

All of You

2 Kings 4: 8-37

- I. Dignified
 - a. Shunem
 - i. Shunem was the site of a Philistine encampment during an Israelite-Philistine battle under Saul (1 Sam 28:4).
 - ii. The town is listed in Egyptian itineraries and shows remains from the Iron Age
 - b. Prominent Woman
 - i. Prominent- respected woman, well to do
 - 1. Whereas women were regarded as inferior to men in most ancient Near Eastern societies, God showed His concern for them here as well as in many other portions of Scripture
 - 2. quite mistress in her own house (vv. 8ff.),
 - ii. Persuaded - notice, learned
 - 1. **Elisha** evidently **stopped** at her house regularly at her invitation as he traveled between Samaria, Jezreel, and other cities.
 - 2. The woman's faith in Yahweh is seen in her desire to be a blessing to the **man of God**. Apparently she was more spiritually sensitive and outgoing than her husband (cf. comments on v. 23).
 - iii. Perceived- notice, learned
 - 1. Room was made for Elisha to stay
 - c. Elisha
 - i. Prophet
 - 1. You have been careful
 - a. Careful – fearful, **take trouble**, to **worry**
 - i. You have taken so much care for us
 - b. What Can I do for you
 - i. There is a quiet dignity in her stance before the prophet
 - ii. The woman's reply (**I have a home among my own people**) expressed contentment with her lot in life; she was at peace and felt no special needs.
 - iii. who will accept nothing in return for her hospitality to *the divine*, refusing his offer to be her spokesman to the powers that be. Her reply of proud good breeding, *I dwell among my own people* (v. 13), in modern terms, in her own social circle, reveals the ancient and abiding character of Semitic social life
 - c. She has no son

- i. To be childless was regarded in Israel as a great personal tragedy. Her reply indicates that she felt having a son was impossible. She urged Elisha not to build up her hopes only to disappoint her later.

II. Comforter v. 19- 21

- a. Son in pain
 - i. My Head, My Head
 - 1. The death of the son is usually attributed to sunstroke, though other suggestions range from cerebral hemorrhage or cerebral malaria to meningitis
- b. Father
 - i. Take him to his mother
 - 1. Asked the servant
 - ii. Continued working
 - 1. Consumed with work
 - 2. Lack of concern
- c. Mother
 - i. Sat on her lap until noon
 - 1. Died in her arms
 - ii. Took him to Elisha's room

III. Determined v.22

- a. Tells her husband send her
 - i. The woman shows no signs of grief; in fact, her actions are characterized by a degree of cold, efficient control. She ascends the stairs, lays the boy down on Elisha's bed, closes the door behind her, then informs her husband that she will visit her erstwhile benefactor. His objections are brushed aside with a simple שלום "peace!"
 - ii. Although she asked for a servant, it is the woman who saddles the ass and through her instructions to that servant shows that she is in control. She eventually arrives at Carmel.
 - iii. When she told him she wanted to see Elisha (**the man of God**; cf. vv. 9, 16, 21, 25 [twice], 27 [twice]), he questioned the need since it was **not the New Moon or the Sabbath**, occasions for religious festivals. The husband's spiritual concerns seem to have been superficial and ritualistic
 - iv. Since there is no information concerning where Elisha is staying in the Carmel range, it is difficult to be precise, but the distance from Shunem to the area of Carmel is about twenty miles.
 - v. Due to her care for Elisha he sent his servant to run for her (He remembered her)
- b. She caught hold of Elisha's feet
 - i. Taking hold of the feet

1. was a gesture of self-abasement and entreaty. Though this gesture occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, in Akkadian literature a wide range of fugitives or supplicants take hold of the king's feet to demonstrate their submission or surrender and make their petitions.
2. a gesture indicating extreme humility, need, and desperation.
3. In the same way that she dismisses her husband's objections to her visit she brushes aside the polite preliminaries offered to her by Gehazi. As is her intention, she comes right into the presence of the man of God on the mountain
 - ii. Elisha allowed her without getting pushed away
 1. **Gehazi** felt that her behavior was improper, but Elisha recognized it as the expression of deepest grief
- c. We will not leave your side v.30
 - i. woman's true intuition of bringing the prophet himself to her house, not accepting his servant as intermediary
- d. Elisha called for the woman not the husband v. 36
- e. She went fell at his feet and bowed
 - i. **When she** entered the room and saw her son alive she first **fell at** Elisha's **feet** out of respect and gratitude (cf. v. 27), **and bowed to the ground** before the Lord in worship.
 1. She comes to Elisha, falls at his feet as before (vv 27, 37), but this time in worship. She also carries her son, this time not as a dead body (vv 21, 37)
 - ii. Took her son
 1. **Then she took her son**, probably in her arms, and left the room full of joy and gratitude for what God had done for her
 - iii. Throughout this story evidences of the woman's faith keep shining through (cf. vv. 8–10, 16, 21–22, 24–25, 27, 30, 37). God rewarded her trust with a miraculous birth and a miraculous restoration to life