
THEME

CONQUERING UNCERTAINTY (LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES)

FLUMMOX IN A TROUBLED TIME

2 KINGS 4:38-44

Adeoye, Emmanuel (Evang.)

When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. *As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." 39 Then one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, for they did not know what they were. 40 So they poured it out for the men to eat. And as they were eating of the stew, they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And they were unable to eat. 41 But he said, "Now bring meal." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it out for the people that they may eat." Then there was no harm in the pot. 42 Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat." 43 His attendant said, "What, will I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, "They shall*

eat and have some left over." 44 So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord.

- Elisha visited the sons of the prophets at Gilgal during the time of the famine (8:1), and he commanded Gehazi his servant to make a stew for the men. Vegetables were scarce so some of the men went looking in the fields for herbs they could add to the stew. The student who came with a cloak filled with gourds wasn't knowledgeable about such matters but just brought what-ever looked edible. In fact, nobody knew what these gourds were!
- What were the evidences that there was poison in the pot? The bitter taste of the stew was perhaps the first clue, and the men probably suffered stomach pains and nausea. There had been death in the water at Jericho (2:19-22), and now

there was death in the pot at Gilgal. It had been introduced innocently by a well-meaning student, but it had to be removed. But it was a time of famine and food was scarce. Elisha dropped some flour into the pot, and the Lord removed the poison from the stew.

As far as we know, there were no poisonous plants growing in the Garden of Eden. They showed up with the thorns and thistles after Adam sinned (**Gen 3:17-19**). Today, there is a great deal of "death in the pot," for we live under the curse of the law of sin and death, and sin and death are reigning in this world (**Rom 5:14-21**). But when Jesus died on the cross, He bore the curse of the law for us (**Gal 3:13**), and for those who have trusted Christ, grace is reigning (**Rom 5:21**) and they are "reigning in life" (**Rom 5:17**). The sting of death has been removed (**1 Cor 15:50-57**)!

In the northern kingdom of Israel, there was no official temple dedicated to Jehovah, and many of the faithful priests and Levites had left apostate Israel and moved to Judah (**1 Kings 12:26-33; 2 Chron 11:13-17**). Since there was no sanctuary to which the people could bring their tithes and offerings (**Lev 2:14; 6:14-23; 23:9-17; Deut 18:3-5**), they brought them to the nearest school of the prophets where they would be shared by people true to the Mosaic Law.

The firstfruit offerings of grain could be roasted heads of grain, fine flour baked into cakes, or even loaves of bread. All of this would be most

welcome to the sons of the prophets, and certainly the Lord honored the people who refused to bow down to the golden calves at Dan and Bethel.

There were one hundred hungry men in the group, and though the gifts the man brought were honored by the Lord, they couldn't feed all of the men adequately.

Gehazi's question "How can I set this before a hundred men?" (v. 43, NIV) sounds like Andrew's question about the five loaves and two fish, "[H]ow far will they go among so many?" (**John 6:9, NIV**).

But Elisha knew that the Lord had this difficult situation well under His control. He commanded his servant to set out the bread and grain, and when Gehazi obeyed, there was not only plenty of food for everybody, but there was food left over. The Word of the Lord had announced and accomplished the impossible.

When our Lord fed the five thousand, He used the miracle as a backdrop for preaching a strong salvation message about the Bread of Life (**John 6:25ff**). Elisha didn't preach a sermon, but the miracle assures us that God knows our needs and meets them as we trust Him. Today we have freezers and supermarkets to supply us with food, and there are food banks to help those who are poor.

But in Elisha's time, people prepared and consumed their food a day at a time. That's why Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (**Matt 6:11**). During his years in the wilderness as an exile, David

depended on God's provision, and he was able to say, "*I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread*" (**Ps 37:25, NKJV**). Out of the riches of His grace, the Lord meets our every need.

- SOMETIME'S WE OFTEN BEHAVE LIKE THE YOUNG PROPHET
- WE OFTEN GO OUT TO BRING THING THAT WILL NOT AIDS US BUT HARM US

TAKE HOME AND LESSON TO BE LEARNT

- WE NEED TO INTENSIFY OUR FAITH IN GOD - **HABAKUK 2:4**
- CHRISTIANS MUST TAKE AWAY FEAR AMIDST CHALLENGES OF LIFE (**2TIMOTHY 1:7**)
- MAKE JESUS YOUR BEST FRIEND BOTH IN GOOD AND EVIL DAYS (**JOB 2:10, PROV 3:5**)

HYMN 623 – BY GEO SERIVEN, "WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS".