



Lesson 129

Elisha and the Poisoned Pot

Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: 2 Kings 4:38-44 • Setting: circa 845 B.C., in Gilgal • Main Characters: God, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets • Plot: Elisha miraculously protects and provides for the sons of the prophets during a time of famine. • Key word(s): “ _____ ” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climax: <i>2 Kings 4:40 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.</i> |
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Poisoned Meal

1. (v 38) This story takes place during a famine in Israel (probably the seven-year famine that Elisha prophesied would come in 8:1.¹
 - (a) The large pot was was a _____ that sat over a fire in which all manner of available food was cooked – meat, vegetables, and meal.
 - (b) (v 39) In an effort to make the stew tastier, one of the sons of the prophets collected wild vegetables, but he naively brought a toxic plant and added it to the stew. The plant might have been a kind of wild _____ that not only tastes bitter but can cause sever illness or even death if eaten in large quantities.
 - (c) (vv 40-41) As they began to eat the stew, some of the prophets recognized the bitter taste as belonging to a dangerous plant. They frantically warned their master Elisha of the dangerous mistake, and he commanded that meal, or _____, be added to the stew. Miraculously, the sons of the prophets were spared an unpleasant death.

Provision Made

2. (vv 42-44) As the dearth continued, a man from Baal-shalishah brought Elisha and the sons of the prophets the firstfruits of his harvest – twenty barley loaves and some grain.
 - (a) Elisha commanded that the men be fed with the offering. The servant objected because _____ loaves would not feed one hundred men.
 - (b) But Elisha insisted, saying “Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, 'They shall eat, and shall _____ thereof.'”

Application

3. In both stories the focus is on food, and especially grain. Meal (flour) was added to the

¹ Bible stories are not always arranged chronologically in scripture.

poisonous stew to make it edible, and the barley loaves were miraculously multiplied to feed one hundred men. Flour is often used in the Bible to signify God's grace towards sinful man. Can you think of other examples in Scripture where flour, grain, or bread is linked to God's care for man? _____

4. The meal added to the stew is a wonderful picture of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life; the meal not only made the stew safe to eat but provided a means of sustenance – so also Jesus not only saves us from sin's eternal death but also provides strength to live by and to battle against sin's presence in this life. He is salvation and _____.

Psalm 118:14 The LORD is my strength and song, And is become my salvation.

5. Elisha took twenty loaves and fed one hundred. The miracle was given not only for the sake of the sons of the prophets, but also to foreshadow the future ministry of Christ, who would miraculously feed thousands. This is the common theme of the Old Testament – even its greatest heroes pale in comparison the glories of _____.

6. The story of the man from Baal-shalishah reminds us that even in apostate Israel embers of revival continued to glow. God uses his people greatly in the _____ spiritual conditions.

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): “meal” • 1. a) cauldron; b) cucumber; c) flour • 2. A) twenty; b) leave • 3. In 1 Kings 17:14-16, the widow's flour and oil are replenished; the Bible speaks of man not living by bread alone, but by every word of God; one of the elements of the Lord's Supper is bread. • 4. Strength • 5. Christ • 6. darkest

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.