



Summer Study Discussion Guide #1

Sermon Title: Unexpected Blessings

Biblical Reference: 2 Kings 8:1-6

Date Preached: Sunday, June 12th, 2022 @ 11am

Summer Study Date: Wednesday, June 15th, 2022

Sermon Summary

In this passage (2 Kings 8:1-6), we read about the great women of Shunem. She was the woman who fed the prophet Elisha and gave him a room to stay when he passed by on his way to the school of the prophets. She was invested in and dedicated to the work of the Lord.

Her service to the Lord put her in contact with Elisha, the prophet of God, and led to her being blessed by the Lord with a child. Elisha prophesied that the Lord would give her a child even though she was barren, and her husband was old. She was miraculously blessed with a son nine months later. One day when the child went to visit his father in the field, he developed a problem with his head and passed away.

The Lord was not finished working in her life in special ways. The Lord restored her child to life through the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 4:8-37). In this passage (2 Kings 8:1-6), Elisha warns her of the famine coming to Samaria because of the city's idolatry. He tells her to leave and find a safe place from the famine for seven years. Because of this warning, she was prevented from experiencing the horrors of the famine that we are told about in 2 Kings 6:24-7:20. This sadly includes cannibalism and privation to the point that the people who experienced it believed they were going to die.

In this story, we see the tender care of the Lord in the life of those who are dedicated to His service. We see the Lord continuing to bless this woman in ways she did not expect. The same is true for the people of God today.

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything you heard for the first time or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Were you able to apply something you learned from the sermon this week?

My Story

Can you think of a time in your life the Lord shielded you from the problems those around you were experiencing?

Digging Deeper

Ask a volunteer to read:

1 Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

2 Kings 8:1-2

This message from God would not have prevented her from experiencing the pain of the famine nor would it have protected her during the famine unless she acted on it.

Discussion Questions

- What were some things that could have made her reluctant to act on his word?
- How do you think she had the faith to act?
- What about this woman's actions most convict or encourage you?

Ask a volunteer to read:

2 Kings 8:3- And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

This passage shows she dwelt in the land of the Philistines, removed from her community of faith, for seven years. Yet she did not become an idolater, nor did she call upon Dagon the god of the Philistines. She lived in the world but was not part of the world. She remained a sojourner (a person who resides temporarily in a place) and never became one with the Philistines.

Discussion Question

- When you are separated from your community of faith and surrounded by the world you either blend in with them or remain true to the Lord like this woman. How do you react when you are put in this situation?

Ask a volunteer to read and instruct them to:

1. Circle or highlight any words or phrases that catch your attention.
2. Underline what you think is important to remember.
3. Put an X next to anything that confuses you.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

4 And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

2 Kings 8:3-6

Discussion Note

Ask people to share what they underlined, circled, and highlighted. Feel free to ask follow-up questions such as:

“Why was that important to you?”

“What was it about that that caught your attention?”

“Did any of you also circle, underline, or write an X on the same thing?”

Discussion Question

- The Lord orchestrated these events in a marvelous way for the benefit of this woman. What is an example of this in your life?

Ask a volunteer to read:

2 Kings 8:6- And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

Discussion Question

- The Lord gave her back more than she gave up following His command. What does this teach us about the character of the Lord we can thank and praise Him for?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do because of hearing the message:

1. What did you hear? -What point in this message was most impactful for you?
2. What do you think? -How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. What will you do? -How will you put into practice what you've learned today?