

Kings and Prophets 14-03-07a

This is Friday the 7th of March 2014. We're in the last seven or so verses of chapter 4 of 2nd Kings. The story of Elisha, particularly as it provides counterpoint to Elijah, has been a quite fascinating and illuminating study and we're going to see that extended and broadened tonight.

Let's take a moment to go to the Lord in prayer and we'll launch our study. Father, we thank you for this time. We thank you for our fellowship.

We thank you for a place where we can come and relax in the company of believers who share enthusiasm for your word, recognize how important it is, recognize the pervasive and encompassing nature of the ministry of your Holy Spirit and how important it is for our growth and our function before you. We pray that as we look at this portion of your word tonight that the Holy Spirit will be our teacher, will knit it together with the things that we have learned in the past and prepare a foundation for things that we can learn in the future. Most importantly that it will become a part of our thinking in a way that will result in application, that we can exercise faith, lay hold of righteousness and ultimately fulfill the destiny that you have assigned to us, that we can be pleasing in your sight, that we can glorify the Lord Jesus and that we can be a blessing to each other and to the world.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. You'll turn with me to 2 Kings 4. We pick up tonight at verse 38.

You remember that having studied the Shunammite lady and her experiences with taking care of the prophet, recognizing who he was, how important he was and then him wanting to provide her with a blessing in return and finding out that she would really love to have a child. And so God in His grace through the prophet grants that heart's desire and she does and then my head, my head out in the field and he comes in and dies in her lap. And her extraordinary faith expressed in the way she behaves in that crisis situation, knowing where to go, knowing what to say, knowing what not to settle for, ensuring that Elisha came back in person.

And when her son is restored to life and restored to health, her first response is not even to grab up her child, she falls at the feet of the prophet. And immediately after that, because in the course of this restoration and healing, what did the child do? What's the only contribution? This child only does two things. He says, my head, my head and falls over and what else? Sneezes seven times.

That's his function. Don't have his name. I was telling Kenny earlier this week, I think in kingdom years to come, whether it's the millennium or thereafter, assuming we can get anywhere near either one of them, you can imagine that there are going to be certain well-trodden paths.

There are going to be little domiciles, households where biblical figures live. And we were

looking at a sermon where Dr. Criswell was talking about the malefactors that were crucified on each side of the Lord Jesus. One of them says, you know, if you be the Christ, save yourself and us.

And the other one says, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And we don't know these guys' names. They're a vignette, just a moment in scriptural history.

But can you imagine finding out that this guy lives over here and day by day people would come and gather in the yard. He might come out and sit on his porch and people would say, you know, we know you've told it before, but tell us again the story of, you know, what it was like, you know, being crucified with the Lord Jesus or what was it like crossing the Red Sea with the water backed up? What was it like? What did manna really taste like? You know, you got any you can show us? And this child, yeah, I'm the guy, I'm the one. You know, it's a miracle I came back to life, big old heavy prophet laying on me and trying to, you know, sneeze.

But you remember after that when Elisha observes, because even in the midst of this crisis, he is observant and it doesn't escape his notice that the child sneezed seven times and through this God communicates to him that this famine is coming. And we went to chapter 8 and we saw the story of the Shunammite woman and her family being preserved through believing the word of the prophet that the famine was coming and they actually go to the land of the Philistines and then return and what the overtones are of that because there are always larger things being pictured. Well, say all of that to say this, there's a famine.

And if you look now where we pick up tonight in chapter 4, verse 38, and Elisha after the experience in Shunamm returns to Gilgal. Returns to Gilgal. You remember Gilgal? Where's the last time we saw Elisha in Gilgal? Remember the whole thing with Elijah and it's time for the mantle to be passed along and it goes, they make that journey in the wrong direction and they go over the Jordan, Gilgal, near Jericho.

It's about 40 miles away from Shunamm. So, Elisha returned to Gilgal and surprise, surprise, surprise, as Gomer Pyle used to say, there's a famine. This is the famine.

This is the seven sneeze famine. The famine of the seven sneezes has hit. Now, it's a country-wide famine.

It's famine in Shunamm. It's famine in Gilgal. By the way, it's famine in Jericho.

Sure good to have some fresh water down there since food's a bit scarce. Famine in the land. Famine throughout the land.

Now, pop quiz for all of you. Each one of you that I see is an advanced student of the Bible with extensive grasp of things biblical. So, here's your quiz.

What is the significance of a famine? What larger implication would there be for the land that God promised to His people flowing with milk and honey, chicken in every pot, coconut on

every palm tree, whatever it might be? Why would God allow or send or permit famine, discipline? And why a famine of all things? Why not hail? Why not invasion? What does a famine speak of? It's a spiritual famine, right? There's a famine in the land. My people perish for lack of bread. Is that what it says? My people perish for lack of knowledge, for lack of wisdom, for lack of grasp of their standing, their covenant obligations and covenant privileges in relationship to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

There's a famine. Now, when there is a famine, there's a lot – well, let me back up. When there's not a famine, when it's bounty land, I'm dwelling in Beulah land, there the table's always full, there the beef is roasting, you know, it's just on and on and on.

There's just all kinds of stuff. But when you get down to thinness and leanness and almost out, like we saw recently in 1 Kings chapter 17, what do you get down to? What's the last thing? Where do they feed people in jail? Well, they used to. Now they're eating more sumptuously than we are.

But what did they use to put people on when they were in prison, when they were incarcerated? Bread and water. Bread and water. What's the nickname for bread? What has it been called all down through history? The staff of life.

If you've got bread, you can live. Without bread, you die. What did Jesus say about himself in that regard? I am the bread of life.

He that believes in me is partaking of the bread and has the water of life. You know, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. You've got the bread and you've got the water.

You've got the basics. You've got the staples of spiritual life when you've got bread and water. Elisha's already provided water in Jericho, right? And in the famine, what do you need? You need bread.

And if you're down to where you haven't even got bread, you're in hurt and shape. Well, there's a famine in the land and Elisha has returned to Gilgal. 40 mile trip.

This didn't take long for this famine to set in. It could have been weeks, a couple of months. People have started to use up the stored provisions.

Now, got to watch closely here. There's fixing to be question two on the pop quiz. The sons of the prophets, I'm reading now in chapter four, verse 38, Elisha returned to Gilgal.

There was a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. And he said to his servant, put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.

What do you think about this verse? What do you think about this situation as described? What stands out in your mind? Take a look at it and ask yourself, ask yourself if there's anything pear shaped, anything a little bit out of round, anything not quite like it ought to be. What do you

know about the Middle East? What's the tradition amongst the Bedouin and the Arabic cultures and the Semitic cultures that have lived there now for thousands of years? What is the fundamental operating principle when it comes to people coming in contact with one another, with people visiting? What's the ethos there? What do people do? Even enemies do this for each other. Hospitality.

Hospitality. You're under my tent. You have come to my place.

I will care for you. This is, you go back to 1st Kings 17 again, the widow, the last little bit of flour and oil she's got, the visiting prophet, she's going to make him a piece of bread. She and her son are about to die.

But part of this ethos now, she recognizes he's the prophet and it's an expression of her faith, but it's also recognition that this is the right thing to do because it's hospitality. Now, what do you see wrong in verse 38? Who's the visitor and who are the visitees? So who ought to be providing food for whom? Who should be providing food for whom here? Who's the home team? Say it out loud. Sons of the prophets.

Who's the away team? Who's the visitors? Elisha. Who provides the stadium and the locker rooms? Who should be providing the food here? You got a hundred guys in the sons of the prophets. We know this from other passages and we know from what we're going to see later in this chapter.

There's a hundred of these guys. How many are on the visiting team? Two. Elisha and Gehazi.

Elisha and his servant. That's it. So what makes more sense to you? I mean, just stay with me now.

Common sense wise, do a hundred people visit two guys and the two guys provide food for the hundred or do two guys come visit a hundred guys and the hundred guys pool a little bit of stuff and provide for the two guys? What do you think? I mean, does this not seem exceedingly weird when you really look at it? Elisha and here's the other thing that I would point out just by way of observation. Elisha came to Gilgal. Who is actually visiting whom? Now he has come to Gilgal to their town and in that sense he's a visitor, but who's visiting whom? Did Elisha say, well, I better go see those sons of the prophets.

No, he just, you know, maybe Gehazi pitched a half shelter there and got a little fire going and here come the sons of the prophets to Elisha. The sons of the prophets were sitting before him. It doesn't say he was sitting before the sons of the prophets.

They were sitting before him. They came to see him. He came to their town, but apparently he didn't go to their camp.

That's why Elisha says to his servant, put on the large pot. What large pot? Elisha's large pot, the pot that Gehazi puts on a mule and carries 40 miles from Shunam. This is Elisha's camp,

Elisha's pot, Elisha's servant.

They're sitting before Elisha. And so I ask myself, if this is the sons of the prophet and they've got their own little community, when Elisha came into Gilgal, he's all hot and sweaty and, you know, Gehazi's all tuckered out, stove in. They said, well, let's go visit the sons of the prophets.

They can put us up. They'll have a place for us to stay. They'll provide us some food and Elisha doesn't go there.

This is part of my impression that the sons of the prophets weren't exactly on the agenda for Elijah and Elisha and many of the other major prophets in Israel. They tolerated them. You never see one of these prophets seeking these guys out.

These guys seek out the prophet. They're like before Elisha. You never see these guys doing very much.

They're factotai. That's the plural factotum. Anyway, so there's a lot going on here just in this one verse.

We've only done one verse, but Elisha has come to Gilgal. What's the significance of Gilgal? G-L-G-L in Hebrew. Gilgal.

This is like having a rock in your hubcap and rolling slow down your driveway. Gilgal, Gilgal, Gilgal. It's like a squeaky cartwheel in ancient Israel.

Cyclical, repetition, up, down, up, down. This was the pattern in the book of Judges, if you remember. Oh, God has delivered us and we're faithful and we're doing fine.

Now we've gotten lackadaisical and apathetic and God has judged us. We're either being invaded. We're having our stuff taken by the Philistines.

Something bad has happened. We cry out to the Lord. The Lord sends a deliverer and we're up.

Everything is great for a few years. Then we stumble and fall and we're down on the ground again. God sends a deliverer.

We're up, we're down. We're up, we're down. Gilgal.

Well, it's no accident that this is where we are. It's not Jericho. It's not Hebron.

It's not any one of a number of dozen other places it could have happened. It's Gilgal. So, Elisha doesn't say, what's the matter with you, sons of the prophets? You know, you're inhospitable.

If you come in here, what do you expect me to feed you all? What does he say? He turns to Gehazi and he says, and when it says his servant, we have no reason to think this is anybody other than our little friend. So, put on the large pot. Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.

Now, how many people we got here? It's like four, eight, 12. You know, a couple dozen people can probably fit in this room. You have to multiply this by four.

Now, how big a pot does he travel with that we could provide stew for a hundred guys? This, okay, let's say each guy gets an eight-ounce portion. That's 800 ounces. How many gallons is that? I don't know.

Were there 64 ounces in a gallon? There's 128 ounces in a gallon. Thank you, chef lady. And so, how many gallons would it take to- Six and a half gallons.

Yeah. So, he must be carrying like a 10-gallon pot or something to be able to cook this down and make a stew. I mean, just to get a taste, just to get a little, you know.

Well, a kitchen trash can's 13 gallons. Yeah. Yeah.

So, this is a pretty substantial undertaking to make food for 102 guys. So, put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets. Well, you can put water in the pot, but any person with a cookbook can tell you it takes more than water to make stew.

So, one went out into the field to gather herbs. This is one of the sons of the prophets. If it was Gehazi, it would say he went out to the field, but it wasn't Gehazi.

And it's important who this is. It's not Elisha and it's not Gehazi. That leaves 100 remaining candidates.

So, you know, number 63 went out in the field to gather herbs because he's thinking, you know, this is going to be some thin stuff here. 100 guys, big pot, you know, whatever the prophet's packing by way of food. These guys probably didn't bring anything.

