

2 Kings

Chapter 4

A wealthy woman gives bread to a man who passes by her house

8- And one day Elisha passed through Shunem and there was a great woman and she insisted (chazak) that he come in to eat bread. And so as often as he passed by he turned in there to eat bread¹.

¹ She sowed kindness and reverence to the Lord, and she reaped more than she could have ever asked or thought: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained messengers of God unawares" (Hebrews 13:2).

There are many things to say about this wealthy woman. First, she is one of only woman that the Bible speaks of in regards to her wealth. With many wealthy people arrogance and pride takes over; and they have no time for anyone else, especially some stranger passing by who is in need of food. However, the Shunamite woman was different: she was a woman of grace, hospitality, and kindness. She was not consumed with her status and self-interest but was moved by the need of a stranger. She did not just ask him out of a religious obligation, but insisted with an overpowering demand (Hebrew 'chazak') that he come and eat bread in her house. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yes she reaches forth her hands to the needy" (Proverbs 31:20).

The Shunamite woman came to realize that Elisha was truly a holy man of God. Her perception of Elisha's holiness was an indication of her own purity and obedience to God. Any sensitivity to the anointing and honor towards someone who walks in holiness is an indication of a deep hunger for the things of God. Her reverence towards holiness and her desire to make room for the man of God in her house further speak of her desire to be near to God. Elisha recognized her eagerness and deep desire to serve him, and called her one that "trembled for them with trembling" (Hebrew 'charat' - 2 Kings 4:13). Thus, the kind of service that she rendered was out of the deepest kind of reverence for the anointing. The servitude and humility that she had always expressed now found its opportunity to be poured out upon the Lord, as she served the man of God. Her servitude was rewarded by the willingness of the prophet to dwell in the room that she had prepared for Him. "For all those things has my hand made, all those things have been, says the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word" (Isaiah 66:2).

There was not the slightest indication of arrogance in her attitude. She was not upset that even after all she has done for Elisha, He never called her by her name, but instead addressed her as the Shunamite woman. When he called her to his room he did not even speak to her, but addressed her through his assistant Gehazi. She regarded herself as nothing more than his maidservant, and in her humility and meekness she wanted nothing more than the honor to serve. When Elisha asked how He could reward her, she had no thought for any such retribution. Her motives were purely out of a desire to be of service to the Lord. It was reward enough for her that Elisha had been willing to receive those things which she had been allowed to supply. However, there has never been a time when a person served the Lord and did not get rewarded (Hebrews 11:6). The presence of God

The woman recognizes that he is a holy man of God

9- And she said to her husband behold now I know that this is a holy man of God who continues to come by.

She makes a room for him to stay at her house

10- Lets us now make for him a small room and place for him there a bed and a table and a chair and a light, an then when he comes unto us he may stay there.

The prophet accepts the provision

11- And it came to pass on the day that he came there that he come into the room and laid down there.

Elisha calls for the woman

12- And he said unto Gehazi his helper call to this Shunammite and when he called to her she stood before him.

Elisha does not speak to her but has Gehazi address her - Elisha sits in the place of God desiring to reward the woman for her kindness.

13- And he said unto him say now unto her behold you have trembled for us (Charat) with all this trembling. What shall be done for you for this? Should a word be spoken to the king on your behalf or to the prince of the army? And she answered I dwell in the midst of my own people.

She is expecting nothing in return- her motive and desire is clearly revealed to only be that of desireing to honor God and His servant.

14- And he said so what is to be done for her? And Gehazi said she certainly doesn't have a son and her husband is old.

always results in the blessing of the Lord - upon those who are blessed to stand before the majesty of His goodness. Just as Obbededom's house was blessed when the Ark entered; even so must this woman also be blessed, who had served the anointed of the Lord. "And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obbededom the Gittite three months, and the Lord blessed Odededom and all his household" (2 Samuel 6:11).

The man of God then touched the dearest thing to her heart, and her deepest desire. She did not ask for such a reward, and surely would have not considered herself worthy of such a thing. To embrace a son was so important to her that it was painful for her to even consider; and so she pleaded with Elisha not to give her any false hopes (2 Kings 4:16). Perhaps she had not heard of all the great miracles that God had done through Elisha; or she thought such a miracle beyond what God would do for her. Yet God in His awesome love and goodness did indeed reward this woman, who had only sought to be honored with the privilege of being a servant. Her heart was fixed; and the one who had come and touched her life so deeply and rewarded her with all her heart's desire would have her vow of trust for the remainder of her life. Through her heart of servitude and commitment to trust God, she would become one of the great women of faith - as she remained absolutely confident in God while facing the greatest trial of her life: the death of her son.

Elisha calls her again

15- And he said call her. And he called her and she stood at the entrance.

Elisha promises her a son- she sees herself as his servant.

16- And he said at this appointed time according to the time of life you shall embrace a son and she said, No my Lord, Man of God do not lie to your maidservant.

