

Church of God Sunday School

THE FAITH OF ELISHA

2 Kings 6:1 — 13:21

The Prophet Elisha lived a godly life. God was faithful *to* him and his faith *in* God was great. This lesson tells of some examples of the faith of Elisha.

One example of Elisha's faith is found in the story of when the "sons of the prophets" came to Elisha, wanting to build a bigger building because their school building had become too small. They wanted to go to the Jordan River, chop down trees by the river, and make beams to build a bigger building there. Elisha said, "Go ye." But they wanted Elisha to go with them, so Elisha went with them to the Jordan River.

The men did not have chainsaws or any electrical devices to cut wood, such as we have today. They had to use axes. That was hard work, and it took strong men to do it. As one man was cutting down a tree, the head of the ax fell into the river. The man cried to Elisha, "Alas, master! for it was borrowed."

Elisha asked where the ax head had sunk. When the man showed him, Elisha cut a stick and threw it into the water where the ax head had fallen. To the amazement of everyone, the ax head floated up to the surface of the water!

The ax head was made of iron (a type of metal). Can metal float in water? No! Metal will sink, not float. Although God made the laws of this universe, He can reverse them, as He did that day.

Elisha's faith in God's power caused the ax head to float to the top of the water. When the ax head came to the surface, Elisha told the man to pick it up. The man stretched his hand out and pulled the ax head out of the water.

Another example of Elisha's faith is seen when the king of Syria was out to capture Elisha. The king sent his army to surround Dothan (*DOH-than*), the city where Elisha and his servant were. When Elisha's servant arose early in the morning, he saw the city surrounded by a great host of chariots and horses. He went to Elisha to tell him, saying, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"

Elisha said, "Fear not: for they that

be with us are more than they that be with them."

Elisha then prayed, "LORD . . . open

his eyes, that he may see." The "LORD opened the eyes of the young man." He saw that "the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire" all around Elisha! Elisha's faith helped the young man to see that the Lord would take care of them.

When the Syrians came to get Elisha, Elisha prayed that they would be struck with blindness, which they were. Then Elisha led them to the king of Israel in Samaria, their enemy! Elisha prayed again, and God opened their eyes. They saw they were in their enemy's camp, but Elisha told the king of Israel to feed them and let them go, and he did.

Another example of Elisha's faith is seen when God told him of a famine that would come on the land because of the wickedness of the people. The famine was to last for seven years. Elisha believed what God said, and he warned the great woman of Shunem to take her household and leave until the famine was over.

The woman heeded the warning and went into the land of the Philistines. (The woman's husband is not mentioned. Remember, he was old. He might have died before this.)

At the end of the seven years, the woman returned to find someone had claimed her house and moved in. She went to see the king and ask for justice.

While she was on her way, the king was talking with Gehazi, Elisha's servant. The king asked about the miracles Elisha had done. Gehazi had just begun to tell him about the young boy Elisha had restored to life, when the woman approached the king, to plead for her house and her land.

Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." When the king spoke to the woman, she told him what



had happened.

The king listened to the woman's story. Then he appointed an officer to restore all that belonged to her. He even told the officer to restore all the harvest of her field, from the time she had left up until that time.

The last example of the faith of Elisha is when Elisha was very sick. Even as he lay dying, he had faith in God. Joash, the king of Israel, came to see Elisha. He wept over Elisha and said, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." (These were the same words Elisha himself had said after seeing Elijah taken by a whirlwind to Heaven.)

In other words, King Joash was saying: "What will I do now that you are dying? You are the only defense of Israel." Elisha gave the king instructions. He told Joash to take a bow and arrows. When Joash did, Elisha put his own hands over the hand of the king's as he held the bow. (This was to show that victory would come through God's hand of guidance; 2 Chronicles 20:15.)

Then Elisha told Joash to open the east window and shoot an arrow. King Joash did, and Elisha said, "The arrow of the LORD's deliverance . . . from Syria:

for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them."

But when Elisha told Joash to "Take the arrows" and "Smite upon the ground," the king of Israel only "smote" the ground three times. Elisha was angry! He told Joash he should have smote the ground five or six times. That would have signified that Israel would conquer Syria. But now Joash would only defeat Syria three times during his reign.

"And Elisha died, and they buried him." Some time later, the Moabites invaded the land. One day, while preparing to bury a dead man, a band of Moabites was seen. Fear came on the burial men, and they quickly placed the body in the tomb of Elisha and fled.

When the dead man's body touched the bones of Elisha, he "revived, and stood up on his feet." It was not the prophet's bones that had the power to raise up the dead man, but God. Through this miracle, God showed honor to the Prophet Elisha and to his faith.

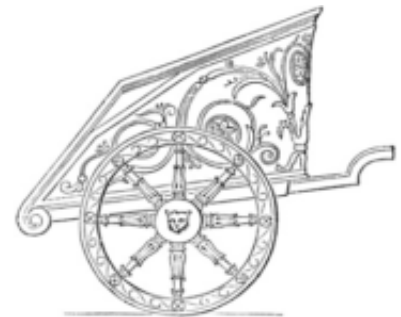
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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."*  
 —Mark 9:23  
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Unscramble the Words



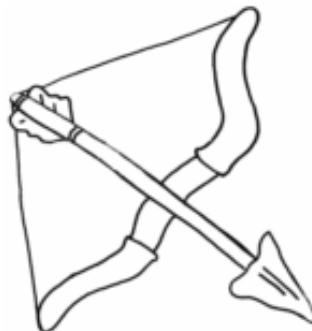
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