

2 Kings Chapter 04 Commentary

2Ki 4:1 ¶ "Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. 2 And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil. 3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. 4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. 5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. 6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

We point out first that Israel was not to lend money on usury to another Israelite, and that the Levites were also free from being sold. *Le 25:35 "And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. 36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. 37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase."* Also see *Le 25:33 "And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel. 34 But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession."* We point this out to say; apparently this Levite had borrowed from a stranger, who was not bound by the laws of Israel, therefore, he could charge usury.

We have in these verses the preforming of a miracle of God through Elisha. A widow, of one of the sons of the prophets under Elisha's tutelage, comes to him begging him to relieve her needs, that her sons are not taken from her to pay a debt they owed. Elisha asks her what she has, and she says nothing but a pot of oil. Elisha commands her to borrow many pots from her neighbors, go into her house and close the door, and pour oil into all the vessels. She did as commanded, and the pot of oil filled every borrowed vessel, and ceased after they were all filled. She returns to Elisha and tells him what has transpired, and he tells her to go sell the oil, pay her debt, and for her and her sons to live off the remaining funds.

Under the administration of the law commandments, the Israelites were commanded to supply the need of the widows, who were widows indeed, meaning that the widows had no other source of supplying their needs. We have here the principle, of the sufficiency of God to provide our every need, which is repeated to us in *Php 4:19 "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."* Just as God has promised to provide our every need, we are commanded to provide for those who cannot provide for themselves.

We can see in Elisha a picture of Jesus, how you ask? Elisha did this miracle out of the goodness of his heart and without cost to the widow. Jesus supplied eternal remission of sins and eternal life for God's people out of his love and compassion for God's people. Jesus does not charge us for the gift of eternal salvation.

This miracle, of oil providing for the sustenance of the woman and her children, is encompassed in the phrase we sometimes hear "the oil of Grace." It certainly was oil of grace to this widow. While the actual phrase "the oil of Grace" is not in the bible, the concept of holy anointing oil is symbolic of God's presence and consecration. We find the concept of oil representing the grace of God in *Ex 30:22-32; 22 ¶ Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 23 Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, 24 And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: 25 And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. 26 And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, 27 And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense, 28 And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot. 29 And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy. 30 And thou shalt anoint*

Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office. 31 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. 32 Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you." We see here that this oil is an oil of consecrating things to be holy to God.

This concept carries over to the New Testament seen in **Jas 5:13-15; 13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.**" What were we before we were born again? We were sick with, and debtors to sin. The anointing oil of God's grace being placed upon us by the indwelling Holy Spirit, is the power that makes us whole, as the blood of Christ makes us eternally free from sin.

This miracle is still happening today in the lives of God's born-again children. Before we were born again, we were in bondage, we were indebted to Satan, who would love to take away from us any form of livelihood that we may live in peace. When we are permanently indwelt with the Holy Spirit, we have an unending supply of the "oil" of the grace of God in our lives. This indwelling Holy Spirit of God is sufficient for us to live out our days on earth, seeing our sin debt has been paid in full, and God's grace is sufficient to carry us through life into the eternal abode prepared for us by Jesus Christ.

We noticed that the widow was to shut the door while she was pouring the oil and filling the containers. This reminds us of what we are told in scripture by Jesus in **Mt 6:1-4; 1 ¶ "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.**" This widow did exactly as she was commanded by Elisha, just as we should do exactly as commanded by Jesus. This reminds us that eternal salvation is personal to each person to whom it is gifted. This eternal salvation is not to be flaunted before the world. Rather, it is to be cherished and humbly carried throughout our lives on earth.

This widow was rewarded in secret by God providing enough oil to pay her debt. And an overabundance to provide for the sustenance of her, and her two sons, to live their lives on. This miracle is a reminder to us that when we are freely given eternal salvation by the grace of God; we have a storehouse which is abounding in mercy and grace, which shall never be diminished in its abundance. Our heavenly storehouse has plenty of the bread of life and the water of life for our earthly, and our eternal existence.