And so, he says, well, I'll contribute. And you think this is a good thing, right? I'll help. Nothing wrong with that.

Right? The word here that is operative is the first word of several. He went out into the field. Into the field.

This is S-E-D-E-H. If I can see my vowel points. S-A-D-E-H.

Sadeh. I was pretty sure that was a... Sadeh. Field.

Now, what kind of field? You say, well, he's outstanding in his field. Well, what field? What field is it? This is a particular kind of field. And you do a word study on this.

You go back to Genesis and Exodus and places like that. This is not a crop field. This is a pasture or grassland or a place.

This is a wild field, not a cultivated field. I don't have time to take you to all the places. But there's a... Well, here's a convenient parallel.

You remember the story of Jacob and Esau. Genesis 29, I think, where he sells his birthright. Remember that? Esau is said in that passage to be coming in from the field.

What's he been doing? Hunting. Hunting. Hunting.

Throwing rocks, throwing spears, javelins, arrows, jawbone. I don't know what he had that he was using, but he was out there hunting and he was unsuccessful. But he was in the field.

You don't go to a wheat field to hunt. You don't go to a barley field to hunt unless you're looking for, you know, rodents. Where do you go? You go to the wild field.

This is a place where mandrakes grow. You remember the whole story of the wives of Jacob and the mandrakes? Oh, son, Reuben brings in the mandrakes from the field. You don't have mandrakes growing out in your wheat field.

This is the wild. Most pertinently and importantly, you remember where it says, Goliath says, come here to me, little boy, and I will feed your flesh to the fowl of the air and to the beast of the field. The field is where the beasts graze, where the beasts live.

And when the beasts live and graze, it's like one of these laws of thermodynamics and unclosed systems. You put stuff in, stuff comes out, right? That's the field. There is fertilizer in the field.

There is raw, unprocessed, natural, organic fertilizer in the field. This is what happens in the field because this is where the vegetation grows. So one of the sons of the prophets goes to the field, to the uncultivated place where unidentified stuff grows to gather herbs.

This is an interesting word because it is Orot, O-R-O-T and in the Bible, it occurs four times, this word Orot. Two times it is translated herbs, the other two times it is translated it is translated lights or light. Why? Because Orot, the very first recorded words of God in Scripture and for our purposes in history are in the first part of the first chapter of Genesis.

What's the very first thing God says? Yahi or let there be light. Well, this is the root of this word and it's not an accident. Lots of different words could have been used, lots of different things could have been gathered, but the guy goes out in the field to gather herbs and that is the way it should be translated.

But there's a fun little word play going on here because it's light. He's going to go gather something beneficial, something that's as good and great and associated with God as it could be. Let there be light.

Light is good when it comes from God. Light is not so good when it comes from man. And he's out there thinking he's going to gather something good.

What he finds is a wild vine. The word translated wild there, sade. He went out to the sade and he found a sade vine, a field vine, and gathered from it a lap full of sade gourds.

Now, if God says a thing once, we're paying attention. If he says a thing twice, we're really paying attention. If he puts the word *sade* three times in the same sentence, I'm thinking it's something we should really sort of note.

So why would this be in the verse? Why would *sade* be so prominently featured here? Remember how in recent times looking at Elisha, it's been helpful for us to kind of step back. Remember the widows, the ladies, and we went back to Joseph talking to Pharaoh, the two visions are one, the things are one. When Elisha meets these guys in the midst of a famine and it's time for some food, he says, let's prepare a stew.

The prophet is preparing the stew. Okay. I'm thinking you can't go wrong if the prophet, if you've come to the prophet of God, whatever your other problems may be, these guys knew enough to come to the prophet.

And the prophet says, Gehazi, put on the pot, let's feed these guys. Jesus says, have them all sit on the ground. You guys feed them, right? I'm ready to take and eat whatever Jesus hands the disciples to hand to me.

Aren't you? As a son of the prophets, I would be ready to take and eat whatever Elisha, the prophet of God that healed the waters of Jericho, that raised the Shunammite son, whatever he's got in the pot, I'm thinking this is going to be good, right? Except this guy, I can make it better. I can enhance the prophet's stew. What comes from the prophet isn't going to be sufficient.

