)

- E.g. Funeral of Evangelist who led so many to Lord not attended by wife/children

2 So 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 but a jar of oil." 3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—**empty vessels**; do not gather just a few.

- I have one jar with oil
- Go find a bunch of empty jars...

All God needs to work. Vessel ready to be filled...

Elisha always looking for a vessel ready to be filled with something

2 Kings 2:20 "Bring me a new bowl [vessel], and put salt in it."

- **Salt:** Picture of our Words seasoned with salt. Words of Healing. Words of Grace

"Go get empty vessels from your neighborhood...lots of 'em"

4 And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons then **pour it into** all those vessels, and set aside the full ones."

**Take you full jar and fill all the empty jars with oil
First salt now oil**

- **Oil:** Picture of Divine Precious Holy Spirit

Oil was used to anoint Priests, Prophets and Kings

1 Samuel 16:13 Then [Prophet] Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the **Spirit of the Lord came upon David** from that day forward.

- Actual Anointing Oil was so precious to duplicate it was **punishable by death**

Exodus 30:33 Whoever compounds any like it, or whoever puts any of it on an outsider, shall be **cut off from his people.**

- We are to be anointed with, empowered by, filled with the **precious Holy Spirit**

Ephesians 5:18 ...do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit...

- Spirit of Jesus/Spirit of Father one in same

Acts 16:7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the **Spirit of Jesus** would not allow them to.

We are nothing without the precious Spirit of God

Isaiah 11:2 [Read] The Spirit of the **Lord** shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, The Spirit of **counsel** and **might**, The Spirit of **knowledge** and of the **fear** of the Lord.

- **Seven-fold Spirit**; Seven Spirits of God in Revelation

Revelation 1:4b [Read] ...Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne

1. **Spirit of the Lord**: Middle Candle of Menorah
 2. **Wisdom**
 3. **Understanding**
 4. **Counsel**
 5. **Might**
 6. **Knowledge**
 7. **Fear**
- **Oil**: Picture of precious Holy Spirit
 - **Vessel**: Picture of earthly human body; clay tent.

We can use our bodies for Good or Evil

2 Timothy 2:20 ...in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be **a vessel for honor**, sanctified and useful for the Master, **prepared for every good work**.

- Our physical bodies can be used for **good or evil**
 1. Vessel used for waste
 2. Vessel of honor if cleansed by the Word

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies** a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

All God needs to work. A vessel ready to be filled...

Take the empty vessels inside and **close the door**

Matthew 6:6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have **shut your door, pray to your Father** who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

- Jesus said to ask for the Holy Spirit and He will be given.
- Close the door and pray to be filled/empowered with holy Spirit

Luke 11:13 [If sinful earthly fathers...] know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!**"

- We also close the door and pray that others receive the Holy Spirit

5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the [neighbors] vessels to her; and **she poured it out.**

- Notice no questions/no doubt/just obedience

Sons kept bringing and she kept pouring

6 Now it came to pass, when the **vessels were full**, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." So the oil ceased.

- As with ditches filled with water Ch. 3, the amount they dug was the amount filled
- Amount of oil was in direct proportion to her faith; i.e. how many vessels she found

I believe that you and I, in the matter of spiritual blessings from God, have more to do with the measurement of our mercies than we think. We make our blessings little, because our prayers are little." [Spurgeon]

She poured it out

- **Pour your Oil into the empty Vessels of my neighbors**

1. **Spirit of the Lord:** Center Candle of Menorah
2. **Wisdom** Without it we make stuff up/mess stuff up
3. **Understanding:** Without it we won't get what people are saying
4. **Counsel** Without it we quote Hallmark Cards
5. **Might** Without it we are weak and people notice
6. **Knowledge** Without it we will believe anything
7. **Fear** Without it we think more of ourselves than we should

- **God pours in wholeness:** Perfects/completes us and makes us whole
- **We bear fruit...**

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Longsuffering
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-Control

- God pours in wholeness so we can bear fruit for the benefit of others

**The fruit of the Spirit in our lives is for the benefit of others
...that they would see Jesus and be drawn to Him**

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 live on the rest."

- Used the oil to pay the debt left by husband
- We use the oil to pay the debt we owe to God...debt of love to others

Plead with others to receive the Spirit. Highways/byways. Go get vessels from everywhere
To be born again/regenerated/forgiven/Saved...Time is of the essence!