8 ¶ "And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to; eat bread. 9 And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. 10 Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither."

Shunem was a city in the tribe of Issachar, which lay in the road between Samaria and Carmel, a road that Elisha often travelled, as we find in **2Ki 2:25 "And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria."**

Hospitality was a virtue of the Israelites by the commandment of God in **Ex 22:21-22; 21 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. 22 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.**" Likewise it is a virtue of the children of God today, seen in **Mt 25:34-40; 34 "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King**

shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Thus, we see this Shunammite woman fulfilling this principle for Elisha, recognizing that he is a holy man of God.

We notice that she consulted her husband about adding on a simple room for Elisha. This demonstrated that she was a woman well acquainted with her place in the house and apparently knew well the word of God.

11 And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. 12 And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. 14 And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. 15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. 16 And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. 17 And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life."

One day Elisha is there in the room she has supplied for him. He calls his servant to ask this woman what she desires in return for her kindness unto them. We see that Elisha asks if she would be spoken for to the king. This woman sought not anything from the king of this world. However, we shall see that Elisha does apply to the true King in Heaven on her behalf, and she is granted a son in her old age. Matthew Henry points out: The giving of a son to such as were old, and had been long childless, was an ancient instance of the divine power and favour, in the case of Abraham, and Isaac, and Manoah, and Elkanah; we find it here among the wonders wrought by Elisha.

Elisha's servant, Gehazi, told Elisha that she has no child and her husband is old. Elisha says to call her to come to him, and when she stood in the door, Elisha tells her that in about a year she shall have a son. She, in unbelief, says to Elisha "***do not lie unto thine handmaid.***" We do not know Elisha's response to this, but she does miraculously have a son as Elisha said.

Today, we are not prophets of God as Elisha, but we can say to those, who have been born again, and do not understand what has happened in their life: we were once as you are now and did not know what to do. We can reason with them out of the scriptures, and through the Holy Spirit guidance and effectual working in their hearts and minds, help them to understand that God has made them a child of God. We can explain to them the surety of the salvation of God, and the need to embrace a life of discipleship to Jesus Christ.

18 ¶ "And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19 And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. 20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. 21 And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. 22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. 23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well. 24 Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. 25 So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: 26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well."

The child grows up enough to follow his father to the fields and tells his father my head, my head. He father has a lad carry him to his mother. The child sits in her lap until noon and then he dies. She lays the dead child on Elisha's bed and shuts the door upon him. This is figurative of putting her trust in God, because she lays him in the man of God's bed. She doesn't put him in his own bed, or her bed, but in the man of God's bed. How often do we put our trust in God and leave our troubles there in his will, and then go seeking the man of God, for us Jesus Christ, and saying "***it shall be well.***" Think about this: she didn't have to hunt the man of God; she went directly to where she knew he was. We can go directly to where we know Jesus Christ is in the Holy Spirit power.

She calls her husband to send her a servant and an ass that she may go to the man of God. Notice, she does not tell her husband that the child is dead. This is why her husband asks; why? since it is not a holy day. This tells us that her husband at least had knowledge of the commandments of God, but we trust that he also had intimate knowledge of God. Her reply is "**it shall be well.**" Since she says, "**it shall be well,**" this woman is acknowledging that things are not well, our son has died, but through steadfast faith in God, she can say "**it shall be well.**"

She does not waste time doing anything else. She makes the necessary arrangements to get her to the man of God as quickly as possible. She rides in haste to Elisha, who sees her coming afar off. Elisha sends his servant to meet her and inquire if all is well, and she replies, "**It is well.**" What great faith this woman is exercising, for it shows that she trusts in the living God, else she could not say "**It is well.**"

Jesus saw and recognized God's people from afar off, even before creation. When they are greatly troubled with the weight of their sins, they come running to Christ. Jesus sees them afar off, for He is in heaven, and his Holy Spirit is in them to minister to them. Because of the new birth; they can come to Jesus believing and saying, "**It shall be well.**" Why? Because we have the New Testament scriptures, and we know what happens in the end for all of God's people.

