

# Apply The Word

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## KINGS & KINGDOMS

### Message Info

#### Title:

Proven Words Deserve  
Devotion

#### Speaker:

Doug Plank

#### Date:

July 10, 2022

#### Scriptures:

2 Kings 2:13-8:29

**Theme:** Be devoted to God's faithful word and you will see his deliverance.

**Introduction:** The stories of Elijah and Elisha are some of the more spectacular in the Bible. They performed dramatic deeds that capture our imaginations, and we may easily be caught up in the spectacle of it all. But we need to remember that those deeds were in service of a greater goal: they served to confirm the words that the prophets declared. We should focus on that: how did their audience respond to the word of the Lord, and how should we?

Here we see 4 stories revealing the priority of God's word and our responses to it:

#### 1. God's word is proven faithful (2:12-4:7)

After Elijah's dramatic departure from the earth, Elisha faces the question of succession: is he called to carry on in prophetic ministry?

He cries out to the Lord and receives confirmation (parting the Jordan) that he is called to be the Lord's prophet.

Elisha also receives contrasting reception to his ministry: one city respects him and is blessed w/healthy water; the youth at Bethel disrespects him and they are killed by the Lord in judgment. They rejected God's word and were judged.

#### 2. First portrait: devotion to God's word (4:8-37; 8:1-6)

The Shunamite woman gives us an example of remarkable devotion to the Lord as indicated by her reverence for and responsiveness to his word.

The Lord rewards her with a son; and when he later dies, she continues to show her devotion to the Lord and his word through Elisha.

The Lord sustains his people through his holy words.

#### 3. Second portrait: conversion to God's word (5:1-14)

In 2 Kings 5, Naaman, a commander in the Syrian army, has leprosy and reaches out to Elisha for help.

When he eventually comes to Elisha, he's commanded to wash in the Jordan. He refuses out of pride; but later relents and was healed.

His response? "Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel" (v. 15). All of his pride has been crushed and he responds with humble praise. He demonstrates the truth that none of us deserve such kindness from God.

#### 4. Third portrait: divided devotion (5:15-27)

Gehazi, Elisha's assistant, was with him during all of these dramatic encounters. He seems to have been a good servant.

But when Naaman offers reward and Elisha refuses, Gehazi's covetous heart is revealed and he goes to Naaman privately to request some reward.

He also plans to deceive the Lord and Elisha. He thinks he can get away with lying to them. But his evil was exposed and he was punished with the leprosy of Naaman.

#### Questions:

1. What is your pattern of engagement with God's word?
2. What are your main hindrances to grow in devotion to it?
3. How can you pursue God's grace to grow in loving and studying his word?