

Even after Elisha was dead and buried God used him to help others. A funeral was taking place when suddenly an invading army was seen by the mourners. In a hurry to get away, they threw the body into Elisha's grave. As soon as the dead man's body touched Elisha's bones, the man came alive again.

Many of Elijah's miracles were connected with judgment, which we all deserve, but Elisha tells us more about God's love. God has shown His love to the world by sending Jesus His son to be punished instead of us.

You can read about Elisha in the First Book of Kings, chapter 19 through to the Second Book of Kings, chapter 13.



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THE LIFE OF

ELISHA



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After his friend, Elijah was taken up to heaven, Elisha crossed back over Jordan. He was met by fifty men who, seeing how he hit the water with his cloak in the same way Elijah had done, realised that Elisha had been chosen by God to carry on after Elijah.

The first problem Elisha faced was that there was no suitable drinking water in the area. The water which was there made people ill. Elisha put salt into the stream of water and God made the water drinkable.

One day a poor woman came to Elisha. Her husband had died and she owed a lot of money. The man she owed the money to was going to take away her two sons and sell them as slaves. Elisha asked what she had left in her house and she answered that all she had was one pot of oil. Elisha told her to borrow empty bottles and jars from her neighbours – as many as she could – and then take them all into her house and close the door. Elisha told her to fill the empty jars with oil from the pot. As her sons brought the jars to her she filled every one. When the jars were filled she went and told Elisha what had happened. He replied that she should sell the oil, pay her debts and use the rest of the money to live on.

Some people were kind to Elisha and his servant Gehazi. One rich lady made him a little room that he could use whenever he passed that way. In return for her kindness Elisha promised that she should soon have the son she had longed for.

When the son was a few years old he went out with his father to the fields to watch the harvest being gathered. Suddenly he had a headache and soon died. His mother set out to find Elisha and bring him back. God used Elisha to bring the boy back to life.

Elisha also sorted out a problem with poisonous stew. One of the men had put some wild gourds into the stew not realizing they were poisonous. Elisha added finely ground flour to the stew and it became safe to eat. The fine flour is a picture of the Lord Jesus.

One day Naaman, a great commander of the Syrian army came to Elisha. He had been told that Elisha could cure him of the dreadful disease leprosy. He brought gifts for Elisha but was surprised when Elisha simply sent him a message to tell him to wash himself seven times in the river Jordan. He was angry because he expected Elisha to make a great show and heal him. His servants persuaded him to do what Elisha told him and he was cured. Not only was he cured of his leprosy but he also learnt that the God of Israel was the one true God. He promised that he would not worship idols any more but only the God of Israel.

The king of Syria came to fight against the land of Israel. He found that many times when he tried to ambush the army of Israel they escaped because they had moved away from where he thought they were. The king of Syria thought that one of his servants was a traitor but they explained the Elisha was telling the king of Israel everything that was going on in the Syrian camp. Of course it was God who knew what to tell Elisha.

Elisha often helped the kings of Israel against their enemies despite the fact that many of them did not obey God. God was kind and cared for His chosen people Israel.

After many years the time came that Elisha would die. Joash was king of Israel at this time and Elisha told him that he could defeat the Syrian army. Elisha told Joash to hit the ground with a handful of arrows and was angry when Joash stopped after hitting the ground three times. Elisha told him he should have hit the ground five or six times but would now only defeat the Syrians three times.