Remember we talked about a woman's duty to run the home? This woman is running her home in a godly manner. Remember the care she has taken, to see that the man of God stops at her house and has a resting place there. This is where the woman's true duty lies. She is to care for the children, and she is to teach them the word and ways of God. Every mother is a preacher, and her children are her congregation. Husbands, do not get the idea that you have no part in this, because you are the head and are to know the whole truth of the word of God. You are responsible to see that the mother is well grounded in the scriptures, that she may teach the children the whole truth while you are away working. Also, it is your own duty to teach the children the word and ways of God; especially when they accompany you like this lad was with his father.

27 "And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. 28 Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? 29 Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. 30 And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her."

What a lesson here for us. The woman prostrate at Elisha's feet, and actually grabbing hold of them, explains the situation to Elisha. Elisha sends his servant with his staff and instructions about what to do. The woman declares that she will not go home with the presence of Elisha, the man of God. Oh! If only we could have such a heart's desire, to not go anywhere without the presence of The Man Of God, Jesus Christ. For as the scripture says in **Ro 8:31 "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"** If only we can remember; when troubles come our way, we would flee to Jesus and fall at his feet, and like Jacob when he wrestled with Christ incarnate, not let go until we receive the blessing we need.

31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. 32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed."

She does not waste time telling Gehazi, Elisha's servant, of the matter. She is determined to speak directly to the man of God. When we are born again, and recognize that we are sinners doomed to hell, except for the grace of God, we also flee to the man of God, Jesus Christ, and fall prostrate at his feet. There, we can unburden our vexed hearts, minds, and souls, and find relief from our sins. When they get there, Elisha finds the dead child lying upon his bed.

We see here the prophecy of the inability of a man to produce life eternal, or salvation, as people generally speak of it. How? Gehazi is just a servant to the man of God. How do we relate this to our lives today? Well, you see, there is a difference in Gehazi, Elisha's servant, and the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent to take his place. The Holy Spirit possesses the same power as the one who sent him. Gehazi did not possess the power that was in Elisha

and could not bring the child back to life. The Holy Spirit possesses the same power as the one who sent him to earth in his stead, and the Holy Spirit can bring the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, to spiritual life.

God's ministers cannot bring the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, to spiritual life, just as Gehazi was unable to bring the child back to life. Any person who tells you that they can save you eternally is dead wrong. The change in the new birth is the sole work of God, not man.

Gehazi was not to greet anyone but to go directly to the dead child. The Holy Spirit, when sent to give the gift of eternal life to a person, does not greet anyone else in the way, but goes directly to that specific person. Unlike Gehazi, the Holy Spirit possesses the power to do the effectual work of bringing the dead to life.

Just as this woman would not go without Elisha went with her. When brought to the knowledge of the truth of eternal salvation, we cannot go without the presence of Jesus goes with us. May we always be found of so great faith in Jesus, that no matter what man may do to us, we can always say "*It is well.*"

33 "He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. 34 And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. 35 Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. 37 Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out."

Elisha goes into the room and shuts the door. We remember that Elisha told the widow woman to shut the door to pour the oil, so that she and her sons were the only witnesses of the miracle God wrought. We also remember the word of God in *Mt 6:6 "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."* And in *Mt 6:18 "That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."* Elisha instructed the widow to shut her door, and she was rewarded openly before men. Elisha shuts the door, for he would not have the glory of men but that the name of God might be glorified. How careful we ought to be to insure that God gets all the glory for the miracles he works in our lives.

Elisha lies face to face upon the child and the child's flesh grows warm. He leaves the child and walks to and fro in the house. He returns and stretches himself upon the child again, and the child revives and sneezes seven times, and opens his eyes. Elisha calls Gehazi to have the woman come into the room. She enters, she sees that her child is alive and bows prostrate before Elisha. She took up her child alive and went out.

