

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
3RD-5TH GRADE
TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 13

Elisha and the Shunammite's Son



Elisha and the Shunammite's Son

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students that God is the Giver of life, and all those who follow Him have the hope of resurrection.

Key Verses

2 Kings 4:8-37—Main Teaching Passage

Job 19:25-27

1 Corinthians 15:20-22

Romans 8:11

Memory Verse - John 11:25

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.'"

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, **1 Thessalonians 4:17**.

Ask the students, have you ever wanted something really bad that you finally got? Maybe a pet, or a toy, or to go on a special trip?

Now imagine after you got that thing that you had wanted to bad for so long, that it was taken away from you. The toy broke, or the trip was canceled. How did that/would that make you feel?

In today's story, someone is going to receive a special gift, but then something terrible happens.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Elisha did a lot of traveling along the same road. A certain woman noticed and, understanding him to be a man of God, often invited him in for food. Elisha passed by so often that she even asked her husband to build an extra room on their house for Elisha to stay in as he traveled. Elisha wanted to know what he could do for this Shunammite woman in return for her hospitality. He learned that she had no child, and he promised that she would give birth to a son.

Elisha's promise came true, but as the baby grew into a young child, something terrible happened. He went into the field to help his father, but began complaining that his head was bothering him. He was sent home to his mother, and died shortly after getting home! She immediately laid him on Elisha's bed and asked her husband for a donkey so she could go to Elisha. The donkey was brought to her and she traveled as fast as she could to find Elisha.

While Elisha was sitting on Mt. Carmel, he saw her in the distance and told his servant Gehazi to go meet her. She told Gehazi everything was okay, but when she got to Elisha, she fell down at his feet, held onto his legs, and told him what happened. Elisha told her to take his staff and lay it on the boy, but she said she wouldn't leave unless Elisha went with her, so they went together. Elisha found the boy and prayed for God to raise him. He laid his body on the boy and felt the boy warm up. He laid across the boy again and this time he sneezed seven times! He brought the woman to the room and invited her to pick up her son, then he departed.

LOOK

Elijah's ministry was very public, but Elisha often worked behind the scenes in the lives of individuals. Earlier in this chapter, the LORD cared for a poor widow. Now He cares for a wealthy woman who longed for a child. God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34). He works in the lives of all who trust in Him, no matter who they are, what they have, or what they are going through.

Take note of the hospitality this woman showed Elisha. She noticed him, welcomed him into her home, fed him, and even built a room for him to stay in as he traveled. Her kindness reminds us to look for opportunities to love and serve others. Jesus said that even giving someone a cup of cold water in His name will not go unnoticed by God (Matthew 10:42).

Because of her kindness, God graciously blessed this woman's with a son, something she never thought she would have. Like Abraham and Sarah before her, God gave life where there seemed to be no hope. But years later, tragedy struck and the child died. The God who had given this life now seemed to have taken it away. Yet that isn't how the story ends.

The interpretation/ exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

This passage reminds us that God is the Giver of life. Elisha could not raise the boy by his own power. Before anything happened, he prayed to the LORD. Elijah had done the same years earlier. These prophets could not give life—but they knew the God who could. The God who gives life also has power over death. The same God who gave the boy life at his birth was able to restore that life again. God graciously answered Elisha's prayer and this brokenhearted mother was reunited with her son.

This miracle points us to an even greater hope. Hebrews 11:35 says that by faith, women received their dead raised to life again. By faith, we too have the hope of resurrection through Jesus Christ. When Jesus rose from the dead, He proved that the price for our sin had been paid and that death had been defeated. One day, all who belong to Christ will also be raised—not only our spirits, but our bodies as well. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the grave lives in us and will one day raise us up also.

Jesus is the only way we can receive this hope. If He had not risen from the dead, we would still be in our sins and death would have the final word. But Jesus did rise, the tomb was empty, and it is still empty today. He ascended into heaven in His risen body and now gives eternal life to all who trust in Him. Just as the Shunammite woman was reunited with her son, everyone who belongs to Jesus will one day be reunited with Him—and with all who have died in faith.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize John 11:25.

We aren't studying the life of Elisha as in depth as we did the life of Elijah, so encourage the kids to read the verses we are not covering on their own.

Pray: God, thank You for being the Giver of life. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, who died and rose again so that all who trust in Him may have eternal life. Help us to trust You, to live with the hope of the resurrection, and to share that hope with others. Amen.

Family Question: What does “resurrection” mean?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Kings 4:8-37 by David Guzik

2. ([2Ki 4:8-17](#)) A son for a barren woman.

