

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday June 22, 2022 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN RECEIVES A SON *2 Kings 4:8-17*

We have been in our study on the life of Elisha for a while now, but with our last few week away I at least think that we should have a bit of a review just catch us up a bit. Let me give you several highlight of where we have been in our study of the Elisha...

Highlights from Elisha: A Persevering Faith:

1. Our study began with an introduction to Elisha and his call to the ministry... remember he was know at the “miracle” prophet.
2. We have focused some of our study on the passing of the “mantle” of prophetic ministry to the northern kingdom of Israel from Elijah, the very powerful prophet, to Elisha... remember that dramatic scene as God carried Elijah (who never tasted death) in that whirlwind to heaven and literally Elijah’s mantel fell to Elisha, he picked up the mantle and carried on Elijah’s ministry in Elisha’s way.
3. We have followed Elisha now as he has begun to retrace Elijah’s steps of prophetic ministry to the rebellions and wayward people of God, Israel, who had rejected their God and begun to worship the pagan God, Baal.
4. We have tracked with Elisha to Jericho where we’ve seen God protect Him through two female bears, we have seen him heal the water at Jericho... we have seen God defeat the King of Moab and provide water in the desert for the dying troops of Israel and her unlikely allies through Elisha, we’ve seen Elijah minister to the poor widowed whom (the widowed wife of a another prophet) and her son who were about to die in poverty... there he multiplied the widow’s oil. And Elisha was just getting started...
5. As the “miracle” prophet Elisha performed more than 20 miracle... more than anyone in scripture with the exception of Moses.

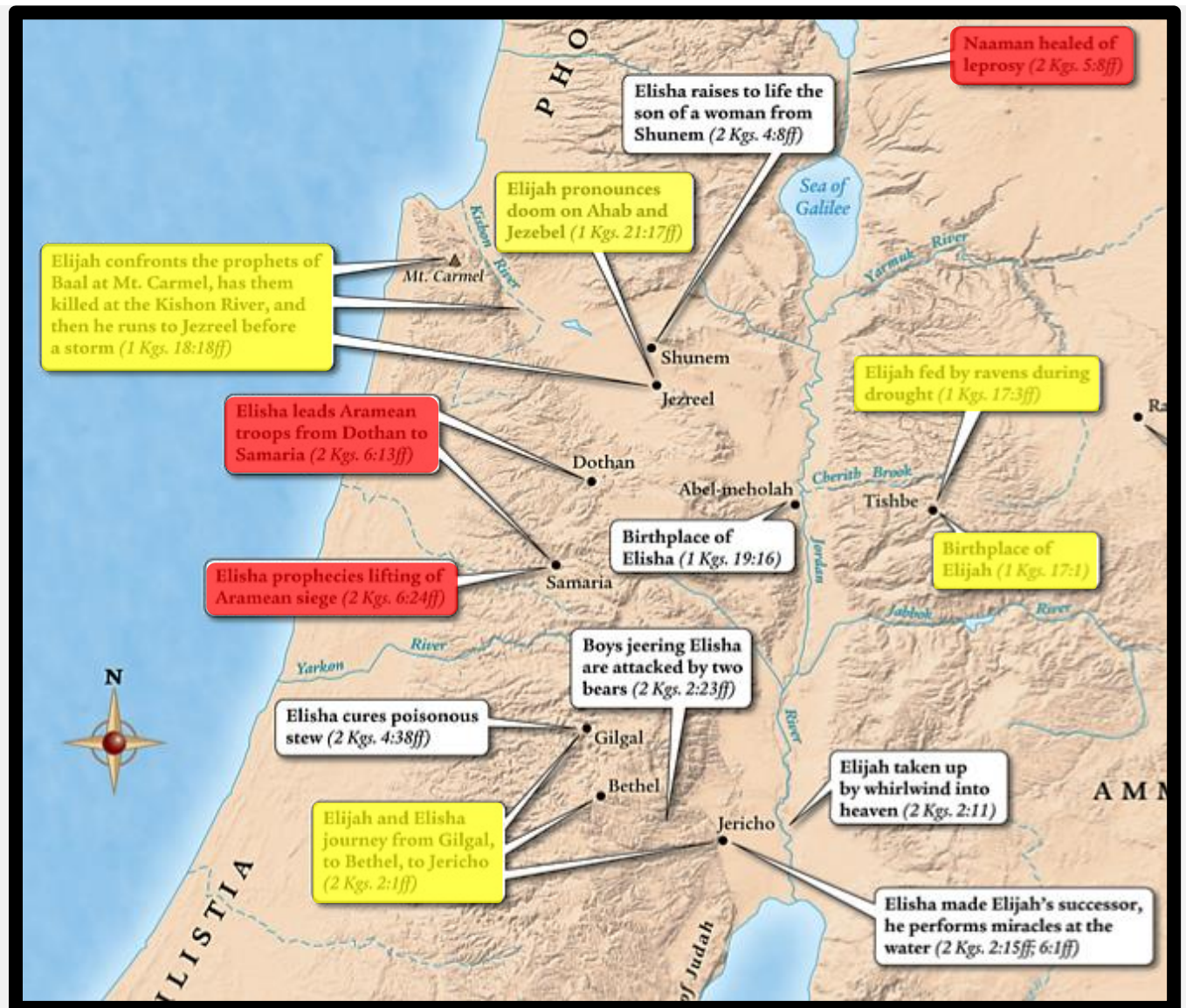
Here are some of the important background facts that may help to firmly establish in our minds who Elisha was and where he came from.

Here are some quick facts about Elisha (these are just some of the background reminders I have been giving you throughout our study so far...

5 Important Background Facts About Elisha to Remember:

1. The name Elisha means “God is Salvation” and gives us an idea of the purpose of His ministry (v.19) –
2. Elisha was the son of a farmer named Shaphat, and was himself a farmer when God called him (v.19) –
3. Elisha was from the town of Abel-Meholah in Israel which means “Meadow of Dancing” which may reflect something of Elisha’s personality (*which was one of compassion, mercy and joy*) (v.19) – That is where Elijah found Elisha plowing the fields. Verse 16 tell us the was from Abel-Meholah, “...*And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.*” Remember that where as Elijah had been more firey and stern as a prophet, Elisha was characterized as being somewhat kinder, more joyful, full of compassion and mercy, which we shall see in our study of his life.
4. Elisha’s call to ministry was from God not man, and was issued through the Prophet Elijah (v.19) – An important note here is that Elijah didn’t call Elisha, God did. Elijah, throughout his ministry was simply the messenger of God, and no less here was Elijah the messenger to Elisha of God’s call on his life. Look up at *verse 16 in 1 Kings 19, “Also you (Elijah) shall appoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.”* God calls! If you are not called of God, but rather called by man your ministry will fail.
5. When God called Elisha he surrendered his life fully to God’s call, no turning back (v.20-21) – Listen to it again in our passage in *verses 20-21, “²⁰ And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?”*
²¹ *So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen’s equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.”*

One more important fact about Elisha’s life that might be of interest to you and that set’s him apart from other prophets in the Old Testament... Elisha was incredibly blessed by God. He did more miracles in the Old Testament than anyone except Moses.



INTRODUCTION

For the next couple of weeks we are going to be with Elisha in Shunem with the notable woman and her family. As with all the events and miracles in the life and ministry of Elisha, 2 Kings 4:8-37 in Elisha's Shunammite excursions illustrates and teaches a number of very practical truths:

4 Practical Truths from Elisha's Shunammite Narrative (2 Kings 4:8-37):

1. **God provides care for all His people** – This passage strongly illustrates the loving and providential care of God for all His saints: young and old, rich or poor, weak or powerful.
2. **God is involved in the lives of men (mankind) in all walks of life** - This passage of scripture in 2 Kings 4:8-37 demonstrates God's involvement in the lives of men in all walks of life if they will but respond to His loving grace.
3. **Faith is necessary for everyone regardless of who they are** – