



Elisha

*“Taking up the mantle :
A transition of power”*

WEEK FOUR – ‘THE MAN OF GOD’

Read 2 Kings 4:1-7

A miracle is an extraordinary and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore attributed to a divine agency, for example: "the miracle of Jesus rising from the grave".

Scientists talk a lot about the **laws** of science and physics, implying that they can never change. However, recently, physicists working on the Large Hadron Collider which is the world's largest and highest-energy particle collider and the largest machine in the world, have had to admit that some of the laws they had believed to be absolute, are in fact, wrong. Physicists at the Large **Hadron Collider** in Switzerland announced they might have discovered a brand-new force of nature. Or to be precise, they unveiled “new results which, if confirmed, would suggest hints of a violation of the Standard Model of **particle** physics”.

What I know about physics wouldn't even fill a postage stamp; my physics lessons stopped when I was 14, very many years ago. However, I understand the *‘violation of the standard model’*. Men of science are extremely clever, but they still get things wrong. Once they have come up with a theory it tends to become absolute knowledge. So, back to miracles and a God who uses his children to demonstrate his wonder-working power. On many occasions we have been told that things cannot go against the laws of physics but sometimes God proves otherwise.

- In verse 1 we read that one of the sons of the prophets died, leaving a widow and two sons. One would assume that these prophets were not wealthy people and probably relied on gifts from the people. Clearly his death left his wife and sons in dire circumstances, hence her appeal to Elisha. What question did he ask her, and how did she respond?
- Elisha tells her to borrow as many empty vessels from her neighbours as she can saying, “DO NOT GATHER JUST A FEW”. What is his next instruction and why do you think he gave it?

- What is interesting about verse 6?
- She was able to pay off her debtors and have enough remaining for them to live off.
- What does this account tell us about God?
- I once heard a guy preaching on: “*The miracle is in the house.*” Can you understand that statement in relation to this account?

The Bible records that Elisha performed more miracles than anyone besides Jesus, and certainly more than the prophet Elijah whose mantle he took up. Like Jesus, he reached out to every class of people, poor and rich, high society and peasants, Jews, and foreigners.

- Do you think this may be because Elisha was bold enough to ask for the ‘double-portion of Elijah’s spirit’?
- Have we the faith to ask God to use us? [\(Read Mark 16:15-18\).](#)

[Read 2 Kings 4:8-17](#)

In this remarkable passage we see how Elisha had gained favour with an important and wealthy woman in Shunem who opened her home to him and set aside a room for his sole use when he was passing thorough. Wanting to show his appreciation of her generosity, he asked what he could do for her.

- Elisha offers to speak to the king or commander of the army, but she wanted no favours from them. It was Gehazi, Elisha’s servant, who gave the answer. Read verse 14.
- Read 1 Samuel 1:1-18 and Luke 1:5-23, to see how God wonderfully met the needs of Hannah, and Elizabeth. To be without children was unusual amongst the Jews and no woman wanted to be known as ‘barren’.
- Whilst the child was still young, he became ill and died. What was the response of the Shunamite woman? Read verses 22-25 of 2 Kings 4.
- How different were the responses of Gehazi and Elisha? Can we learn anything from this?
- God had been faithful despite the outward appearances (read verses 29-37). Even though things do not happen as we would want, God is always faithful.
- How do we develop our faith and trust in God?

[Prayer](#)

[God, help us to remain faithful to your word and develop the faith to put it into action.](#)