CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
APRIL2020 2024

Scripture Story: 2 Kings 4.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 19.

the miracle worker



Photo by Jacqui Janetzko

keytext

"She said to her husband, 'I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God.' "

(2 Kings 4:9, NIV)

flashlight

"The lesson is for God's children in every age. When the Lord gives a work to be done, let not men stop to inquire into the reasonableness of the command or the probable result of their efforts to obey. . . .

"A fuller sense of God's relationship to those whom He has purchased with the gift of His Son, a greater faith in the onward progress of His cause in the earth—this is the great need of the church today" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 243).

what do you think?

What do you think of the following statements—do you A (agree) or D (disagree)?

___ God works as many miracles today as He did in Bible times.
___ Many times we experience miracles and don't realize it.
___ If we had more faith we'd see more miracles.
___ If we saw more miracles we'd have more faith.
___ The greatest miracle is our salvation.
___ Faith will take away all your doubts forever.
___ Faith will make everything in your life easier.
___ If we truly believed in miracles there would be no world hunger.

did you know?

The word "miracle" is derived from the Latin word *miraculum* meaning "something wonderful." Simply defined, a miracle is an event or action that contradicts known scientific laws and that can be explained only as an act of God. Miracles recorded in the Bible can be classified in the following way: power over nature, power over disease, power over death, and power over demons.



INTO THE STORY

The Widow's Olive Oil: **"The** wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, 'Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.'

"Elisha replied to her, 'How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?'

" 'Your servant has nothing there at all,' she said, 'except a small jar of olive oil.'

"Elisha said, 'Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.' "

The Shunammite's Son Restored to Life: "One day Elisha went to Shunem. And a well-to-do woman was there, who urged him to stay for a meal. So whenever he came by, he stopped there to eat. She said to her husband, 'I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God.' . . .

"Then Elisha said, 'Call her.' So he called her, and she stood in the doorway. 'About this time next year,' Elisha said, 'you will hold a son in your arms.' . . .

"When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch. . . . Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out on him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.

"Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, 'Call the Shunammite.' And he did. When she came, he said, 'Take your son.' "

Death in the Pot: "Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, 'Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these prophets.' . . .

". . . The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, 'Man of God, there is death in the pot!' And they could not eat it.

"Elisha said, 'Get some flour.' He put it into the pot and said, 'Serve it to the people to eat.' And there was nothing harmful in the pot."

Feeding of a Hundred: "A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. 'Give it to the people to eat,' Elisha said.

" 'How can I set this before a hundred men?' his servant asked.

"But Elisha answered, 'Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the LORD says: "They will eat and have some left over." ' Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the LORD."

(2 Kings 4:1-4, 8-16, 32-44, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

In 2 Kings 4 we find four miracle stories. Read the four stories then reflect on these questions:

Which of the four miracles do you think was the greatest? Why?

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What impresses you most in each story? Explain.

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What do the stories have in common? What are the unique aspects of each story?

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Have you heard of any modern-day miracles that are similar to these stories in 2 Kings 4?

What do these stories tell us about Elisha?

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What do these stories tell us about God?

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punch lines

"This is what the LORD says:

" 'Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,' declares the LORD. 'They will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for your descendants,' declares the LORD. 'Your children will return to their own land' " **(Jeremiah 31:16, 17, NIV).**

"This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" **(Romans 3:22, NIV).**

"LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy" **(Habakkuk 3:2, NIV).**

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" **(Matthew 7:7, NIV).**

"I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades" **(Revelation 1:18, NIV).**

further insight

"You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. . . . Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you."—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 146

Sabbath

Read Matthew 12:38-42.

Based on today's Bible passage, reflect on how Jesus' answer to the Pharisees might inform your answers in the *What Do You Think?* section. What was Jesus saying in His answer?

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Sunday

Read 2 Kings 4.

Review the four miracles in 2 Kings 4. Next to each miracle see if you can find a similar miracle recorded in the Bible.

The miracle of the widow's oil is similar to ___

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The miracle of the healing of the Shunammite's son is similar to _____

_____.

The miracle of the poisoned pot is similar to

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_____.

The miracle of the feeding of a hundred is similar to _____

_____.

Monday

Read Hebrews 12:14.

The Shunammite woman recognized Elisha as "a holy man of God" (2 Kings 4:9, NIV). What attributes do you think she saw in Elisha that led her to this conclusion? Who comes to mind for you when you think about a "holy person"? How can you be known as a holy person?

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Tuesday

Read Matthew 7:7.

Ellen White points out that this lesson is for God's children in every age: "When the Lord gives a work to be done, let not men stop to inquire into the reasonableness of the command or the probable result of their efforts to obey" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 243).

Where is the line between absolute faith in God ("I *believe* God will take care of me if I donate my entire paycheck to an orphanage") and reckless foolishness ("I *believe* God will protect me in jumping off the Empire State Building")? What do you think Ellen White means when she counsels us not to "inquire into the reasonableness of the command"? Was God's command of Abraham to kill his son Isaac a "reasonable command"? Explain.

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What is one thing that you believe God is asking you to do that you know is WAY out of your abilities? Do you think it's out of God's?

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Wednesday

Compare the *Punch Lines* to the following verses about faith:

John 20:24-29
Hebrews 11:1
Hebrews 11:6
Romans 10:17

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Thursday

Read Romans 3:22.

Is it possible to emulate the kind of faith that we read about in people like Abraham, David, and Peter? How can I exercise more faith? Does faith produce miracles? Or is it in seeing miracles that my faith is strengthened?

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Friday

Read Habakkuk 3:2.

Read the following passage from Ellen White then write down what this means in your life today.

"What condescension it was on the part of Christ, through His messenger, to work this miracle to satisfy hunger! Again and again since that time, though not always in so marked and perceptible a manner, has the Lord Jesus worked to supply human need. If we had clearer spiritual discernment we would recognize more readily than we do God's compassionate dealing with the children of men" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 241).

What this means for my life today: _____

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_____.

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapter 19.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.