

The Qualities of a Godly Woman

2 Kings 4:8-37

8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there."

11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. 12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What can I do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'"

She answered, "I dwell among my own people."

In this familiar passage we mostly are looking at the ministry of Elisha. He was the successor of Elijah. The two most dynamic prophets in the Old Testament. They establish the groundwork for the writing prophets who will follow them.

But in this chapter there are two women mentioned that intertwine with the life of the prophet. The first shows the reward of faith. And how God sustains those who put their trust in Him.

In the passage before us we find a different woman. One who is not in distress but is doing well and is very satisfied with her life. But she wants to do something for God, by providing for the needs of this prophet that travels past her house regularly. The prophet in turn wants to reward her with something she lacking, but she cannot think of a thing. Then the prophet determines to ask God to give her a son, which the Lord does. But when the child has grown, he dies. The woman then seeks out the help of the man of God. And God raises the child from the dead.

That's the basic gist of the story but let us now look into the life of this woman. She has many qualities that caused her to be that great, a notable woman.

- I. She cares for the things of God.
 - A. 8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food.
 1. Have you ever noticed that there are really only two ways to do something for God.
 - a. The first is worship or doing something to enhance worship.
 - b. The second is do something for someone else in the name of God, or for God's sake.

2. She saw this man of God pass by her home every once in a while and she knew that he was involved in doing the work of God.
 - a. And although it seems that the prophet never asked anything of the woman, yet she was looking for some way to minister to others.
 - b. That is a good quality for anyone, but especially of mothers.
 - c. For mothers, sometimes it may seem overwhelming and you may need to take a break from all the serving, but serving others is being like Jesus.
 - (1) Matt 20:28 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." NKJV
 3. The family is to be a place where no one does all the serving but rather that each one serves the other.
 - a. Gal 5:13-14 13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." NKJV
 - b. That is a predominant characteristic of the Christian, and the Christian mother and father, husband and wife.
 - c. It is when people decide to serve themselves or that others should serve them that we end up with marital strife.
- B. 9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there."
1. Notice that although she was a notable woman, a great woman, one with a certain ability to get things done and to be prosperous, she did not do this thing on her own but talked it over with her husband.
 2. He must have been a godly person also, for otherwise he might have become jealous with this stranger coming by his house to eat and now his wife wants to put an addition on to the house for him.
 3. Serving God should always be a family affair.
 - a. Regardless of who is the initiator of there should be mutual support from both husband and wife.
 - b. That is why God tells us that a believer should not marry and unbeliever.

c. There will never be a full support for the things of God it that family unless the unbeliever becomes a Christian.

4. So they build for the prophet a room of his own and sets everything in it that he needs.

II. Now the prophet wants to reward the woman for her kindness.

A. 11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. 12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What can I do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'"

B. Elisha was not only a powerful prophet, to be honored and even feared, but he was a person of influence.

1. This is seen in 2 Kings 8, when even though he does not ask it of the king the king restores the land of a certain widow who Elisha had helped.

III. But this woman is content.

A. She answered, "I dwell among my own people."

B. She was content, oh what a great value.

1. Most of us are not content, we always have a list of the things or situations we want.

2. And our society promotes that type of lifestyle.

3. Many a young couple get married and then expect to have everything right then that it took their parents 30 years to accumulated.

IV. But the prophet finds something that she lacks, a child, a son.

A. 14 So he said, "What then is to be done for her?" And Gehazi answered, "Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old." 15 So he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 Then he said, "About this time next year you shall embrace a son."

V. It is not that she does not want a child, but that she have given up hope of ever having one.

A. And she said, "No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!"

VI. But along with blessing sometime comes tragedy.

A. 17 But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her. 18 And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. 19 And he said to his father, "My head,

my head!" So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

VII. In the time a tragedy she turns to the man of God.

A. 21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door upon him, and went out. 22 Then she called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back." 23 So he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "It is well." 24 Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25 And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, the Shunammite woman! 26 Please run now to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'" And she answered, "It is well." 27 Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone; for her soul is in deep distress, and the Lord has hidden it from me, and has not told me."

B. Her complaint is that she feels deceived.

1. 28 So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

VIII. God shows Himself more powerful than even death

A. 29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child."

B. But she will not leave the prophet.

C. 30 And the mother of the child said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her. 31 Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."

D. The life of the child is brought back.

1. 32 When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. 34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. 35 He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again

went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Pick up your son."

E. Notice that she is not unthankful for the favor of God given to her.

1. 37 So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out. NKJV

What would I say to the rest of us?

Honor your mother for I am sure that she is a notable woman.

Appreciate your mother for all the untiring service that she does.

Husbands, cooperate with your wife as you seek out ways to serve the Lord.