Matthew 25:1 [Read] "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took **no oil** with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

- Ten Virgins? 10 Lamps in a Jewish Bridle procession

Jesus is Groom coming to get His bride made ready with Holy Spirit

- **5 Foolish Virgins** have Lamps with no Oil
- **5 Wise Virgins** have Lamps filled with Oil

...5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. **6** "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; **go out to meet him!**'"

- All slept but 5 slept next to lamps with oil and were ready

...7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, '**Give us some of your oil**, for our lamps are going out.' 9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

- Trimmed and lit lamps

Without oil the wedding party was not ready for the bridegroom. Without the Holy Spirit, no one is ready for the return of Jesus. [Guzik]

- **Give us some of your oil**

...10 And while they went to buy, the **bridegroom came**, and those who were ready **went in with him to the wedding**; and the door was shut.

- **He came and took those who were ready**
- **Door was shut to those who were not**

It was the indwelling Holy Spirit that made them ready...not works [sleeping]

...11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, '**Lord, Lord, open to us!**' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, **I do not know you.**' 13 "Watch therefore, for

you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Lord, Lord! Most chilling words in Bible? "I do not know you"

- **Many will say Lord, Lord** and He will say I never knew you
- Without the Holy Spirit non-believers are not recognized by Jesus

Romans 8:9 Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, **he is not His.**

SUMMARY Elisha and the Widow's Oil

She received oil from the Lord then poured it into the empty vessels of those around her

- Elisha continues miracles with second woman in **Ch. 4...**

II. Elisha Raises the Son of a Notable Women

8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a **notable woman**, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food.

- **Elisha went to Shunem:** Regular stop **v9**
- Shunem: Lit. *Double resting place*
- **Notable woman:**
 1. Nameless yet notable; lit. great before man and God
 2. Notices Elisha offers prophet food

9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. **10** Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there."

- **Holy Man:** Set apart to God
- **Make a room:** Bed, table, chair, lampstand, Bible...**how cool is that?**
 1. Books of Moses
 2. Joshua
 3. Judges
 4. Psalms
 5. Job
 6. Etc....

Matthew 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

We can share in the reward of God's servants by supporting them in their work. Even seemingly insignificant works of kindness (a cup of cold water) performed for God's people are meaningful in God's eyes. [Guzik]

11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the

upper room and lay down there. 12 Then [Elisha] said to **Gehazi** his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before [Gahazi]. 13 And [Elisha] said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. **What can I do for you?**'"

- **Gahazi first mention:**

1. Servant to Elisha as Elisha was to Elijah
2. Not the same outcome

- **Elisha lying down/Gahazi is mediator:**

Elisha asks woman... "What can I do for you"

- **2x: V2 [Widow] "What shall I do for you?"**
- Too often leaders want something done for them

Greatest will be the servant. Last first and first last

- **What can I do for you?**

13b... Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?' "

- I have connections

12c...She answered, "**I dwell among my own people.**"

- Notable woman of city happy to dwell among common people
- Attribute of God...

Isaiah 57:15 ...thus says the **High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity**, whose name is **Holy**: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

- I **dwell** with [abide, remain with, rest with] i.e. hang out w/ contrite/humble
- To **revive** them; i.e. make alive Lit to give them breath
- Jesus ate with sinners...

Matthew 9:11 [Self-righteous ask...] "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

- Paul commanded us to associate with the humble...

Romans 12:3 [Urged believers not...] to think of [themselves] more highly than [we] ought to think...**16** Do not set your mind on high things, but **associate with the humble**. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

- David knew who he was before others/the Lord...

Psalms 131:1 [David whole Psalm] Lord, **my heart is not haughty**, Nor **my eyes lofty**. Neither **do I concern myself with great matters**, Nor with **things too profound for me**. 2 Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, Like a weaned child with his mother; Like

a weaned child is my soul within me.

**A person with a calm/quiet soul is a person who is humble/contrite resting in God
...not arrogant and proud**

- Happy to dwell with common people...

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

- **Elisha speaks loud enough for only Gahazi to hear**

1. She has no son
2. Husband is too old

15 So he said, **"Call her."** When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 Then he said, "About this time next year you shall embrace a son."

- In 3 months, you will conceive
- In 1 year...you will be holding your brand spanking new son!

Impossible? God promised Abraham and Sarah a son in old age. Respons?

Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed

Genesis 18:15 [Sarah laughed at promise] And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" Issacs means laughter

Psalms 37:4 Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

God knew the desire of her heart...a son

16... And she said, "No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!"

- **Filled with emotion**

1. No, My lord
2. No Man of God
3. Peter: Not so "Lord"

...do not lie to me about something that means so much to me

- Afraid to believe the impossible as Martha when Jesus said Lazarus will rise
- I know he will rise in the resurrection. **No, he will rise today.**

17 But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her. **18** And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. **19** And he said to his father, **"My head, my head!"** So he said to a servant, "Carry

him to his mother." 20 When [his father] had taken him and brought him to his mother, [the boy] sat on her knees till noon, and *then* died.

