

CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE: ELIJAH AND ELISHA

APRIL 23, 2025

Background:

The name *Elijah* means “my God is Jehovah or my God is Yahweh.” Very little is known about this ninth century B.C. prophet. All the personal history known about this great man of God is stated in 1 Kings 17:1 “Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead.” Elijah prophecy during the reigns of Ahab and his son Ahaziah. The last prophet of the New Testament, John the Baptist, is associated with Elijah because of his apparel and mainly because he came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Matt. 11:14).

The name *Elisha* means “God is salvation.” Not much is known about this prophet that succeeded Elijah the Tishbite. Elisha was the son of Shaphat who lived in the Jordan valley and it appears that he was a farmer (1 Kings 19:16, 19).

Although there is very little personal information about these two men, the impact they had in biblical history still speaks today.

Lesson Outline:

Elisha and the Widows Oil:

2 Kings 4: 1-7

Elisha Purifies a Pot of Stew:

vv. 38-41

Elisha Feeds One Hundred Men:

vv. 42-44

Key Themes:

- Elisha helps the widow of a prophet
- Elisha purifies a pot of stew
- Elisha feeds 100 men, foreshadowing a miracle of Jesus

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Summary:

Second Kings chapter 4 deals primarily with several perform by the prophet Elisha. A small amount of oil is miraculously multiplied enabling the widow of a prophet to pay her debt. A pot of stewed prepared for the sons of the prophets is accidentally poisoned is made pure by adding flour, and a small portion of barley loaves feeds one hundred men. The feeding of the 100 foreshadows Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 (Luke 9: 13-17; John 6: 1-14.)

Small Group Discussion:

1. The miracle of feeding 100 men from a small amount of food foreshadows what miracle Jesus performed in the New Testament? Where is this miracle found in the NT and how are the similar?
2. Why was the widow in need of Elisha's help and how did she respond to his instructions?

4/30 – 2 Kings 4: 8-37