

Elisha and the Pot of Stew

“And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and 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.” So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, though they did not know what they were. Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, “Man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it.

So he said, “Then bring some flour.” And he put it into the pot, and said, “Serve it to the people, that they may eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot.” (2 Kings 4:38-41)

Natural and Spiritual Poison

1. The curse pronounced when Adam and Eve sinned, went into the dust of the ground, and affected all of nature.
 - a. The flesh of man, sinner and saint, saved or unsaved were also included in the curse.
 - b. The desire for glory and notoriety is not any different with ministers than actors and musicians of the world.
 - c. They will go to any length to be noticed or have their “fifteen minutes of fame.”
2. From the Old Testament, men and women of God have used sinful methods to exalt their reputations before others.
 - a. Timothy faced it in the New Testament church and Paul had to give him instructions, *“But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some”* (2 Timothy 2:16-18).
 - b. Many young ministers read or listen to their teachings and because they sound like the truth, do not recognize the poison.
 - c. God has placed in our bodies the ability to detect many poisons in food and it is no different in our spiritual senses (Hebrews 5:14).

- d. Not only do we have senses to help us discern what is good and bad for natural bodies, we have also developed antidotes and remedies for the times we eat poisons.
- e. A tree was cut down to land in the waters of Marah to change the poisonous waters to sweet (Exodus 15:25).
- f. This medicine is to cleanse out the effects of false doctrine is the basics, the four of God's word (Revelation 22:2).

Where the Miracle Took Place

Gilgal was the camp of Israel when they entered Canaan. After each battle and scouting trip, the armies returned to their families and homes in Gilgal. The name Gilgal means "the place of the circle." A symbol for the word of God and its basic doctrines which give us power for each day and each battle.

The city stood beside the Jordan River which had been parted by God's power and the nation had set up twelve stones as a memorial to God's power and provision (Joshua 4:18-24). It was here the men who had not been circumcised in Egypt or the wilderness were circumcised before entering Canaan to conquer it. This shows their separation from the world. An act showing their heart attitude (Jeremiah 4:4, Romans 2:29). It was the place where the manna stopped, and the people began to eat the corn (food) of the land (Joshua 5:11).

Gilgal was also the place where Elisha began his ministry beside Elijah, going from city to city, before Elijah was taken into heaven (2 Kings 2:1). Then Elisha returned to Gilgal, the place of the word.

There was a drought in the land and food and water were in short supply. Far more than a natural drought, it was also a time of spiritual famine, a lack of the teaching of the truths of God's word and the worship of false gods, Baal (Amos 8:11-12).

The Meaning of the Miracle

1. In a time of spiritual drought, it is important to not only receive "sound doctrine" as a student of the word or a member of a congregation, but also as a minister to teach it.
2. As a young minister, it is important to learn from those who have years of experience, the elders of the Body of Christ.
3. Sitting at the feet of a seasoned minister is as important as Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus to learn the word and worship Him.
4. Young ministers are filled with zeal but have little discernment in recognizing true doctrines from false ones.

- a. Satan has sowed tares among the wheat. Satan is an evil imitator of God and the word. He comes as an angel of light, transforming his ministers into apostles of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:13-14).
 - b. These false ministers preach another Jesus and another gospel (2 Corinthians 11:4, Galatians 1:6-7).
 - c. Paul warned the young ministers of Ephesus that some from their own people would rise and teach perverse (twisted) things to draw disciples after themselves (Acts 20:30).
 - d. It takes time to develop spiritual senses and to be able to “prove all things and hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
 - e. This is why association with older, tested ministers is important.
5. What is needed for the pot when poison has been put in is meal or flour.
- a. This is not anything exotic, but basic doctrines which will cure the pot.
 - b. There is healing in the true word. Enough to change and cleanse the false teaching.
 - c. That which would kill can now be that which nourishes and heals.
 - d. The one to throw it into the pot is the seasoned minister, the teacher with a lifetime of experience and practice.

King Rehoboam and His Choice of Counsellors

“Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise me to answer these people?”

And they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. And he said to them, “What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?”

Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us’—thus you shall say to them: ‘My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s waist! And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!’” (1 Kings 12:6-11)

1. Rehoboam was far harder on the people and taxed them more than his father, Solomon.
2. He listened to the counsel of the younger, immature counselors.
3. Rehoboam split Israel into the northern ten tribes and southern two.