Again, we see that the work of salvation was wrought behind closed doors and was manifested openly when the door was opened. As miraculous as this was, it is even a greater miracle when a child of God is born again. You see, the new birth is a work that is done behind closed doors, in a person's inward parts, and is manifest with the public confession of faith in Jesus Christ.

How many people knew of the death of the son of the Shunamite? Of her household, only the Shunamite woman knew. Her husband did not know. The servant that carried her to Elisha found out when they got to Elisha. Elisha and Gehazi knew when she told them. This helps us realize; eternal salvation is a personal gift of God to a particular person.

One of the duties of a mother is to pray for her dead children, who are dead in trespasses and sins, that they might be given spiritual life. She may do that, today, by going to the pastor, or minister of God, and pleading for prayer that God would do that miraculous work of salvation by grace in her children's lives. This would be aside from her own prayers. I am sure while the child sat upon her lap dying; she was praying for him. I am sure that when she put him on the man of God's bed; she was praying. I am sure when she went to Elisha, she was praying. I am sure that on the return to where the child was; she was praying.

Both, fathers and mothers, must carry their children to God in prayer for the eternal remission of their sins and the gift of eternal life to be bestowed upon them, which can only happen through the man of God as witnessed in this scripture. The man of God being Jesus Christ and his Holy Spirit presence. What a great responsibility parents have, and now humbling it should be to them, when they understand they are entrusted with caring for a child, or children, of God.

What joy! Would be in the heart of the Shunamite woman to receive her dead son alive. What joy! In the heart of parents today, when they see their child who was dead in trespasses and sins given the gift of the new birth. The Shunamite, the mother, received her child and returned to her own house. This gives us the picture of a newborn child of God being received into the fellowship of the New Testament Church. Praise God for the miraculous work of eternal Salvation by the Grace of God, wrought for us through Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! Amen!

38 ¶ And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. 39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not. 40 So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. 41 But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot."

Elisha goes to Gilgal, where he has a school of prophets, and there is a dearth (famine) in the land. Elisha tells his servant to put on the great pot and seethe pottage that the sons of the prophets may eat. Why use the great pot during a time of famine? Elisha understands that God will provide and feed the whole company.

One went into the field and gathered wild gourds and shred them in the pot, not knowing what the gourds were. When they poured out for the people to eat, they cried out that there was death in the pot and they could not eat. Why would they detect death in the food? History teaches that these gourds were very bitter, which caused them to be recognized as poison. Elisha tells them to bring meal, which he casts in the pot, and it offset the poisonous effect of the gourds, so they could eat and not die.

Some lessons we can learn from this:

First, Elisha had them set a pot large enough for all to eat. When we go to church, and the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, there is enough for everyone, no matter how large the crowd. The large pot is always present in the assembly of the saints, for God knows the needs of each individual.

Secondly, the ones gathering to put in the pot need to know what is fit to eat and what is poisonous. When ministers are preparing to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, they need to know the truth from the lies of the devil. Why? Because, when you put adulterated scripture in a sermon, there is death in the pot. This reminds us that not only are the ministers to know the whole truth of the King James Bible, but the congregation is to know also. Why? If the congregation does not know the whole truth of the King James bible, they will eat anything that is fed to them, and it will have death in it, if it is not the pure, unadulterated, gospel of Jesus Christ. The only way: the congregation can know if the ministers are preaching the whole truth is to have the whole truth in their hearts and minds to measure the sermons by. Just as the sons of the prophets were given discernment for the death in the pot, so God's people are to have discernment of death in the pot, which is false doctrine. A word of caution: not all poisonous things have a bitter taste, and some are very sweet to the taste. Therefore, if a minister is preaching or teaching what man has said or done, though it be pleasing to the ears, it is not the gospel. The gospel will always carry our thoughts to Jesus.

There is a prophetic picture here of the world of religion today, as seen in **2Ti 4:3-4; 1 ¶ "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."** These kinds of people do not care that there is death in the pot, neither do they recognize the death in the pot.