The woman conceives

17- And the woman became pregnant and brought forth a son at the appointed time of life which Elisha had spoken to her.

Absolute Faith in the power of God

The child is grown

18- And when the child was grown one day he came out to his father in the harvest.

Struck down by a disease

19- And he said unto his father my head my head, and he said unto his helpers carry him to his mother.

The boy dies

20- And he had carried him in and brought him to his mother and he sat upon her knee until noon and he died.

21- And she ascended and laid him down upon the bed of the man of God and she shut the door and went out.

She ran to the man of God. She showed no emotion about the death of her son but now she displays great emotion about how he will be saved from death.

22- And she called unto her husband and she said send me now one of the young men and one of the donkeys and I shall run unto the man of God and I shall return.

She so removes herself from the death of the boy that she does not reveal it to her husband. She is so full of faith that all she has to say about the situation is- "it will be well"

23- And he said why are you going to him today? It is neither the new moon nor the sabbath. And she said it will be well!

Now her emotion rises more as she does not wait for the helper to saddle the donkey she does it and then demands the young man to move quickly!

24- And she saddled the donkey and she said unto her young man drive and go and do not restrain your riding for me unless I ask you to.

Recognized by the man of God

25- And so she traveled and came unto the man of God unto mount Carmel. And when the man of God saw her from a distance he said to Gehazi his helper behold there is the Shunammite.

A confession of great faith!

26- Now run quick;y and call to her and say to her is it well with you? Is it well with your husband" Is it well with your son? And she said it is well?

27- And when she came to the man of God upon the mountain she grabbed (chazak) both his feet then Gehazi came to get her off of him and the man of God said leave her alone for her soul is vexed and the Lord has concealed it from me and not made it obviusse to me.

28- And she said did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say go easy with me?

29- And he said to Gehazi gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand and go if you meet any man you shall not bless him and if he bless you do not respond to him and place my staff upon the face of the young man.

The woman will settle for nothing less than the man of God.

30- And the mother of the young man said as the Lord lives and as your soul lives I will not let you go (azav) and he arose and followed her.

Chapter 18

19 And Rabshakeh said to them speak now to Hezekiah this is what the king the great king of Assyria has to say. "What is this trust in which you are confident²?"

² The things that we trust in make us confident that we will succeed. There are many things that we may trust in within ourselves or from our governments or others that we may consider powerful and rich however, there is nothing permanent about these things. The only thing that is permanent is the kingdom of God the only one that is unfailing is God. Are gaze falls short of reality and truth when we think that we can determine our own destiny and that those earthly things that we hold on to will always be there to help us. When we let truth takes hold of our thoughts we realize that to put our trust in anything else but the Lord is foolishness. The Lord desires to break us free from every false hopes and turn our hearts towards reality. He invites us to participate in His kingdom and put our trust in Him. It is in His unfailing love and unchanging existence that we can truly be confident.

The Assyrian Empire had become the greatest kingdom on earth in the days of Hezekiah. The Assyrian kingdom had destroyed many nations including the Northern Kingdom of Israel and why was the Southern Kingdom of Judah to think that it would be any different. Therefore, one of the great generals of King Sennacherib had come to inform Hezekiah that his kingdom would fall just like all the other nations. The gods that the other nations had trusted in were not able to save them so why did Hezekiah think that his nation would withstand his great power. Hezekiah's unwavering confidence provoked Rabshakeh to ask

him what it was that he trusted in that made him so confident. Did he trust in Egypt? Or was it that he trusted in the God of Israel?

Hezekiah made no pretense about his position before the Lord but immediately turned to the word of God and inquired of the Lord's prophet Isaiah. He was able to stand strong only up to a point and finally sunk down into a state where he was as one who was ready to bring forth a child but had no strength left to push (2 Kings 19:3). The word of the Lord comforted him when everything looked hopeless and impossible God promised of success had not changed for those who would put their trust in Him.

Has no one remembered who the living God is and what great things He has done for His people. He is the one that has formed the heavens and the earth. It is God who raises up kings and pulls them down. It is God alone who rules in the Kingdom's of men. To Him belongs all of the wealth and the riches of the world and He gives them to whosoever He wills. He commands the sea and it obeys Him. The stormy winds and the fire are His servants. It rebukes the waters and they return to their place. He discovers a path in the midst of the sea and commands the Jordan to stack up to the heavens like a pillar. If His people rebel against Him then He gives their enemies power over them if they repent and return to Him then in His faithfulness He restores them and gives them the place of greatness, which He has ordained. Christ Jesus has now secured the place of authority for all those who will put their trust in God. Who will lose their lives that they might find the one that God has purchased for them in Christ Jesus. Jesus is head over all principalities, powers and dominions if we will turn to Him with all of our hearts and put our trust in Him then surely we will see the salvation of our God and the great things which He has promised to do!