SBC Low Kok Guan (5A, MB107)

31-March-2021 Message 2 of 2

NIV 15 Minutes

**Grace in Amazing Ways**

**2 Kings 4:38-44**

**Topic:** Grace

**Subject:** The way that God showed His grace to His people.

**Complement:** Was through His miraculous protection and provision for them.

**Purpose:** The listeners will learn to trust and thank God for His protection and provision.

**Meditation:** Let’s take a moment to thank God for His protection and provision this week.

**Reading:** Psalm 121:7-8 – 7 The Lord will keep you from all harm— He will watch over your life; **8**the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

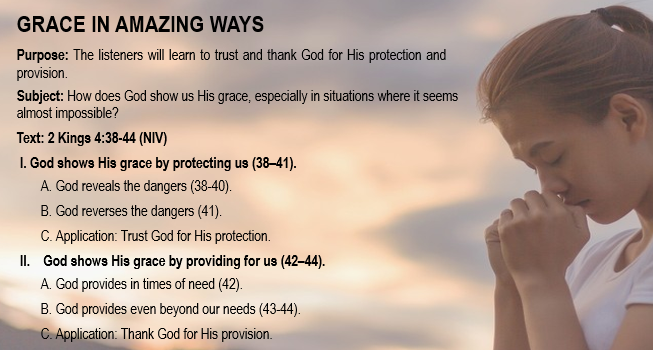
Philippians 4:19 – And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

**Song:** Great is Thy Faithfulness by Chris Rice.

**Benediction:** Verses to be used: Numbers 6:24-26 – **24** The Lord bless you and keep you; **25**the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; **26**the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”’