I'll help him. I'll help him. I'll help him.

I'll help him. Remember at the tail end of Revelation, what happens to anybody that adds to the words of this prophecy? God will add to him the plagues that are in this book, right? If God is providing a thing, be content to let God do the provision. Don't decide to do him one better.

And we see this all over the place, I think, in the Christian world today, where the Bible is good, but we can make it the \$6 million Bible. We can rebuild it. We can make it better.

We can put some cybernetic enhancements in it. We can edit it. We can repackage it.

We can improve it. God's off to a good start here, but let me have that thing. Let me show you how it could really be better if you do it this way.

This guy is a son of the prophets. He's a teacher in Israel, wannabe. But this story shows the kind of teacher he's going to end up being.

He's going to take what comes from God through legitimate prophetic revelation, and he's going to add to it. He's going to spice it up. He's going to, in his mind, add light, add substance.

I can make it better. Elisha didn't say, one of you guys go to the field and see what you can find. He said, Gehazi, put on the pot and make these guys food.

If I'm a son of the prophets, I should be sitting there cross-legged, waiting for the dinner bell. You can imagine this guy sitting there, and he's watching Gehazi put on the pot. The water's boiling.

He throws in some three-legged, green-eyed, no-nose, nothing that was in the saddlebags there. Who knows what it was? But he's thinking, what did you pick that up on the road from Shunam? 35 miles in, you found this thing baking in the road, and now it's in the pot. For some reason, he's dissatisfied with the stew.

So he gets up, he goes to the field, and he says, I'll find something to put in the pot. And the reason we know that this is not legit is because he went to the wild, and he, from a wild vine, gathered wild gourd. We don't really know too much about this gourd, since it's pretty much a hypoxlegomena here.

And he came, and he sliced it into the pot of stew, though they did not know. Now there's some debate. The accepted Hebrew text says, they did not know.

And this is Yadah with a wow on the end, the letter W. You remember, it looks like a shepherd's staff. It's just like a vertical line with a little crook at the top. I'm writing it this way.

It looks like this. It's just a little wow at the end. So it's Yadah sort of.

Well, in the received text, there's a dot there, and that means they did not know. However, if you raise the dot like a little helium balloon, you go up from the middle of the wow and put it on top of the wow, now it's Yadoh, which means, and of course there's a negative in front of it. He did not know.

I'm voting for the he did not know, because everything else in the sentence is he. One went to the field to gather herbs. He found a wild vine.

He gathered from it a lap full of wild gourds. He came, he sliced into the pot of stew, though he did not know. Father, forgive them.

They know not what they do. Okay? Remember that? Who was Jesus talking about there? The leadership of Israel? Those who should be teachers in Israel did not know what they were doing in corrupting the truth, corrupting the spiritual nourishment for Israel. But you can take it either way.

Apparently, they didn't see him put it in, and he didn't know he was putting something bad in the pot. If he had known, he wouldn't have done it. So it works and is valid either way.

But we'll ask the guy. He's going to have a house. We'll go visit him.

We'll sit in the yard. He'll come out. We'll say, hey, son of the prophet, tell me something.

Tell me about those gourds. Is it you that didn't know, or they didn't know, or nobody knew?

And what were you thinking? Well, anyway, we, you know, he can turn around and say, well, you know, few details in your life I'd like to ask you about also. He did not know.

They served it to the men to eat. They, they served it to the men to eat. And this is interesting because Elisha does not serve in the same way that the Lord Jesus in the feeding of the 5,000 and the 4,000 did not serve.

They gave it to the men to eat. So some of the sons of the prophets, you know, take on waiter duties and they're helping to distribute out of this pot. And now it happened as they were eating the stew that they cried out and said, man of God, death in the pot.

Scratch out there is. They didn't say there is. They said, man of God, death in the pot.

Now there's, there's a line of thought that says that this was a, a wild vine with a fruit, the shape and size of an orange, but with an extremely bitter taste. It's *Citrullus colesynthus*. That's all, starts with C's like citrus, only *Citrullus*, *Citrullus colesynthus*.

Coley and *synthus* both start with C. *Citrullus colesynthus*, wild vine fruit, the size and shape of an orange, extremely bitter taste. Such a fruit would certainly have elicited the reaction described in the story in the sense that when they tasted the stew, it was really bitter. Sorry, but I beg to differ.

Why? This, this is not hyperbole on their, their part. They don't say it tastes like you dropped something dead in there. They're saying death in the pot.

They think this is going to kill them. And I know this because of the word for gourd. It is a *hoppox* in this particular form, but it derives from a verb and that means to split or explode.

What is the association between the verb and the noun? If you eat this particular gourd, your digestive system goes haywire. And in a time of famine, you really don't want dysentery. You really don't want exploding intestines in a famine.

You just don't trust me on this. So this gourd is one known for its, shall we say, purgative qualities. It, you will lose the moisture in your body.

You lose any remaining nourishment in your body. This is, this is a, has an extreme and dire purgative and laxative effect. This will basically turn all 100 sons of the prophets inside out.

And they're already on very meager rations, apparently have been for weeks or months. So death in the pot, as soon as they taste this stuff and realize what it is, they know that they are going to be sick. Even before they get sick, a couple of them taste it.

They've tasted it before. They know what it is. In some cases, in very small doses, it's used for medicinal effect, but they've just, they've, they're eating a big bowl of it.

Death in the pot, poison in the pot, and they could not eat it. Now this isn't just a bad taste. How

do I know this? Because in verse 41, after this situation is remedied, it says there was nothing harmful in the pot.

The word harmful here is ra, with the evil ion, you know, ra with a, with a aleph and a hey after it, ra to see, that's a good thing. Ra with the evil ion, ra, this kind of reminds you of the Egyptian god ra. This is evil ra.

This is bad. This is the word for evil. Tree of the knowledge of Tov and ra.

And after the healing, there is nothing ra in the pot. And it doesn't say evil tasting, it's evil in the sense that it can make you dead. What did eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil do to Adam and Eve? Dying thou shalt die.

You will surely die. There was nothing harmful. So this, this is life-threatening stew that they have just imbibed.

Well, man of God, death in the pot, and they could not eat. They, they're already starting to get sick. They can't, now they can't eat, period.

It is in italics. It doesn't say they could not eat it because it tasted so foul. They could not eat, period.

It's already starting to produce cramps, convulsions, whatever this particular plant does. So Elisha says, then bring some flour. Now of all the things that Elisha could say, why does he say this? Step back, think big.

1st Kings 17. You got a widow in a famine situation. What is it that will sustain her? Flour and oil.

Her barrel of flour never runs out. Her jug of oil never runs dry until rain comes back to Israel. Flour is beneficial.

Now, what is the nature of flour? And I purposely didn't really dwell on this particular aspect of that story until now, because this is our connection. What is flour? Where does it come from? What's, what's the raw material? You grow wheat. What do you do to the wheat to get flour? You thresh it.

And how does threshing take place in ancient Israel? Remember when Gideon was threshing the wheat? You get a thing that looks like a grass rake, and you smack the devil out of it with this rake to do what? Separate the wheat and the chaff. What does, what does Jesus say? Burn the chaff with fire, gather the wheat into my barn. So you thresh it, you separate the wheat from the chaff, you take the wheat, and then you grind the wheat in small quantities.

You do this with a mortar and pestle type arrangement. Larger things, you've got the muzzle knock the ox that treadeth out the grain. Treading is the threshing part.

I, when I was in Sunday school, they had a picture, and I always pictured, you know, the ox with

this great mill wheel going around. But it doesn't say that grinds the grain. It says that treads the wheat.

He's, he's threshing. You run the oxen over it, and their feet bust up the wheat and the chaff. And, you know, you hope that you also don't have the beast of the field thing going on in there.

But you have a lot of processing to get flour. The wheat is vexed. It is tried.

It is stressed. It is smacked to separate good from bad. It is winnowed.

How do you winnow? You take a pan type shovel, throw it up in the air. The chaff being light blows away. The wheat being substantial falls back to the ground, winnowing.

So you thresh, you winnow, burn the chaff, gather the wheat, and now this wheat has been ground into flour. It is no accident that Elisha says, bring some flour. Flour is, remember the parable of the sower and the soils? Jesus said, the seed is the word.

So if we're thinking in spiritual terms, what is the spiritual association, the spiritual value in decoding the message, if you will? What does flour represent in terms of the Word of God? Not just freshly delivered Word of God. This is Word of God that has been tried, that has been ground up so that it is usable and digestible and productive. There are implications all over the place for this.

Remember when Jesus was walking through the fields and the Pharisees were getting onto Him because they said His disciples were harvesting, they were working on the Sabbath? What were they doing? Pulling the heads of the wheat and eating it raw? What does that tell you about the disciples' spiritual status at that point? Haven't refined the Word, haven't ground it up, haven't made it into its digestible form. They're trying to deal with the raw that you can kind of get by, but they're just pulling the heads off. They don't have processed Word of God.

They're not at that point yet. Once they become apostles, they will have reached that point. Anyway, there's no lack of significance here.

Something foreign, something wild has been put in the pot for the consumption of these men who have the ambition of being teachers in Israel. What fixes it? This is not a chemistry solution here. It didn't do something in the realm of chemistry and physics to neutralize the poison.

This is supernatural and the flour is symbolic. You need processed, digestible, usable Word of God to counteract heresy, to counteract error, to counteract that which puts death in the pot. Well, I've run a little bit over for the first session, but this is why you are blessed when you are consistent in your concentration and your reflection on the Word of God.

It is one thing to come to Bible class and get the wheat. I can do a little bit of threshing. I can do a little bit of winnowing so that you can kind of get at the kernel of it, but it is in each of our individual souls that that wheat is ground and made into flour that can then be used to make

food, to supply energy, to really be usable.

And this is the responsibility that each of us have, not just to come and listen in class, not just to pull the heads off the grain and chew and kind of satiate hunger. There's chaff in that. There's stems in that.

I mean, you can kind of get by, but it's not nearly as effective and it doesn't have the effect here. The message here, you need the flour. This is what Elijah supplied to the widow with flour.

God, through Elijah, supplied that flour. This is usable, sustainable energy to live. What is the remedy when there's death in the pot? Not just wheat, not just waving a magic wand, not saying abracadabra, not casting out the demon of gourds or something.

It is flour. You've got to attack that. You've got to counter it with the bread of life and bring some flour.

He put it, he, Elisha, put it in the pot. He didn't say put flour in the pot. He said, bring it to me.

Elisha puts it in the pot. Then he says, serve it to the men that they may eat. And there was nothing evil left in the pot.

The evil of the wild gourd is taken away with flour. There is significance here for us. And there is significance for the nation of Israel.

Now, keep in mind, last thing I'm going to say before the break, the visions are one. The dreams are one in Pharaoh's case. Here, the famines and the remedies in the famine are one.

And we take all of this together because it's being turned. Each situation, it's the same thing from a different angle. We're getting the dimensionality, the depth and the length and the breadth and the height by having this situation cast in different terms so that we can see it from a different angle.

But the key here, and we're going to really see this in the second session, it's all centered on the same truth. So we've got to think about the widow with the flour and the oil. There, oil is an essential part of the story, isn't it? And we know what oil represents universally in Scripture.

It's the presence of the Holy Spirit. You've got the power of the Word of God, but it doesn't become bread until you mix it with oil. Try making bread out of flour and water.

You get paste, right? When you're a little kid, everybody makes flour paste. You get a paper mache. Is that what you want on the insides of you, paper mache? Flour and water, there you go.

It takes oil to make bread. We're not looking at oil here. This is a different truth.

It doesn't take away from that truth, but we're looking at it from a different angle. If you're

looking at an elephant from the front, you can't see his tail. It doesn't mean his tail is not important.

His back legs aren't important. It just means from this view, we're focusing on something different. What are we focusing on? We'll bring it out and summarize it when we come back from the break.