- **Promise fulfilled...Promise passes away**

1. Years together
2. Grabbing his head
3. Dies on mothers' knees...

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

- **NOTE:** Not rebelling against God
- Immediately acts on faith lying dead son on Elisha's bed

Not the quantity of our faith but the quality of faith that moves hand of God

Matthew 17:20 [Boys asked why could not cast out a demon] So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, '**Move from here to there,**' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

- Faith comes through hearing the Word of God
- Faith is intensified by Praying/Fasting
- Faith is solidified by remembering faithfulness of the object of our faith...**JESUS**

Faith moves mountains. This lady has a mountain that needs moving.

Not the quantity of faith but the quality of our faith and the object of our faith

- Mother laid dead son on the Prophet's bed...**left the promise with God**

22 Then she called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back." 23 So he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "**It is well.**" 24 Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25 And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, the Shunammite woman! 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.**"

It is well? It is well.

Hebrews 1:11 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

- As I walk by faith and see the other side...**yes, it is well.** Lit. **Yes...it will be well**

It is heroic faith when we can feel that if the child shall die it is well; if this husband shall die it is well: and if we ourselves shall die, all is well, for He who has the arranging of all that concerns us cannot arrange otherwise than well. [Often] our rebellious spirit says, with poor old Jacob, "All these things are against me," but true faith sits humbly down at the feet of the great Disposer of all events, and says, "**He has done all things well.**" [Spurgeon]

It is well!

- **Horatio G Spafford: Writer of "It is Well"**

1. Successful Lawyer/businessman in Chicago Mid 1800's
2. Wife Anna and 5 Children
3. 1871
 - Young son died pneumonia
 - Business lost in Great Chicago fire
4. 1873
 - Wife and 4 daughters crossing Atlantic from US to Europe
 - Horatio stays in Chicago planned to take another ship later
 - Collided with another ship
 - 226 out of 313 drowned including 4 daughters
 - Sailor on small boat spotted Anna floating on piece of wreckage
 - Telegram: Anna to Horatio: "Saved alone, what shall I do?"
 - Horatio later framed telegram and place in office
 - Boarded ship to see wife. Told spot her ship went down w/4 Daughters
 - **Wrote: It is well**

When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll, Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul. Chorus: It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul

5. Anna had 3 more children.
6. One died of pneumonia at age of 4
7. Horatio and Anna started/ran successful orphanage Israel

It is well!

27 Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she **caught him by the feet**, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone; for **her soul is in deep distress, and the Lord has hidden it from me, and has not told me.**"

- Caught Elisha by the feet as he is walking
- Servant pushes her away [glimpse at true colors]

Mathew 19:13 Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of **such is the kingdom of heaven.**" 15 And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.

- Jesus uses children as a teaching prop; such are the citizens of Kingdom of Heaven
- Last will be first and the first last. Humble will enter. Proud will be left out

28 So she said, “**Did I ask a son of my lord?** Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me?’”

Fight within/without intensifies: I didn’t ask you for a son

Why would you give him to me only to take him?

Proverbs 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

Proverbs 17:22 A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

Proverbs 15:13 A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

- Asks herself, “Wouldn’t it have been better not to have had my son at all?”
- Tennyson would say no...

It is Better to have loved and lost than never to love at all [Alfred Lord Tennyson]

How sad it would be to live our lives in a mode of self-protection that costs us some of the most precious experiences of life: to love and to be loved. We exchange a life of fulfillment for a life of safety. We exchange one kind of pain for another: the pain of love-and-loss for the pain of loneliness. We must each ask ourselves if that is a trade we are willing to make. Love costs so much because it gives so much. After all, if it didn’t give so much, we wouldn’t be in such pain when we lose it. For me, that is a trade-off worth its weight in gold. [Jennifer L. Kunst, Ph.D.]

- Grabs him by the feet and won’t let go
- Wrestles with God as did Jacob
 1. Lord was losing and Jacob won’t let go until blessed
 2. Lord dislocated Jacobs hip

Changes his name from deceiver to Israel [Prince of God or One who persists with God]

...until he gets the blessing

Genesis 32:31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the **sun rose on him**, and he limped on his hip.

“It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply.” [A.W. Tozer]

**Heavy Trial? Don’t stop wrestling with God till your blessed
Stop asking God why and start asking what He is accomplishing through it**

- Son’s birth not a coincidence
- Son’s death not an accident
- Did not take God by surprise

- Purpose in the pain

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.

