

2 Kings 4:42-44 - Someone Greater than Elisha

Intro - This month we began a new emphasis in the OT. For the Thanksgiving season we have looked at accounts with prominent “food” elements. Today’s account is not as familiar as those but it does have a familiar ring to it. Elisha feeding the 100 is one of those events that is easily overlooked. It seems every time I read it I’m like, “o yeah, I forgot about this one”. But this was a major miracle (back in the day) and it showed how God blessed the tithe (given in a terrible time) and provided for the people.

Nevertheless it seems a little anti-climatic in light of other more dramatic/similar events that happen later. I think that is an important point because Elisha was great, and greatly used, but there is Someone greater than Elisha. The thrust of the OT is to build anticipation for that SOMEONE who is greater – a greater Prophet, Priest, King, Provider, Savior... There is someone who eclipses the OT stories and to whom the OT stories point. The OT stories are important but remember that they point to the greater

Elisha was Elijah’s Servant

- These two prophets are often confused with each other because of similar names
 - jah is before sha - alphabetical order helps with prophetic order
- Elijah was a great man of God. Confronted prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18
 - Flees to mountain of God in 1 Kings 19 and receives instruction to make Elisha successor
- Elisha left all and followed Elijah 1 Kings 19:19-21
- The day Elijah was to be taken up into heaven Elisha would not leave his side
 - Elijah took cloak and parted the Jordan river 2 Kings 2:8
 - Elisha asked to inherit a double portion of Elijah’s spirit 2 Kings 2:9-10
 - Elisha uses Elijah’s cloak to part the Jordan river - 2 Kings 2:14-15 – other prophets saw

Elisha’s Double Portion

- Elisha’s ministry mimicked Elijah’s in several ways similar miracles (but twice as many)
 - During a famine Elijah went to widow of a Zapheth and multiplied some flour and oil so she and her son would survive (1 Kings 17)
 - Elijah’s miracle helped 3 people - widow, son and Elijah
- Elisha does exceedingly abundantly above this
 - There was a famine in the land (2 Kings 4:38) Elisha had already helped with a food poisoning issue - 2 Kings 4:38-41 (practical prophet addressing practical needs)
 - Water, food, ax, creditors
 - Someone was faithful during the famine 2 Kings 4:42
 - The first fruits/tithe was to go to the priesthood/men of God
 - Numbers 18:21 Deut. 18:1-2 priesthood supported and poor aided
 - It is hard to be faithful in famine – but someone was - 20 loaves
 - God test us with hard times and He also tests us with the tithe

- Widow of Zarepheth was “fix me a small loaf first...” 1 Kings 17:13-14
- Elisha didn’t keep the gift to himself - “Give to the people to eat” 2 King 4:42b
 - Feet and beaks given to pastor - pastor wife served to their givers ☺
 - 20 loaves/heads of grain seemed insufficient for 100 men 2 Kings 4:43
 - Elisha’s servant objects
 - 20 biscuits and some trail mix for 100 men (plus women and kids?)
 - Do you ever worry about not having enough? (Matt. 6:31-34)
- Elisha said to “give it...they would eat and have leftovers” 4:43b
 - I wonder how this worked out? Basket of bread never depleted? (like flour/oil)
- However it worked - it worked out
 - They even had leftovers 2 Kings 4:44
 - God takes our little and can make it go a long way (can I get a witness?)

Someone Greater than Elisha

- Elisha feeding the 100 with 20 loaves was an amazing miracle and provision but it does feel a little anti- climatic in light of other events that we know happen later in scripture
 - The kiddy ride is great until you ride the big roller coaster
 - This unfamiliar story has a familiar ring to it
- Jesus took 5 loaves and 2 small fish and fed 5000 men 12 baskets left over (Matt. 14)
 - On another occasion – 7 loaves and fed 4000 7 baskets left over (Matt. 15)
- Miracles from the lesser to the greater
 - Elijah multiplied flour and oil to feed 3 people
 - Elisha multiplied 20 loaves to feed 100 people
 - Jesus multiplied 5 loaves to feed 5000 and 7 loaves to feed 4000
 - Elijah and Elisha both parted the waters of the Jordan river
 - Jesus just walked on the water all the way across as lake/sea
 - Elijah called down fire on a company of soldiers who came to arrest him
 - Elisha blinded and then fed a company of soldiers that came to arrest him
 - Jesus laid down His life for a company of soldiers who came to arrest Him
 - Elijah and Elisha both raised for dead children of women who helped them
 - Jesus did so for Jairus, widow of Nain and Mary
 - Elijah didn’t die and caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire (one man – Elisha- saw this)
 - Elisha died and buried (2 Kings 13:20-21) bones raised one man
 - When Jesus die many came from the tombs
 - If you can but touch the risen Savior you will live (His resurrection=first fruits)
 - Jesus was seen by many after resurrection - 500 at one time
 - He ascend into the clouds in front of a multitude
 - If all He did were recorded the world couldn’t contain the books
 - John 20:30-31; 21:25