

COMPASSION FOR THE BELIEVERS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

BELIEVE BELIEVERS COMPASSION DO GOOD

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

2 Kings 4:8-37, 8:1-6

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children understand the need to show compassion to others who believe in Christ

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

In the previous lesson, we learned that Elisha was Elijah's successor as Yahweh's prophet (1 Kings 19). In another place, Shunem was situated on the slope of a hill in front of the valley of Jezreel. Elisha met a woman there and they became friends.

In verse 13, we see the expression, "I have a home among my own people" which could mean, "My city will take care of my every need."

The Shunammite's husband was probably very conservative in his religion. We assume this because she said in verse 23, "Why go to him today? It is not the New Moon or the Sabbath. It is all right," she said. She saddled the donkey and left to go find help.

There are several things that indicate that the Shunammite woman and her family had lots of money. They described her as an important woman (verse 8). She had the ability to make room in her house for guests (verse 9). She had followers and helpers that worked for them (verses 18, 19, 22 and 24). All in addition to her religious life. She recognized Elisha as a man of God. They also knew about religious traditions. However, this did not mean that they lived a life without needs and problems; instances where they would need help and encouragement would still arise.

Even today, there are brothers and sisters in the church that are exposed to difficulties and difficult trials; things that may make

them trip in their faith in God. These strong Christians also need encouragement and people who listen to them, people that help feed their hungry spirit. This is something that we should always remember and put into practice.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Ask the children to help you list some needs or problems that they know of in their congregation, whether a person, family, or level of leadership in the church.

You can initiate the activity like a brainstorm. (You can check out what this consists of on the next page under Activities.) Start with the question: "What needs are there throughout our church?" It is important that you, as the teacher, are wise and know how to guide the activity so there are not jokes about people or children prying into people's private lives.

Read with your children the passage in 2 Kings 4:8-37. You can use the reading technique called "jump over to..."

Interact with the children to see if they have understood the story that you just read. Ask them to give you ideas of how to help the needs of the people you talked about earlier. Help them come up with ideas in order for them to carry out their ideas.

TEACH THE LESSON

One day a woman said to her husband, "I know that this man Elisha who often comes our way is a holy man of God. Let us make a small room on the roof and put a bed and a table in it, as well as a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us." The husband paid people to build this room.

"Elisha! Welcome again! Come in, I have a surprise for you!" said the Shunammite woman. She took the prophet to a room she had prepared for him. Elisha had stayed with this family many times.

"Whenever you come to visit Shunem, you are welcome to stay here," she said to Elisha. Elisha thought about the woman and her loving ways towards him and he wanted to give her something in return. He called his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite. Tell her, 'You have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you?'" She replied, "I have a home among my own people."

"What can be done for her?" Elisha asked. Gehazi said, "She has no son, and her husband is old." Then Elisha said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood in the doorway. "About this time next year," Elisha said, "you will hold a son in your arms." The woman had wanted a son, but she thought it would be an impossible thing.

But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time, she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her. She was so happy to be a mother! The child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers. He said to his father, "My head hurts! My head hurts!" His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother." After the servant had lifted him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died. The mother was inconsolable and went to find Elisha. She went as fast as she could to where he was.

Elisha saw her coming from far away and he sent Gehazi to meet her and see if everything was okay, but he did not say to ask about her son. She wanted to tell Elisha directly, but he gave Gehazi his staff as a symbol of his prophetic authority. "Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. Do not greet anyone you meet, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face."

When they got to the house, Gehazi did as he was told to do and went back to Elisha to tell him that the boy had not woken up.

When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch. He went in, shut the door, and prayed to the Lord. Then he got on the bed and lay beside the boy. As he stretched himself out beside him, the boy's body grew warm. Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out beside him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite." And he did. When she came, he said, "Take your son."

Sometime after, God told Elisha that he was bringing a drought. There would be nothing to eat. Elisha remembered the compassion of the Shunammite woman and went to go warn them. "Get up, take yourself and your household away to live where you can, because God has declared a famine in this land for the next seven years," Elisha told them.

So she and her family left. After seven years, they returned, only to find their home and possessions had been taken. She went to the king to beg for her house and land. The king was talking to Gehazi, and he told the king who she was and her story. Once the king heard this, he ordered that all her belongings be returned to her. (2 Kings 4 and 8)

CONNECT THE LESSON

Review

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #306-A and #306-B to review the lesson.

Who needs compassion?

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #306-C. Tell the group that in this picture they will find people who need compassion. Have them circle them.

Showing compassion to my church family

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #306-D. Have the students look at the picture on their activity sheet and ask them, "How can people show compassion to these people?"

- Square 1: Explain that sometimes pastors feel lonely. They listen to other people's problems and sometimes feel as if they are not able to help them out. People criticize them unjustly. A way to show them compassion is to tell them you love them and are praying for them.
- Square 2: Someone could hold the door open for the lady.
- Square 3: The church can provide things that will help the family start their new life. Write on the board, "What needs does our local church have?" (Write the answers on the board as well.)
- Square 4: Have the children write or draw how they can help someone at church.

Once everyone has finished, have them share and explain their answer for Square 4. Invite them to put these ideas into practice this week.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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Say the memory verse together. To know if the students have memorized the text, ask the following questions: "When should we do good to all?" (When we have the opportunity.) "Especially who?" (Those who belong to the family of faith.)

WRAP-UP

Pray

Finish the session with prayer asking the Lord to help the group make their ideas and thoughts about showing compassion a reality. Remember to pray for your pastors and other ministers involved in your church.

Encourage

Thank the students for their attendance and encourage them not to forget what they learned.

Invite

Announce something about the next session to increase the group's interest and to invite friends to attend.