

Elijah/Elisha – Standing Alone
Week 19 – The Return of the Woman in Shunem

Transition: In last week's passage, Syria (Aram) was once again on the march against the northern kingdom of Israel and was set to conquer it through the sheer power of its mighty army. But in one of the most dramatic and surprising turnarounds in the Bible, Syrian soldiers scurried home because they were no match for God who fights for His own.

Context: This week, we cover the story of a woman whom we have already met...the woman in Shunem. In that story, God had raised her dead son back to life (through Elisha). In this story, Elisha warns her of a coming famine and she and her family move elsewhere. In the process of leaving and returning, God continues to shower her with blessing.

Opening Questions:

- How do you explain unlikely coincidences? How have you heard others explain them?
- Has someone in authority ever come to your defense? What happened? What impact did it have on you?

Scripture/Storying: 2 Kings 8:1-6

Discipleship Questions:

- What is your overall reaction to this passage? What impression does it make on you and why?
- This is the second time we're seeing the woman from Shunem. What do you remember about her story? (See 2 Kings 4:8-37.)
- Elisha warns the woman to relocate her family to another place because God has ordained a famine to hit the land. What were her immediate feelings? What challenges do you think she would have encountered by moving an entire household to a foreign land for seven years? Have you ever moved away from your home when you didn't want to? What happened? What were you feeling? How did it turn out? What did you learn?
- At the word of Elisha, the woman and her household moved away. Have you ever done anything this dramatic in obeying God? If so, share the story. If not, what would it take for you to do something so extreme?
- The woman from Shunem appears exactly the moment Gehazi is providing an example to the king of a miracle that God had performed through Elisha. In what ways does knowing that God is in complete control comfort you?
- When has God worked through an unlikely coincidence in your life? Share the story, and how it affected you.
- In this situation, the king did the right thing by restoring the woman's land as well as the income the land had produced from the time of her departure. How does the theme of restoration in this passage point us to Christ? Why is it important for us to remind ourselves of how our King has restored us? Can you recall a time when remembering your restoration helped you? Share the story and the ways you were benefited.
- What is the Holy Spirit teaching you through this story? How does it impact the way you think and live?

Prayer time: This week we are praying for Street Hope, a ministry that Providence supports.

- Pray for the Garland Oaks Residents as they move into a new season. Pray that they will stay engaged in their schooling and that the teachers will be encouraged in their daily tasks. Pray as Street Hope continues to hire additional employees for Garland Oaks.
- Pray for the students, parents, and teachers that Street Hope will be training soon. Pray for the team as Steve Arnold, the new Prevention Educator, transitions into his new position.
- Pray that God will provide for the financial needs of their ministry.
- Pray for teachers, caretakers, and parents to recognize the signs and risks when children in their care may be exposed to danger. Pray for an open door to share information that will protect the innocent.