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. And she said to her husband, “Look now, I know that this *is* a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 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.” And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. Then he said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite woman.” When he had called her, she stood before him. And he said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What *can I* do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?’” She answered, “I dwell among my own people.” So he said, “What then *is* to be done for her?” And Gehazi answered, “Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old.” So he said, “Call her.” When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. Then he said, “About this time next year you shall embrace a son.” And she said, “No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!” But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.

a. **A notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food:** This remarkable relationship between Elisha and the Shunammite woman began when the woman *sought to do something for the prophet*. Elisha didn’t seek anything from this woman; she eventually **persuaded him to eat some food** as the guest of her hospitality.

b. **Let us make a small upper room on the wall:** The Shunammite woman then sought to do *more* for the prophet. With the approval of her husband, they made a room for Elisha to stay in on his frequent travels through the area.

c. **About this time next year you shall embrace a son:** To this barren woman this promise seemed too good to be true. The stigma associated with barrenness was harsh in the ancient world, and this promised son would answer the longing of her heart and removed the stigma of barrenness.

d. **The woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her:** The woman who so generously provided material things for the prophet of God was now blessed by the God of the prophet, blessed *beyond* material things.

3. ([2Ki 4:18-37](#)) The Shunammite woman’s son is raised from the dead.

And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. And he said to his father, “My head, my head!” So he said to a servant, “Carry him to his mother.” When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* died. And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut *the door* upon him, and went out. 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." 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.*" 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." 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! 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.*" 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." So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?" Then he 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." And the mother of the child said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her. 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." When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. And he 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. 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. 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." So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.

a. **He sat on her knees till noon, and then died:** This was the son granted by miraculous promise, in reward to the faithful service of the Shunammite woman. The boy tragically died on the lap of his mother after a brief but severe affliction.

i. "His head was grievously pained; which possibly came from the heat of the harvest season, to which he was exposed in the field." (Poole)

ii. "Probably affected by the *coup de soleil*, or *sun stroke*, which might, in so young a subject, soon occasion death, especially in that hot country." (Clarke)

b. **She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door upon him, and went out:** This shows the faith of the woman. She prepared for the *resurrection* of the boy, not his burial.

i. "She had no doubt heard that Elijah had raised the widow's son of Zarephath to life; and she believed that he who had obtained this gift of God for her, could obtain his restoration to life." (Clarke)

c. **And she answered, "It is well":** The Shunammite woman didn't want Elisha to learn of her grief through his assistant Gehazi. She wanted the man of God to hear it from her own lips and sense her own grief.

i. "Nothing makes grief dumb so surely as prying and yet indifferent intrusion. A tenderer hand than Gehazi's is needed to unlock the sad secret of that burdened breast." (Maclaren)

d. **Let her alone; for her soul is in deep distress, and the Lord has hidden it from me, and has not told me:** Elisha seemed mystified that this woman (whom he presumably often prayed for) was in a crisis that was hidden from Elisha. In this circumstance Elisha was more surprised that God *didn't* speak to him than if God *had* spoken to him.

i. "How much better would it have been for the Church if its teachers had been more willing to copy his mod-

esty, and said about a great many things, 'The Lord hath hid it from me!'" (Maclaren)

e. **Lay my staff on the face of the child:** Instead of going directly himself, Elisha sent his servant Gehazi with his staff. This seems to follow the previous pattern in Elisha's ministry: he did not do things for people directly, but gave them the opportunity to work with God and to trust Him for themselves. God told the alliance of kings to have ditches dug ([2 Kings 3:16](#)). God told the widow to gather vessels and pour the oil herself ([2 Kings 4:1-7](#)).

i. It may be that the Shunammite woman failed under this test, because she thought that the power to heal was more connected with Elisha himself and she refused to leave his presence (**I will not leave you**). The child was not healed by the laying on of the staff, though (hypothetically) the child may have been healed with only the staff if the Shunammite would have embraced this promise with full faith.

f. **He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord:** God did heal the Shunammite's son in response to Elisha's prayer. He prayed after the pattern shown by his mentor Elijah ([1 Kings 17:20-23](#)).

i. Elisha prayed with great faith because he knew God worked this way in the life of his mentor Elijah. He also prayed with great faith because he sensed that God *wanted* to raise this boy from the dead.

ii. "Although some ceremonial uncleanness might seem to be contracted by the touch of this dead body, yet that was justly to give place to a moral duty, and to an action of so great piety and charity as this was, especially when done by a prophet, and by the instinct of God's Spirit, who can dispense with his own laws." (Poole)

iii. There is a significant contrast between the stretched-out supplication of Elijah and Elisha and the authoritative command of Jesus in raising the dead (as in [John 11:43](#)). Elijah and Elisha rightly *begged* God to raise the dead. Jesus *commanded* the dead to be raised.

iv. "This staff of his – whatever became of the other – was long enough, he knew, to reach up to heaven, to know at those gates, yea, to wrench them open." (Trapp)

g. **The flesh of the child became warm... then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes:** "Although miracles were for the most part done in an instant, yet sometimes they were done by degrees, as here, and [1 Kings 18:44-45](#); [Mark 8:24-25](#)." (Poole)

i. "Of course, there is a profound and beautiful use to be made of the prophet's action in laying himself upon the dead child, mouth to mouth, and hand to hand, if we regard it as symbolic of that closeness of approach to our nature, dead in sins, which the Lord of life makes in His incarnation and in His continual drawing near." (Maclaren)