

May 13, 2016 - II Kings 4:8-37 - The Great Shunammite Mother

Introduction:

The Shunammite Mother did everything within her power to save her son. It is remarkable what a Mom will do for the welfare of the children. This April has been 4 years since my mom past and I think of her more now than ever. I still remember being 7 when a bunch of thugs got in our home while my mom was out. The sitter ex-boyfriend decided he pay her a visit. Her resistance got him angry and him and his gangster buddies push their way into the house arguing with her. My brother and I got up out of bed and watch this all unfold on the stair-steps. Vito began to reprimand them; he was only eight, telling them he would tell our dad and call the cops. I was trying to say.... what in the world are you saying? But nothing came out. They chased us up the stairs and I tried to crawl under the bed but they grabbed my leg and threw me on the bed. Then they proceeded to threaten our lives and come back if we ratted on them and burn our eyes out all the time holding a lid cigarette bud right before our eyes. I still remember, I couldn't move, I couldn't talk, time just stopped. I am just glad they didn't come back later, Mom saw to that... Moms do what they have to and it does not matter what they must endure...they will it.

Surely the foundations of society are resting heavily upon the shoulders of mothers who sacrifice of themselves. I hope every mother feels special and is treated special on this holiday in her honor. God bless you ladies, and may your Mother's Day be sweet and special in every way.

When churches have good, godly women giving full attention to the rearing of good kids, you can be sure the churches will be better. A good mother loves her family and provides an atmosphere where each member can find acceptance, security, and understanding. She is there when the children need a listening ear, a comforting word, a warm hug, or a loving touch on a fevered brow. And for the Christian mother, her greatest joy is in teaching her children to trust and to love Jesus as their Savior. The most important occupation on earth for a woman is to be a real mother to her children. It does not have much glory to it; there is a lot of grit and grime. But there is no greater place of ministry, position, or power than that of a mother.

--Maybe you had a mother who did not know how to love or care for you. Don't dread Mother's Day. Instead of focusing on your situation (maybe you've lost a child, or cannot conceive), think of Mother's Day as a time to reflect on, serve, and honor your own mother. Stop concentrating on your own broken dreams. Find ways to help other mothers who, like yours, need some parenting skills. Abraham Lincoln once said, "I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life. Mothers you should never under-estimate the power of your prayers, your love and your influence, your God given instance of motherly intuition.

In today's message we will learn that these characteristics were attributes of the great mother of Shunem. These traits facilitated in restoring her son from death itself. The Bible states that the Shumimite woman was a great woman. The Hebrew word for great is *gä-döle* and it comes from a root word that conveys the idea of greatly distinguished. Some scholars declare that she was great due to her wealth but the word conveys great because she distinguished herself.

Whenever the Lord refers to someone as being great, we need to examine the Scriptures and discover why she was great in the sight of God. Then we ought to glean from their lives truths and principles that we can apply in our life and glorify God.

In my study I uncovered five points attribute to her. I spelled them out from the word great, they are outlined in an acrostic fashion:

Gracious in hospitality- v8 / **R**espectful to her husband- v9-10 **E**ncouraging to Gods Servant - v11 **A**dorned in humility v13&15 **T**estament of Faith - v18-37

I. Gracious with hospitality vv. 8.

1. Elisha's travels often took him near the home of this woman and her husband. He would travel the road between Samaria and Carmel where he held his prophets school. The woman would not let Elisha pass without stopping in for a meal. She was well off and was willing to share it with the man of God. This Shumemmite woman worn the gracious dress of hospitality. She distributed to the necessity of God's servant. In verse #8 she constrained Elisha to eat bread. She invited him to stop for lunch or sit down to dine not just a piece of bread.

2. Ladies, godly moms are gracious moms and they exhibit this quality often before their children teaching them to share. That is what a true believer does. **Romans 12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.** Mom you can be an example of hospitality by serving others in your church. If you don't show it or live it, don't expect your children to, they won't. Thank God for mom's hospitable character and for her loving care.

II. Respectful to her husband. V 9-10

1. She had a submissive spirit in relationship to her husband. She kindly persuaded her husband to build a small upper room for the prophet, so that when he came their way he would not only have food, but rest and shelter as well. Note in #9 the statement, "I pray thee" she is asking not demanding, even though that which she seek is for God and is beneficial to her family.

It behooves the godly Christian mom to set the example of submission according to God's Word to their husbands as the head of the home.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. --- Colossians 3:18, 19 "hü-po-tä's-sō" means to subject one's self; this word was a Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader". In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of cooperating. Her suggestion is well received by her husband because it displayed respect and submission. Maybe he was not even a believer but her godly way was a

blessing to him. She was displaying the traits that Peter spoke of in **I Peter 3:1-6**. So a special chamber (addition) was added to her home as a small place for the Man of God to stay.

