

# HAFTORAH SUMMARY FOR PARSHAS VAYERA

*by Rabbi Aron Tendler*

Kings II 4:1-37

Sometime around the year 3043 - 705 b.c.e., Elisha took over the mantle of prophecy from Eliyahu. Elisha served the Jewish people as their mentor and protector, and this week's Haftorah relates two of the miraculous incidents that he performed. The first story is of Ovadya's widow and the pitcher of oil that continued to pour until she had enough oil to pay off all her debts and make a decent living.

The second is the Shunamis who was unable to conceive children. After being blessed with a son, the child dies and Elisha performs the miracle of resurrecting the boy's life. In both instances, basic human needs were satisfied through the righteous individuals trust in the Navi and in Hashem's providence. The widow's husband was the great Ovadya who risked his own life and fortune to protect 100 prophets from the murderous purge of Achav and Ezevel. The Shunamis and her husband were wealthy, G-d fearing people who generously provided for all who needed. Both women could have expected that their basic needs for income and family be deservedly provided by G-d.

The theme of Vayera is trusting Hashem beyond the limits of rational and assumed justice. As with Sarah and Avraham, the trust that Ovadya's widow and the Shunamis had in Hashem was unrelated to their limited human expectations. They trusted Hashem to provide as He saw fit, without any strings attached.