

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN-PT 2
2 KINGS 4:18-37

Introduction

Last week we saw the first part of the story dealing with the Prophet Elisha and the great Shunammite Woman.

She reached out to be a great blessing to Elisha even before she knew him to be a man of God!

Then, when she did perceive that He was a man of God, she wanted to do more for him!

A. *At First She Was Just Being A Blessing To Someone!*

B. *Later She Realized That She Ought To Do More For Elisha!*

What she did for the man of God she did humbly and sacrificially!

When Elisha asked if she wanted something, she indicated that she was content!

But Gehazi, Elisha's servant suggested a need—A SON!

Elisha called her and told her she was going to have a SON!

And the Word from Elisha was fulfilled!

The promised son was born. She had doubted the possibility of ever having a son, but now it had become a reality! There was happiness in her life!

But the story does not end there! Tonight we're going to see the rest of the story!

I. WE SEE SHE CHERISHED HER SON AND HE GREW UP!

(Vs 18a)

Now, we don't see the details of his growing into maturity.

Verse 17 talks about his conception and birth and the miraculous nature of his birth!

What a blessing! **When a woman had a barren womb it was looked on by society that she was under a curse from the LORD!**

[e.g. We could mention other miracle births —Sarah (Isaac), Rachel (Joseph) Hannah (Samuel)]

Children were valued much more then than they are now! They were looked on as a gift or a reward from God! They were viewed as blessings! So, how did we get to this point in our society where **some view children as a curse, not a gift, reward, or blessing from God!**

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Could I tell you that the LORD has not changed His view of children! *Psalm 127:3 – “Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.”*

But the statistics of babies being murdered before they are born and now even as they are born is truly astounding and horrifying!

(Abortion is a self-induced scourge in our country as well as in many other parts of this world!)

I know children were needed on the farm or whatever the family business was back then more than they are now as technology and machinery have replaced the need for laborers.

But to snuff out the lives of children because they are unwanted and because their lives have been cheapened by a selfish, sinful society who view them as burdens instead of blessings is truly tragic and ungodly and our nation is suffering and will suffer because of it!

This Shunammite woman though, no doubt, had longed for a child that did not come until she had pretty much given up hope of ever giving birth! Then she received this blessing from God!

Those of us who have children know what it was like to take that little one and to begin molding their young lives and nurture them to maturity!

As Believers, the goal is to help them to grow up into maturity so that:

- 1) They know and love the LORD. (*“...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4*)
- 2) They are productive members of society.
- 3) They can get along in life.

We are not given that process here in this boy's life. We are just told, *“...and when the child was grown.”* But understand that there was a whole lot of love and care and tears that was wrapped up in those six words! Those of us who are parents know that!

II. WE SEE THAT TRAGEDY STRUCK THIS FAMILY IN AN INSTANT! (Vs 18b-20)

While out in the fields with his father and the reapers, this son was stricken with a sudden, unnamed, illness having something to do with his head. (Was it an aneurysm or a stroke maybe? We don't know!)

His father had one of the lads carry him home to his mother!
Can't you imagine that his mother felt totally helpless! Especially when she didn't know what was wrong with him or what to do for him!

We're not told, but I'm sure his mom asked this lad,
"*What happened to him?*" (It's what mom's do, right!)

The lad could not tell her any more than he knew, which wasn't much, probably saying something like "*I don't know ma'am, he told is dad, 'my head, my head!' and his dad told me to bring him to you!*"

That wasn't much for her to go on so she held him in her lap. **I'm sure that she did all that she knew to do, but she could not prevent death from claiming him.** By noon that day, her miracle son was dead!

This one that she had longed for and had given up hope of ever having!
This one that she had carefully nurtured and raised until he was grown!
This one that, no doubt, she would have traded her life for his!

What a tragedy! This world is full of tragedy! Job said in *Job 14:1*,
"*Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*"

We know it to be true! We hope and pray that tragedy won't come our way to our loved ones, but then sometimes it does!