III Encouraging to God's servant Vv.11-13

1. God's servant Elisha was very blessed and encouraged by her hospitality. So, encouraged and cared for that he wanted to repay her kindness. One day when Elisha was staying at this woman's home, he determined to express his gratitude by doing something for her. He was not really thinking of a miracle, but of some favor that he might grant, like putting in a good word for the woman with the king or with the commander of the army. Elisha gave his servant the task of questioning the woman and then getting back to him as to what he might do for his gracious hostess. He had connections but the greatest connection he had been with God.

2. Gehazi did as Elisha had instructed him, but this wealthy woman was not seeking anything, and the truth of the matter was that she did not lack any necessity. She told Gehazi that she was well provided for and needed nothing. Elisha then asked his servant if he knew of anything she needed that she had not mentioned. Gehazi shows some real insight here. He knew that while this woman was still in her child-bearing years, her husband was not. He seems to have discerned that while this was the deepest longing of her life to be a mother, she would not mention it. Oriental women, and Jewish in particular, connect the ideas of disgrace with barrenness and after all, it seemed as if it were impossible. It would take a miracle.

She desired a child because she wanted God's best. She wanted to honor and glorify God and she knew the best gift of God's love ever given to a woman is a child. A truly godly mother, a woman with the heart of a mother is one who longs to have a child. God gave a gift a special blessing of His love, a fulfillment of the divine intention for women and certainly a hope for the next generation to raise a godly seed.

IV. Abundant in humility. Vv.13,15

a. Notice verse 13-17 "She asked for nothing, her purposed in serving was from a humble heart. Note that, she stood in the door this was a custom of modesty. She explained that her life was contented; she had not extended hospitality to them for gain. He offered a job or office for her husband in the Kings court. She was contented among her own people.

V. Testimonial of faith (17-38) ... "Rest of the Story"

1. A few years passed, and the child, now a young boy, went out into the field to be near his father during the harvest. The boy became ill, and the father had one of his servants carry the boy home to his mother. It was there, in his mother's arms, that the boy died. The woman carried the child upstairs to Elisha's room where she placed him on the prophet's bed. She then closed the door and sent word to her husband, asking him for the use of a servant and a donkey.

Her husband was perplexed. Think of a husband having a taxi service and only two cars, the wife comes on the job and needs to take the car and driver! This was not a Sabbath or a new moon, not one of those times when she usually went to worship where the prophet was. Her

husband was perplexed by her request, but she assured him that everything was fine and set out with the servant and the donkey to find Elisha. The Shunammite had to ride a journey of five or six hours to the top of Mt. Carmel. She was not going to concern him just yet. Moms do what they have to and it does not matter what they must endure...they will it. **Hebrews 11:1**

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2. Here was one determined woman with great faith. Gehazi did as he was told. He ran ahead, found the boy in the upper room, and placed Elisha's staff on his face. Nothing occurred. Gehazi then went back to meet Elisha, informing him that he had placed the staff on the boy's face, but that the child did not awaken. ---gospel

When Elisha arrived, he went up to his room, where the child had been laid, with his staff now on the boy's face. He went in alone and closed the door. The child was dead. There is no doubt about this as we are told this twice (4:20, 32). We are also told that the child did not show any response and that his body was cold, so that Elisha had to warm it with his own body (4:34).

3. Elisha's actions are not merely the motions of a man attempting to give artificial respiration. It is apparent that the child has been dead for several hours. Some of the time, he is pacing about in prayer I would assume (verses 33, 35). The raising of this boy was no mere resuscitation by means of artificial respiration it was a rising from the dead, through prayer. The child was restored because she had faith in God. - She had a persistence faith "a mother's faith" Heb.11:6. She had faith to find Elisha and Mt. Carmel.

3. We know, of course, that Elisha did not raise this boy; God did. The act of Gehazi was allowed to fail, in order to free the Shunammite and the people of Israel at large, of the superstitious notion of supposing a miraculous virtue resided in any person, or in any rod, and to prove that it was only through earnest prayer and faith in the power of God and for His glory that this and every miracle was to be performed.

The lad sneezed seven times... and then opened his eyes. Elisha called to Gehazi and told him to get the boy's mother. When she came to Elisha, he told her to pick up her son. She fell on her face at the prophet's feet and then picked up her son and went out.

Conclusion:

Moms are chosen of God for a great task, and must be faithful to God's calling, and do it. Doing right by God's standards is what brings honor to Motherhood. That is what elevates motherhood to its proper recognition and importance's. The hope for our society really rests in what happens in the next generation and that is so much in the hands of godly women.