

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on 2 Kings by Matthew Henry, James E Smith, and Dale Ralph Davis

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading 2 Kings 4:1-7 Elisha and the Widow's Oil

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Elisha was one of the most noted Old Testament miracle workers. In many ways this string of miracles remind us of Jesus' life and ministry. God is showing Himself powerful through Elijah even to mostly unbelieving Israel. Yet though there were many in Israel following false gods, some Israelites, and some notable Gentiles, followed the true God. And *God*, M Henry says, *magnifies His goodness with His power.*

This goodness and power of God was made evident to a grieving widow. Though she followed God, now she is facing disaster. Her prophet husband had died, leaving some significant debt. Her creditors were going to take her sons to work off the debt for him. In desperation she cries to Elisha. She has nothing, it seems, only a jar of oil left in the house. Yet she obeyed Elisha, gathered many containers from her neighbours, kept pouring oil into them and this jar of oil lasted until all the containers were full.

Are you in need? Desperate? Cry out to God. He will answer! Will He multiply what you have like this widow? We don't know. But we do know, as Davis writes, that *Yahweh, Israel's God and our God, is the help of the helpless and of the nameless.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What was the widow's situation?
2. What could she do? What did she do? What did God do?
3. What can we learn from this miracle?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 80²
1. Thank God that He is the helper of the helpless
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading 2 Kings 6:8-23 Syrians captured

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Again, God is going to provide for His people. Even when we cannot see Him at work, He is caring for us. Davis points out the beauty of even the structure of this account

Sparing Israel, vv. 8-10

Frustration and disclosure, vv. 11-12

The right place, vv. 13-14

Crisis of fear, v. 15

Prayer for sight, vv. 16-17a

Answer to prayer, v. 17b

Crisis of 'attack,' v. 18a

Prayer for blindness, v. 18b

Answer to prayer, v. 18c

The wrong place, v. 19

Disclosure and danger, vv. 20-21

Sparing Aram, vv. 22-23

Smith comments that these *two miracles of Elisha demonstrated God's compassion for Israel and his superiority over the gods of Aram*. Does not this God care for us today? Is not He greater than all the gods of the nations? Can you trust Him to be at work – even in crisis and even when you can't see Him?

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What was the miracle of seeing in this account?
2. What was the miracle of blindness in this account?
3. How have you seen God at work recently?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 80
1. Pray that you and your family will know God's compassion and see Him at work, with God's help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading

2 Kings 6:1-7 An Axe-head Floats

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Again, here, we are presented with a miracle of ordinary matters. The house for the prophets was too small. So, at Elisha’s instruction, the prophets headed for the Jordan to cut down trees to make a larger house. But, alas! One of the prophets’ borrowed axe lost its head as it flew off the handle into the river. At his cry of alarm over this lost axe-head, Elisha threw a stick into the water near where the axe-head had been lost and it floated back to the surface.

Davis points out 4 lessons in this miracle of ordinary matters. 1) *God is concerned with our simple needs. In the middle of scenes of international politics, foreign affairs, military strategy and national crises—in the middle of all that God cares about a measly axe-head.* 2) *God has power for a genuine need. The text seems to say that you can expect God’s supply for a genuine need. (But, we may often need divine wisdom to make clear what our real need is.)* 3) *God provides for future needs. What if Elisha had never been asked to go? Or what if he’d refused to go? The request (v. 3a) and consent (v. 3b) seem like such a routine piece of courtesy that we think nothing of it, and yet in that bit of trivia God was already at work providing for a need that was yet unseen and unknown.* 4) *God appeals to our need. We know that 1–2 Kings wasn’t completed until after Judah was captive in Babylon (see 2 Kings 24–25). Are these accounts not saying, ‘Israel, here is the God available to you’? ‘See,’ so they imply, ‘how Yahweh’s arm works for those who fear him, how near he is to the broken-hearted, to the poor and needy. Turn and seek this God who offers himself to you.’*

Turn and seek this God who offers Himself to you.

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What happened in this story
2. What can we learn from this miracle of ordinary matters?
3. Why does God care about our simple needs?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 80

1. Confess, with your family, that you will trust God’s provision
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading

2 Kings 4:8-37 Elisha and the Shunammite woman

Notes
(See back page for authors)

As Elisha travels the road from Samaria and Carmel, he often passes through Shunem. A wealthy woman there recognises Elisha as a man of God and asks her husband build a room for him to use as he travels through. To repay her kindness, God showed Himself powerful in giving, as He often did in the Bible, a child to a barren older woman. Like Sarah (Gen 18:10,14, 21:1-2), this woman gets pregnant and gives birth to a son. This son, however, is not in the line of Christ, nor a famous leader of Israel. We don’t even know his name! Yet we see God’s kindness to ordinary believers.

The boy grows up and is out in the field with his father and the farm hands and is overcome, it seems, with heatstroke, and dies. How can this be? How can God’s good gifts go so bad? The mother sets out for Elisha. Even in her grief she assures both her husband and Elisha’s servant that, “It is well.” And God empowers Elisha to, eventually, bring the boy back to life.

Davis suggests this story is here to reveal your God—the God who delights to amaze his ‘ordinary’ people with his good gifts; who sometimes baffles us with the mysterious sorrow he brings; who places limitations upon his servants so that we will never esteem them too highly; and who gives us a sneak preview in 800 BC that not even death will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Why did this woman have a room built for Elisha?
2. How did God twice show His power to this woman?
3. Why do God’s good gifts sometimes bring sorrow too?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 80

1. Rejoice with your family that God shows kindness to ordinary believers and nothing separates them from His love
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

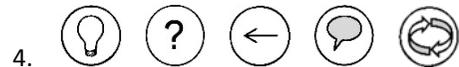
Reading 2 Kings 4:38-44 Miraculous stew, miraculous bread

Notes (See back page for authors) Now we see God provide miraculous power for two food needs. First one of the chefs made some really bad stew by adding a bit of wild gourd. We might say of something we don't like, "This is so awful it's killing me." But, this was no idle complaint. Elisha threw in some flour and the stew was made harmless.

Then we have bread – but not enough for the prophetic school. The servants might well remind us of servants of another Prophet who thought they didn't have enough food to feed the group before them (see Lu 9.13). And, like that One, Elisha had the bread given out and there was enough, with left overs. Once again, God provided. Yet, for the One who was to come, His miracle of food was O, so much more! And, of course, He not only provided bread, but He is the Bread of Life!

In both of these miracles, Davis reminds us *it is wonderful to know Yahweh, a God who is not above trafficking in the nuts and bolts of life? Have you noticed that daily bread comes first in the petition-section of the Lord's Prayer, before the forgiveness of sins? Daily bread matters to [God]. How close the God of the Bible is to where you live! ... It's only a pot of stew rendered harmless, but it's a small sketch of the day when 'they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain' (Isa. 11:9a).*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What did Elisha do with the bad stew?
 2. What did Elisha do with the not-enough bread?
 3. What can we learn of God in these 2 miracles?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 80
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to ask God for your needs and trust His provision, with God's help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 2 Kings 5:1-27 Naaman the Leper healed

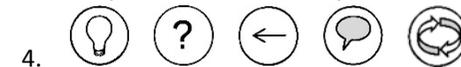
Notes (See back page for authors) God's power becomes known even outside of Israel. Naaman had it all – strength, position, power, victories – and an incurable disease. And, it "just so happened" that there was a young Israelite girl in his house. "God's prophet in Samaria can heal you," she promised Naaman. So, with his king's permission, off he went.

Smith points out, though, that Naaman made several mistakes. *1) he thought he could purchase his cleansing (v5) 2) he went to the wrong place in search of cleansing (v6-7) 3) he had a preconceived notion of how cleansing should happen (v11-12) 4) he got angry with the prophet who told him how to achieve cleansing. (v12b)*

But Naaman's servants reasoned with him to do this simple instruction – wash 7 times in the Jordan - that Elisha had commanded. And cleansed he was – flesh fresh as a baby's skin!

Smith then points out several indications that Naaman's heart as well as his skin was healed. *1) he took extra time and distance to return to express his appreciation to the man of God, 2) the once pompous Aramean was now contrite, 3) Naaman confessed faith in the supremacy of Yahweh. 4) he was anxious that Elisha should accept a "blessing," in appreciation for what he had done, 5) he took two mule loads of soil back with him, it seems, to consecrate a plot of ground, 6) he declared his intention to cease offering sacrifice to any god other than Yahweh, and 7) though he would be compelled, with his king, to bow before Rimmon, he expressed hope that Yahweh would pardon him of this wrong.*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What did Naaman do wrong?
 2. What did Naaman do right?
 3. Why did God show mercy to a non-Israelite?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 80
1. Rejoice with your family in God's grace going to Gentiles
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member