We can go from great joy to great heaviness in a relatively short period of time! Sometimes even in an instant!

We look for answers and there are seemingly none that we can find.

Had God's kindness to her ended? Why would God give her a son and then let her son die while she was still alive? We don't know what went through her head! But we can just imagine can't we!

III. WE SEE THAT SHE LAY HER DEAD SON ON ELISHA'S BED! (Vs 21)

There is no indication here of tears or crying out. It doesn't mean that there wasn't any, but we are not given her emotions, just her actions.

She knew that God had given her the child by the hand of Elisha!
And only the power of God could cause him to receive life again!

So, she lay him on Elisha's bed and then shut the door and left the house to go see Elisha!

IV. WE SEE THAT SHE WENT TO GET THE PROPHET ELISHA! (Vs 22-24)

It doesn't even appear that she let her husband know that their son had died! She called out to her husband to send her one of the servants with and donkey so she could "*...run to the man of God, and come again.*"

Her husband didn't understand her urgency, but she didn't let him know what the urgency was either. Maybe she knew his faith wasn't as strong as hers and he would have tried to talk her out of the trip if he knew their son had died!

She was determined to get help for her son! Her hope was in the LORD, and Elisha was the man of the LORD she knew and trusted!

V. WE SEE THAT SHE HAD GREAT BOLDNESS! (Vs 25-28)

A. She Went Directly To The Man Of God!

1. She wasn't interested in speaking to his servant, Gehazi.
2. She knew the power of God rested upon Elisha.

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B. She Fell Humbly At Elisha's Feet!

1. She grabbed his feet in desperation.
2. Elisha did not know her son was dead, she didn't tell him.
3. She only reminded him of his promise.

VI. WE SEE HER PERSEVERANCE! (Vs. 29-30)

A. Elisha Sent Gehazi With His Staff To Restore The Boy! (Vs. 29)

1. However, this didn't satisfy the woman!
2. She had come to get Elisha and no substitute would do!

B. She Determined Not To Leave Without Elisha! (Vs. 30)

1. She knew the power of God was on Elisha!
2. Finally Elisha gave in and followed her home.

VII. WE SEE SHE EXPERIENCED GREAT RESULTS! (Vs. 31-37)

A. The Staff Was Powerless! (Vs. 31-32)

1. Because it was in the hand of Gehazi!
2. But the power of God wasn't on that piece of wood, but rather it was on the man of God!
3. Many trust in things which are powerless, but our trust needs to be in the LORD and His power!

B. But God Wasn't Powerless!

1. **Elisha came to the boy and prayed! (Vs. 33)**
This woman knew that Elisha had the power of God and knew how to get a hold of God!
Her trust was in the LORD of Elisha!

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2. Then Elisha placed himself upon the boy! (Vs. 34)

3. Then Elisha waited upon God and then did it again and the boy was miraculously restored to life! (Vs. 35)

4. The Shunammite woman was called in and told to take up her son! (Vs 36)

5. The Shunammite's reaction shows that she was full of humility and gratitude! (Vs 37)

Conclusion

The question we might have is: Why did the LORD allow this to happen this way? Understand that the full answer is with the LORD! Sometimes we are NOT going to know the answer to why the LORD allows what He allows!

Isaiah 55:8-9– “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

However, we can see a few things here:

1. The Shunammite woman's faith was tested here.
(Someone said: “A faith that can't be tested can't be trusted!”)
That's not a Bible verse, but it is a Bible truth!
2. Elisha, the servant of the LORD was also tested here.
Men of God may even struggle with why the LORD allows what He allows as they serve Him, but they must have their full faith and trust in Him and Him alone knowing that He can do things we cannot understand and that are past us finding out!
3. Gehazi, had an opportunity to see the power of God manifested through Elisha's life and came to know the LORD in a greater way!
3. The LORD's name was glorified once again! (*1 Corinthians 10:31*)