...her soul is in deep distress

- **Jesus understands and in 700 years will walk in her shoes**

John 12:27 "Now My **soul is troubled**, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

- Jesus understands exactly/perfectly/completely what we are going through

Hebrews 3:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot **sympathize with our weaknesses**, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- **Did I ask for a son?** Wrestling with God

29 Then [Elisha] said to Gehazi, "Get yourself ready, and take **my staff** in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child."

- **Elisha sends Gahazi...**

1. Take my staff. Run. Don't talk to anyone
2. Lay my staff on face of dead boy

- **Elisha sends Gahazi...**

30 And the mother of the child said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, **I will not leave you.**" **So [Elisha] arose and followed her.**

I will not leave you Elisha...you Gott `a come too...

- **All gird their loins!**

1. Gahazi starts running
2. Woman follows Gahazi
3. Elisha follows woman

31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "**The child has not awakened.**"

Gahazi tells Elisha in woman's hearing...the staff thing didn't work

32 When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and

prayed to the Lord.

- Did he make a mistake? Was he presumptuous?

...shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord

Object of Faith moves from staff to God who made the tree the staff came from!

- **NOTE:** Prophet prays for the dead to rise while Jesus commands dead to rise

34 And [Elisha] **went up and lay on the child**, and put his **mouth on his mouth**, his **eyes on his eyes**, and his **hands on his hands**; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the **flesh of the child became warm**.

- **Quite a sight**; learned from mentor Elijah in 1 Kings 17
- Mouth to mouth, Eye to eye and Hand to hand

When we put ourselves into the condition of the sinner, hope for him, pray for him, agonize for him in broken-hearted sympathy on his account, putting ourselves as far as we can into his place, God often makes us the instruments by which his Spirit quickens the dead in sin. [Spurgeon]

- **Progressive Miracles? Time-Release Miracles?**

1. Man saw people as trees before second touch when completely healed
2. Flesh warm but no other signs of life

35 He returned and walked **back and forth in the house**, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the **child sneezed seven times**, and the **child opened his eyes**.

- **Goes downstairs walking all around the house...back up**

1. Repeats process
2. Seven Sneezes
3. Good as new

We might believe everybody thinks our kids are as cute as we do...wrong
Most beautiful sneezes a mom could ever hear

36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "**Pick up your son**." 37 So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.

Before picking back up the promise she once put down... She gives glory to God

- **We live to bring glory to God; our purpose**
- Thus. God will bring circumstances/trials/tribulation that will allow us to do that

1. Circumstances that Mold us
2. Trials that shape us
3. Tribulation that conforms us into the image of Jesus as the world watches...

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed to the image of His Son...**

SUMMARY Elisha Raises the Son of a Notable Women

III. Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew

38 And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land.

- **Gilgal:** First camp after crossing Jordan with Joshua
- Famine in Northern Kingdom
 1. Unable to be blessed due to idolatry...**cursed**
 2. Unable to be taught because of pride...**unteachable**
- **Famine:** Suffering as people begin to starve

38b...Now the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

- **Elisha at head of table**
 1. Gahazi go get large pot
 2. Make some stew and feed these guys...

39 So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, though they did not know what they were. 40 Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, "**Man of God**, there is death in the pot!" And they could not eat it.

- Wild vine bearing poisonous gourds
- Reason there was plenty during famine? Don't let Gahazi cook

41 So [Elisha] said, "Then bring some flour." And he put it into the pot, and said, "Serve it to the people, that they may eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

- **Put it in the pot;** i.e. the clay vessel:
 1. **First Salt;** gracious faith-building words to others
 2. **Next Oil;** the Precious Holy Spirit
 3. **Now Flour?** To be added to a vessel already *filled with death*

The flour brought life from that which brings death

Romans 3:23 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

- We are all born spiritually dead
- **Good News:** Jesus gives life the Spiritually dead

John 6:33 [Jesus is the...] bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

- Life from Death
- Light from Darkness

Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

- **Paul:** Such were some of you

We were stewing in/on the things that killed us until the Bread of Life was added

42 Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God [Elisha] bread of the firstfruits, **twenty loaves of barley bread**, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And [Elisha] said, "**Give it to the people, that they may eat.**" 43 But his servant said, "What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?" He said again, "**Give it to the people, that they may eat;** for thus says the Lord: 'They shall eat and have some left over.' " 44 So he set it before them; and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.

- **Jesus would do the same...**
 1. **Feeding of 4000** w/ 7 Loaves and 3 Fish; i.e. a few little fish
 2. **Feeding of 5000.** Lit 15,000 w/ 5 loaves and 2 fish
- **Even during famine...God provides for His people**

Psalm 37:25 [David] ... I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed. 27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore. 28 For the Lord loves justice, And **does not forsake His saints;** They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.

SUMMARY Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew