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| **Intro:**  1: Arouse interest by reflection | Morning brothers and sisters. Can you recall a time where you have experienced God’s grace in your life, e.g., God’s protection, provision? Can you give me a thumb up if you have? |
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| 2: Raise Need | How about right now? Do you sense God’s grace in your life right now? E.g., you are safe and healthy, you have enough money for meals, you have a place to stay, or for some, you have finished your preaching assignment? |
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| 3: Subject  Restatement | But how does God show you His grace, especially in situations where it seems almost impossible for God to come true for you? Meaning grace is shown in ways that amaze you. |
| 4: Background | There is a story in 2 Kings 4:38-44 that shows us how God extends His grace to His people in amazing ways. When that happens, we know that it has to be God at work. This story happens where Elisha was serving during the time of kings like Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash. These kings did what was evil in the sight of God. Thus, there was a famine, which came as a judgment for their disobedience. In the midst of this, God amazed Elisha and the prophets with His grace. |
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| 5: Preview, Passage | In this passage, we can see how God’s grace is given to His people in 2 miraculous ways. To find out more, can I invite you to turn to 2 Kings 4:38-44 and let me read for all of you?  **38**Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these prophets.” **39**One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine and picked as many of its gourds as his garment could hold. When he returned, he cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were. **40**The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, “Man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it. **41**Elisha said, “Get some flour.” He put it into the pot and said, “Serve it to the people to eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot.  **42**A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. “Give it to the people to eat,” Elisha said. **43**“How can I set this before a hundred men?” his servant asked. But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” **44**Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord. (NIV) |
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| Transition, **MPI, R** | So, from the text, how does God show us His grace? He does so first by protecting us. The LORD reveals his love by making sure we are safe from harm. |
| V38-41 Explanation (Protection) | The story began by telling us that there was a famine in Gilgal. A company of prophets was with Elisha. A servant was asked to cook some stew for the prophets. However, food was scarce so the man could only find some herbs, wild vine, and gourds. The servant might not even know what he had used to prepare a meal for the prophets. So, when the prophets ate it, they found that there was poison in the pot. The word in Hebrew is *maveth* which means death as in pestilence. It could be that the prophets tasted something bad or bitter or some had started to have stomach pains and nausea. Hence, the pot of stew could not be eaten. It was then Elisha put some flour in it and the pot was clear of the poison. Some suggested that flour could absorb chemicals that could nullify the poison from the pot. However, the context tells us that it was a miracle. God revealed the danger to these prophets where they noticed that something was wrong. Not only so, but God also reversed the dangers against them that could have caused harm to them. |
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| ILL  (Accident) | After driving for more than 25 years on the road, there were several times that I met accidents. There were a few that were close to fatal, if not for the grace of God. There was once where I was going to pick my children. The traffic light right in front of me was about to turn red and there were cars at the back. I knew that I could still cross and turn right in case those cars at the back decided to speed up. That was where I made a quick turn. What I did not know was there were many cars stuck right after the right turn. It was then I saw these cars and immediately stepped on the brake. Unfortunately, I still banged into the car in front of me. However, because of the brake, no one was injured. It was then my dad drove past with my children in his car. It then dawned upon me that usually at this time, my children would be with me. However, my dad had kindly offered to pick them up that day.  From this incident, I realized that the accident would have been worse if I did not see the cars and stepped on the brake. The Lord opened my eyes to see the dangers in front of me. The Lord also reversed the dangers for my children if not for my dad who was free to pick them up that day. My dad was like the flour in the pot that Elisha used. Please don’t ever tell my dad that I compare him with flour, but I am so thankful for the amazing grace God extended to me through His protection over me. |
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| APP  (Our safety) | How about you, my brothers and sisters? Are you thinking of an accident that you had some time ago? If not for the grace of God, will you still be zooming in to hear my sharing today? Perhaps for some of us, we are safe because God has protected us even without us knowing. What then should be our response? From that incident, I have learned to trust God for His protection. This is especially true for our family who may not be with us, e.g., not in Singapore right now. Can we trust God to protect them even as we pray for their safety? Our gracious God is amazing. He can protect us! So, trust Him. Trust Him. |
|  |  |
| Transition, **MPII** | (Besides protecting us, how else does God show us that His amazing grace is sufficient for us?) |
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| V42-44  Explanation (Provision) | The passage continues to tell us that there was a man from Baal Shalishah who brought 20 loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain and some heads of new grain to Elisha. Elisha then kindly offered them to a hundred men around him. Elisha was a truly godly and kind man but he seemed to have some problems with Mathematics. How are we going to feed a hundred men with 20 loaves of barley bread and some grains? What was amazing is that after all had eaten, there was still some leftover. How can that be? Until we read that this is what the Lord had already told Elisha. The story then ended with all that was done according to the word of God. So, it was not a mistake but a miracle, because the Lord has spoken. God extended His grace to these prophets in the time of famine by providing for in times of need and even beyond their needs. |
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| ILL  (Gift) | Last week, I was on medical leave because I was having a sore throat. I went to see a doctor and did a swab test. I was then put on stay home notice. On top of this, my wife was informed that she was not allowed to report for work and also no school for my children. 2 days self-declared holidays for them. As my wife would only be paid if she turned up for work. Hence, she lost $400 for that 2 days because of me. Amazingly, last Monday, when I was in church, there was a lady who came to me to thank me for serving the Lord. She then handed me an envelope and said that she was led to give this to me. At first, I was thinking it could be some vouchers or a card. After I opened it, there was a cheque for $1000. I have not banked in the cheque, partly to show you. Also, I have learned that when someone blessed me with a gift. I should first ask God if this is for me or I should use it to bless others instead. It was then I realized that after giving 10% to the Lord. I could give my wife $400 (which I have not). After which, I would still have $500 left. What am I to do with it? Last Thursday, I received another letter to tell me that there would be an increase in the fee for my daughter’s piano lesson of $15. I was thinking if I should let her continue. It was then I realized that with the $500, it would be more than enough for my girl to pay for the difference of $15 for the next 2.5 years. I would still have leftovers after all paying after all these. Again, I am so thankful for the amazing grace of God extended to me through His provision for me through this sister. |
|  |  |
| APP  (Thank God) | How about you, my brothers and sisters? Are you thinking of the debts you need to pay? Or the school fees or the textbooks that you need to buy for next semester? Where is the money going to come from? Can we trust God to provide for us, even our loved ones who may not be with us? Our gracious God is amazing. He can provide! Trust Him. Trust Him. Not only so, but thank Him in advance for His provision. Because the story did not end here. The sister told me that the Lord spoke to her to give me $1000 on Resurrection Sunday even before I was sick. The Lord has already provided even before I asked Him. Thus, we can thank God in advance for His amazing grace extended to us. |
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| MI, R | So what is this whole passage actually telling us? I’d sum it up this way: *Thank God for his amazing protection and provision* (MI). So, let’s learn to trust and thank God for His protection and provision even when it seems impossible. Because God extends His grace to us in amazing ways. |
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| APP  (Write it down) | Not only so, after all that God has done. Write them down in your journal so that the next time we wonder if God’s grace is sufficient for us, we can look at what we wrote. And be assured that God will extend His grace to us in amazing ways. |
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| End | That’s our God! The gracious and amazing God! |
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| Prayer | "Almighty God, thank you for loving us. Thank you for bestowing upon us Your amazing grace. Thank God for protecting us and providing for us. We know that You are faithful and You will continue to watch over us and provide for all our needs. So that when others look at how You have shown us, Your grace, they will give you praise and glorify Your name. Thank you, God. Lastly, thank God that by Your grace, I finished my preaching assignment. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen!” |