Thirdly, it is the lesson that it was not the meal that healed the pot of food. The meal was put in by Elisha, the man of God, and the healing of the death in the pot was by the power of God, which was manifested by Elisha putting in the meal, a type of the bread of life. If a person has a false doctrine, which they have been taught to believe, the preaching of gospel truth, through the Holy Spirit power, will rebuke the false doctrine.

Fourthly, this is why we are commanded in **1Ti 5:22; 19 "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. 22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. 23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."** You see, the bible set up a way for the ministry to bring up younger, or new, ministers who have felt the call to the ministry. Just as Elisha had a school for the sons of the prophets and was tutoring them, in the ways and commandments of God, so it is to be in the ministry of the New Testament Church.

The older ministers are to take the time to delve into study sessions with the new ministers, to guide them in learning the true doctrines taught in the bible. Once they are satisfied that the younger minister is called and sufficiently grounded in the truth of scripture, they can be presented to the church and begin exercising in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the biblical way for the training up of new ministers.

Now, back to death in the pot. If a new minister preaches anything unsound, the older minister, or the elders of the church, or the one who recognizes the error, are to take him aside and show him the error. They are to address him in love and kindness. They are to bring with them the scriptures that demonstrate the error, and the scriptures that demonstrate the truth. Once the new minister understands his error, he is then armed with the truth to come back before the congregation and acknowledge his mistake.

1Ti 5:22; 19 "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Elisha had them bring meal to put in the pot to remove the death in the pot. The meal is representative of the bread of life, which is representative of Jesus Christ, who is representative of the Word of God. Understand, when false doctrine is preached, only the true Word of God will remove the poison from it. Thus, we see the elder minister, in love and kindness, pointing out the error of the new minister. This is to be done publicly, so that all may learn from it. That means that not only is the new minister to learn from the kind rebuke, but the congregation is to learn that error is not to be accepted from the pulpit. It is a reminder to them that they truly need the knowledge of the whole truth, for there may not be another minister there to point out the error, and then the responsibility falls on the deacons, elders, and congregation to correct the error in love.

I believe when it says to "**lay hands suddenly on no man,**" it is telling the ministry, and the church; to take your time and be sure that the new minister is well grounded in true doctrine, then they can be set aside and come under the hands of the presbytery.

42 "And there came a man from Baalshalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. 43 And his servitor said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. 44 So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD."

This man brings to the man of God, the priest, the firstfruits of the land. He brings twenty loaves of barley bread, and full ears of corn in the shucks. This is a proper thing to do under the commandment of the law ordinances of God. I would point out that according to historians, a loaf of barley was a very small loaf, unlike a loaf of bread as we recognize it today.

Elisha tells the man to give unto the people that they may eat. The man, in disbelief, tells Elisha; it would be an offense to set so little before so many. Elisha tells him again to give to the people that they may eat for thus saith the LORD, they shall eat and leave thereof. Remember, at the start they set on the great pot, because Elisha knew that God would provide. The man now obeys and sees the power of God at work.

This is a prophetic picture of Jesus feeding five thousand plus in **Mt 14:16-21; 16 "But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. 17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children."** And when Jesus fed the four thousand plus in **Mt 15:34-38**.

This reminds us of what Jesus tells us in **Mt 6:33; 30** *"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*

Oh! If only our faith and trust in God would be so strong as we see manifested by Elisha, and many other prophets of God, and the disciples and apostles in the New Testament, and displayed by our Saviour himself. We pray that God will be patient with his chosen children here in time, and continue to strengthen our faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ, who has already supplied our every need. What do you mean? Do we have need of anything that Jesus has not provided? He has given us the gift of eternal life in Christ. He has given us eternal forgiveness of our sins. He has given us the promise seen in **Joh 14:1-3; 1 ¶** *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* When Jesus accomplishes the fulfillment of this promise, we shall be satisfied, and we will never need again. Thank you, King Jesus, for your earthly, and eternal, provision of our every need, Hallelujah! Amen!