



**Reaching,
Restoring,
Raising Up**

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L.I.F.E. Group Questions—Romans 1:1-17

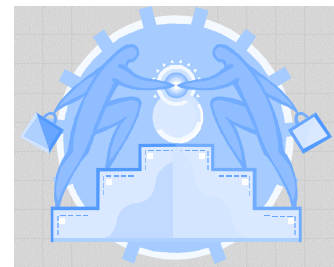
Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

1. Talk about how your understanding of Christianity has changed over the years. What part of it do you think is toughest to believe or to do?
2. Discuss the comfort that "it all starts with God" brings, and discuss how this also challenges you. How can you praise God because of this?
3. Share with the group what you think God's "special" call on your life might be. What is keeping you from completely fulfilling that, and what steps could you take to make it a reality?
4. How passionate are you right now about serving those around you? Give an example of how serving others in the past has helped you draw closer to God.
5. Discuss some practical ways to really get the Word into our lives (talk about using the 2 questions a day approach of the LifeGuide). Talk about what it will take to do this.
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find
Yours Below and Join Us!**

Adult Bible Fellowships

Locations, Times, Descriptions



ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS
- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -

	9:00		10:45
Rm104	30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104	Open—Bower-Chappell
Rm 201	30s-40s—Sims-Fendley	Rm 112	Women—Byrum
Rm 203	Young Singles —Franklin/Reynolds	Rm 201	20s—Alexy/Jones
Rm 205	40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 202	30s—Tripp-Tripp
Rm 207	40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 203	Singles—Bentzel
Rm 208	Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 204	30s—Heritier-Sharp
		Rm 205	Engaged/Young Married —Houston/Baker
		Rm 208	Open—Regis-Anderson
		Gym	College Ayres-Getchell

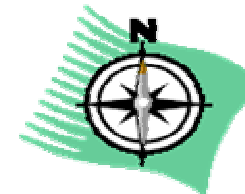
July 18, 2004

Living Like a King
Fulfilling Our Call to Royalty from 1 & 2 Kings

Celebration Fellowship

Ya Gotta Believe!

A preview of II Kings 6-8



Volume 2, Issue 50

July 18, 2004

Inside this issue:

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The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- Worship—You were planned for God's pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God's family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

The 1973 Mets, on the heels of a season, made it to the 7th game of the World Series. Their rallying cry, was "ya gotta believe". The stories in this week's study call for the same kind of "against all odds" faith in God. 1st, an axe head on the bottom of the Jordan River needed to be recovered—and it was when Elisha threw a *stick* in the water that it began to float. Then, with Elisha surrounded by the enemy forces, he prayed that God would blind them, and when He miraculously did so, Elisha leads them to Samaria where they

were the ones surrounded by the enemy. Next, with Israel under siege, God caused the Arame-an army to flee in panic over the "sound" of a approaching army—which wasn't really there. Food that had been scarce was now abundant—and it was discovered by 4 outcast lepers. The royal official who doubted this could happen had been told that he wouldn't see it, and, as prophesied, he didn't see it because he was trampled by the crowd. Then, there was the story of the Shunammite woman who had lost her land



We can live like kings when we follow the King, Jesus.

because of her obedience to God; but when she returned the king incredibly had just heard the story of her son and decreed to restore her land. Finally Hazael, a "dog" in his own eyes, fulfilled the prophecy of Elisha and became king of Aram. With God involved "ya gotta believe".

"It's a Miracle!"

One of the award-winning Super Bowl commercials of the 90s pictured a monk handing his superior a manuscript copied in impossibly record time. Since he didn't know it had been copied on a Xerox, he exclaimed, "It's a miracle!". In this week's study in 2 Kings 4-5 there are some genuine miracles in which Elisha, the prophet, is involved. The first involved a widow whose debts were so high that the creditors wanted to take her sons as slaves to resolve them. Although this was a common practice of the day, she was distraught, and turned to Elisha for help. He told her to borrow as many empty jars from her neighbors as possible, and to start filling them from the only jar of oil that she had. Miraculously, the oil flowed until there were no more pots to fill. Elisha then told her to sell the oil, and when she did her debts were paid and money was left on which to live. This story teaches us that our faith in God

will be seen by the extent of our obedience, and that when we do trust Him, He will fully provide for us. Elisha then had the opportunity to help a hospitable woman and her husband from Shunem. They had invited him to eat with them any time he passed by, and had even fixed up a guest room for him. The woman was so content that when Elisha asked what he could do for them, she said that she lived among her relatives, implying that there was nothing else she could want. But Elisha, discovering they were childless, promised her a son by that time next year. This was a hope that she was afraid to believe, but it happened just as Elisha said. This event shows us that when we give with pure motives God will always bless us greatly. Unfortunately, the son became very sick one day and died. Immediately the woman laid the boy on Elisha's bed, and (without telling him about the boy) told her husband that

(2 Kings 4-5)

she needed to go see Elisha. As she neared Elisha's place and met Gehazi, she told him all was well. But, when she got to Elisha she accused him of deception, thinking he must have known the boy would die. These were typical human responses. When we encounter difficulty, we often turn to those who represent God, but we blame them as well—although we know God is the only one who can fix the problem. Also, like the woman, we mask our troubles to those around us. To her credit, however, though she blamed God, she still turned to Him through Elisha; and when she did, God met her need. Elisha first sent Gehazi with his staff to lay on the boy, but nothing happened, showing that it would take more than magic to heal him. When Elisha arrived he went upstairs, shut the door, and prayed to the Lord. Then, he stretched out on the boy, face to face, and the boy began to get warm. The 2nd time he did this the boy, coming back to life, sneezed 7 times (to

(Continued on page 2)

II Kings 4-5 (continued from pg 1)

show complete restoration). Then, Elisha called the woman up to take her son. This story shows that God will meet our needs through prayer, but God's answer often requires our personal involvement. When Elisha then returned to the school of prophets at Gilgal, they made some stew. Someone had thrown a poisonous gourd in the pot, and when they ate the stew they realized that it was lethal. So, Elisha took some meal and threw it in, making the stew safe to eat. This showed that the true God was the source of life, while the false god, Baal (lord of the earth), was the source of death. After this event Elisha was involved in another food miracle. During a famine about a hundred people were gathered and there were only 20 barley loaves and some corn with which to feed them. Although Gehazi felt that was inadequate Elisha told him to distribute what they had anyway. When he did they were all fed with food left over, just as the Lord had promised. We learn from this that when we give what we have to God He will use it to meet the needs of those around us. The final incident in these chapters centers around Naaman, a well-respected Aramean captain, who was a valiant warrior—but who had leprosy. A Jewish servant girl told his wife that she

knew of a prophet who could heal him, so they went to the king of Israel for the cure. The servant girl's example shows us that if we will just tell people what we know about God, He will use it to bring glory to Himself. When Naaman arrived before the king he panicked, knowing he couldn't heal him. He either didn't want to turn to Elisha, out of rebellion, or had forgotten about him due to neglect. But, when Elisha heard about this, he challenged the king about his faithless response and told him to send Naaman to him. Upon arrival he sent word to Naaman by his servant to wash in the Jordan River 7 times. Naaman, who felt he should have been personally received and instantly cured, was furious, and started back home. He



"If we will just tell people what we know about God, He will use it to bring glory to Himself."

was too proud to receive God's help. But his servants persuaded him to follow Elisha's instructions, and when he did his skin became as smooth as a boy's. This shows that when we humble ourselves and obey God, He will meet our needs. This convinced Naaman that the only true God was in Israel, and he wanted to take some Israeli earth back with him, probably to build an altar of worship to God. He even asked forgiveness in advance for bowing in the temple of Rimmon, due to political necessities. He wanted to pay Elisha back for this, but Elisha refused. However, Gehazi, overtaken by greed, went after him and made up an excuse about some other prophets needing clothes. Naaman gladly gave him two changes of clothes and some gold. Sadly, when questioned by Elisha, Gehazi lied to him, too. Elisha called his hand on this, and told him that the leprosy of Naaman would adhere to his family forever. Greed always stems from indifference to the needs of others, and results in harm to ourselves. When we don't follow God, it always leads to a lower quality of life, but when we, like Naaman and the Shunammite woman, follow Him, our life is greatly enriched. God always wants to bring life, even if "it's a miracle" when it happens.

Study Questions for 2 Kings 6-8

Elisha continues a remarkable prophetic ministry, revealing God's desire to bring life and wholeness to this world.

1. Read 2 Kings 6:1-7. What different aspects of this event made it miraculous (v6)? How is the axe head a picture of our lives? Using a comparison, what "piece of wood" makes our lives usable again?
2. In 2 Kings 6:8-17 what frustrated Aram's king (v9, 11-12), and what did he do about it (v13-14)? What was God's solution (v15-16) and how did Elisha's servant discover it (v17)? How can we apply this?
3. From 2 Kings 6:18-23 what did Elisha pray (v18, 20) and what resulted (v20)? How did Elisha treat these captives (v22-23) and what was the outcome (v23)? What does this show about the power of prayer and kindness?

4. Looking at 2 Kings 6:24-31 what was Israel's situation (v24-25), and how bad was it (v25, 28-29)? How did this affect the king (v30) and what was his reaction (v31)? What does this show about human nature?

5. Using 2 Kings 6:32-7:2 what did the messenger come to do (v32) and what was wrong with the king's thinking (v33)? What did the Lord promise (7:1), how did the officer respond (v2), and what was Elisha's response (v2)?

6. From 2 Kings 7:3-10 how had God fulfilled His promise (v6-7), who discovered it (v8), and why (v3-5)? What good choice did they make (9-10)? How can we follow their example on a "spiritual" level?

7. Read 2 Kings 7:11-20. What fear did Israel have to overcome (v12), but when they did what was the result (v15-16)? How was the word of the Lord fulfilled (v16; 17-20)? What can we learn about faith here?

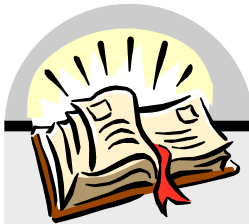
8. In 2 Kings 8:1-6 how did the woman exhibit faith (v1-2), and what did it cost her (v3)? How did God "miraculously" take care of her (v4-6)? What does this teach us about dealing with losses and trusting God's timing?

9. From 2 Kings 8:7-15 what was Ben-hadad's situation (v7), and what did he do about it (v8)? What did Elisha tell him (v10) and what did this mean (v14-15)? What was Elisha's reaction (v11) and why (12-13)?

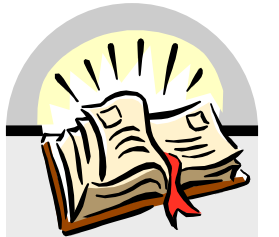
10. Using 2 Kings 8:16-19 who was king of Judah after Jehoshaphat (v16), what was he like (v18) and why (v18)? Considering Jehoshaphat was a good king, what does this show?

11. Looking at 2 Kings 8:20-29 what problems did Joram of Israel (v20-22) and Ahaziah of Judah (v28) encounter? What family were both kings related to (v18, 25)? Do you think this relates to their problems?

12. Review 2 Kings 6-8. Give examples of God's deliverance in these chapters (6:1-7, 8-15, 17-20, 7:3-7, 8:1-6), and examples of the consequences of failing to trust or follow God's word (6:32-33, 7:18-20, 8:20). What does this teach?



"When we give what we have to God He will use it to meet the needs of those around us."



Memory Verse

**"Do not fear,
for those who are
with us are more
than those who
are with them."
2 Kings 6:16**