**POWER POINT SLIDE**



# **Study Questions (Step 1)**

# **Context:** What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Before this, Elisha was in Shunem and he ministered to a Shunammite woman (4:8-36)

### The woman asked for a son and Elisha prophesied that she would have a son in about a year (4:11-17).

### However, when the boy grew up, he died. Elisha prayed for him and he came back to life. (4:18-27).

# **Purpose:** Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Elijah was taken up to heaven. Elisha was appointed to be his successor.

### God was using Elisha as much as he was using Elijah. Given a double portion, Elisha was performing more miracles than Elijah that were recorded for us in the Bible.

# **Background:** What historical context helps us understand this passage?

1. Elisha was serving during the time of Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash, and they did what was evil in the sight of God.
2. It was a time of famine, which came as a judgment because of disobedience of the kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
3. This also resulted in the coming downfalls of the Kingdom of Israel.

# **Sources Used**

1. Lange, John Peter, and Philip Schaff. *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 2 Kings.* Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008.
2. Patterson, Richard, and Hermann Austel. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary.* 1 Samuel–2 Kings. (Revised Edition). Edited by Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.
3. Wiersbe, Warren. *Be Distinct: Standing Firmly Against the World’s Tides.* OT Commentary: 2 Kings & 2 Chronicles. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2010.

# **Questions & Answers (cf. p. 22 #1)**

**Text: 38**Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these prophets.” **39**One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine and picked as many of its gourds as his garment could hold. When he returned, he cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were. **40**The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, “Man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it. **41**Elisha said, “Get some flour.” He put it into the pot and said, “Serve it to the people to eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot. **42**A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. “Give it to the people to eat,” Elisha said. **43**“How can I set this before a hundred men?” his servant asked. But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” **44**Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord. (NIV)

### **Verse 38**

### What is Gilgal? What could be the significance?

### Gilgal was the first place where the Israelites encamped after crossing the Jordan River. It was also the place where they had their first Passover in the Promised Land. The day after the Passover, the Israelites then had their first produce of the Promised Land, unleavened bread, and roasted grain. A place where the Israelites had more than enough when they first entered the land was the same place where they did not have enough and needed God’s intervention.

### Why was there a famine?

### This could be the 7-year famine that was mentioned in 2 Kings 8:1-3 where God called for a famine in the land. It was a judgment on the land.

### **Verse 39**

### Why did the servant bring back what was inedible for the prophets?

### Because of the famine, he might have difficulties finding food for his master. Vegetables were scarce so the man went to look for herbs instead.

### It could also be possible that the servant did not know that what he brought back was inedible.

### **Verse 40**

### What does it mean to have “death in the pot”?

### New Living Translation translates death as poison. The word in Hebrew is *maveth* which means death as in pestilence (which will cause death).

### How did the prophets know that there was death in the pot?

### It could be that the taste was bad or bitter. Hence. they sensed that something was wrong when they began to eat it. It could also be possible that they started to have stomach pains and nausea.

### **Verse 41**

### What was so special about the flour that turned what was inedible to be edible?

* + Flour was known to be an emulsifier that absorbs chemicals that could nullify the poison from the pot.
  + It could also be supernatural.
  + In times where food was scarce, Elisha did not ask the servant to throw it away, rather he did with what he had to nullify the poison in the pot.

### **Verse 42**

### Where was Baal Shalishah?

### It was a place near Gilgal. It was just a few miles away.

### Why did the man from Baal Shalishah bring Elisha the food?

### It could be out of honor for the man of God since the text addressed Elisha as the man of God.

### In the Northern Kingdom of Israel, there was no official temple or sanctuary where the people could bring offerings to God, so the nearest would be the school of prophets which was near Baal Shalishah.

### In times of famine, 20 loaves of barley bread from the first ripe grain and some heads of new grain were precious. It was an intentional giving to bless God’s servants.

### What did Elisha ask his servant to do? Why?

### The food was meant for Elisha but Elisha asked the servant to give it to the people.

### As a servant of God, Elisha thought about the needs of the people first before his needs.

### **Verse 43**

### What was the question posed by the servant? Why?

### “How can I set this before a hundred men?” As there were a hundred men with Elisha, the food that was brought to him was not enough to feed all of them.

### What was Elisha’s reply to the servant?

### Elisha repeated his instruction to give the food to the people to eat.

### Also, he told the servant of what God said to him that a hundred men would eat and still have leftovers.

### **Verse 44**

### What happened after the hundred ate the food given to them?

### There was leftover as spoken by the LORD through Elisha.

### **Tentative Subject/Complement Statements**

### **Text:** Different Translations (differences highlighted)

1. **38**Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these prophets.” **39**One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine and picked as many of its gourds as his garment could hold. When he returned, he cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were. **40**The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, “Man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it. **41**Elisha said, “Get some flour.” He put it into the pot and said, “Serve it to the people to eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot. **42**A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. “Give it to the people to eat,” Elisha said. **43**“How can I set this before a hundred men?” his servant asked. But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” **44**Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord. (NIV)
2. **38**When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting in front of him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.” **39**Then one went out into the field to gather mallow, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds; and he came and sliced them into the pot of stew, because they did not know what they were. **40**So they poured it out for the men to eat. But as they were eating the stew, they cried out and said, “You man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they were unable to eat. **41**Then he said, “Bring flour.” And he threw it into the pot, and said, “Pour it out for the people that they may eat.” Then there was nothing harmful in the pot. **42**Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh grain in his sack. And Elisha said, “Give them to the people that they may eat.” **43**But his attendant said, “How am I to serve this to a hundred men?” Nevertheless he said, “Give them to the people that they may eat, for this is what the Lord says: ‘They shall eat and have some left over.’” **44**So he served it to them, and they ate and had some left over, in accordance with the word of the Lord.(NASB)
3. **38**Elisha now returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land. One day as the group of prophets was seated before him, he said to his servant, “Put a large pot on the fire, and make some stew for the rest of the group.” **39**One of the young men went out into the field to gather herbs and came back with a pocketful of wild gourds. He shredded them and put them into the pot without realizing they were poisonous. **40**Some of the stew was served to the men. But after they had eaten a bite or two they cried out, “Man of God, there’s poison in this stew!” So they would not eat it. **41**Elisha said, “Bring me some flour.” Then he threw it into the pot and said, “Now it’s all right; go ahead and eat.” And then it did not harm them. **42**One day a man from Baal-shalishah brought the man of God a sack of fresh grain and twenty loaves of barley bread made from the first grain of his harvest. Elisha said, “Give it to the people so they can eat.” **43**“What?” his servant exclaimed. “Feed a hundred people with only this?” But Elisha repeated, “Give it to the people so they can eat, for this is what the Lord says: Everyone will eat, and there will even be some left over!” **44**And when they gave it to the people, there was plenty for all and some left over, just as the Lord had promised. (NLT)

**Tentative Subject (I):** The way that God showed His grace to His people.

**Tentative Complement (I):** Was through His miraculous protection and provision for them.

# 

**Possible Illustrations**

## Daily, we can move from place to place and stay alive because of God’s protection. Sometimes, we may have taken all these for granted. There will be times when we would know because the danger is right in front of us. However, there may be times where we do not even know that we are saved from danger because God is watching over us and protecting us from harm.

## I still remember there was once where I only had $1.28 in my bank account. At the time, I was not working so the allowance came from my dad. However, I did not want to burden my dad so I asked my Father in heaven for help instead. The next day, I just wanted to make sure that I did not see wrongly. I was shocked to see $1001.28 that morning. It was that night, where my dad told me that he just got his pay and had banked in $1000 for me. I am so thankful for my dad and certainly for God who provided for me when I needed it.

# **Possible Applications**

1. To encourage Christians to trust and thank God for His protection amid danger.
2. To encourage Christians to trust and thank God for His provision amid lack.

# **Older Outlines of This Sermon Text or Outlines by Others (Books, Commentaries, etc.)**

* Text: **38**Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these prophets.” **39**One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine and picked as many of its gourds as his garment could hold. When he returned, he cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were. **40**The stew was poured out for the men, but as they began to eat it, they cried out, “Man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat it. **41**Elisha said, “Get some flour.” He put it into the pot and said, “Serve it to the people to eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot. **42**A man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, along with some heads of new grain. “Give it to the people to eat,” Elisha said. **43**“How can I set this before a hundred men?” his servant asked. But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” **44**Then he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the Lord. (NIV)

1. Be Distinct: Standing Firmly Against the World’s Tides.

1. Grace removes the curse (4:38-41)
2. Grace satisfies the hungry (4:42-44)
3. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary. 1 Samuel–2 Kings.

(Elisha and the supplying of the food)

1. A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 2 Kings.
2. Elisha came again to Gilgal (4:38-39)
3. There is death in the pot (4:40-41)
4. A man from Baal-Shalishah (4:42)
5. Give the people that they may eat (4:43-44)

**Grace in Miracles**

**2 Kings 4:38-44**

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT): The way that God showed His grace to His people was through His miraculous protection and provision for them.

# I. The way that God showed His grace to His people was by protecting them (38-41).

## God’s protection was shown when the people discovered poison in the pot (38-40).

## God’s protection was shown when Elisha nullified the poison in the pot (41).

# II. The way that God showed His grace to His people was by providing for them (42-44).

## God’s provision was shown when Elisha gave the food offered to him to the people (42).

## God’s provision was shown when Elisha multiplied loaves where there were more than enough for all to eat (43-44).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will learn to trust and thank God for His protection and provision.

**Sermon Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Introduction

### Interest: Recall a time where you have experienced God’s grace in your life, e.g., God’s protection and provision.

### Need: Do you sense God’s grace in your life even right now? E.g., you are safe and healthy, you have enough money for meals today?

### Subject: How does God show you His grace, especially in situations where it seems almost impossible?

### Background: Elisha was serving during the time of kings (Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash) who did what was evil in the sight of God. Thus, there was a famine, which came as a judgment for their disobedience.

### Preview: Today we are going to look at how God extends His grace to His people in 2 miraculous ways.

### Text: 2 Kings 4:38-44 (NIV)

(How does God show us His grace? He does so…)

# I. God shows His grace by protecting us (38–41).

## God reveals the dangers (38-40).

## God reverses the dangers (41).

## Application: Trust God for His protection.

(Besides protecting us, how else does God show us that His grace is sufficient for us?)

# II. God shows His grace by providing for us (42–44).

## God provides in time of need (42).

## God provides beyond our needs (43-44).

## Application: Thank God for His provision.

(Knowing God’s grace, what are we to do?)

# **Conclusion**

### Remember that God will extend His grace to us by protecting and providing for us (MI).

### Exhortation: We need to trust and thank God for His protection and provision even when it seems impossible. Giving a personal testimony of God’s amazing provision.

### Application: Take time to write down our thanksgivings whenever God showed His grace in protecting and providing for us. Trust God to continue to do so as we pray for His grace daily.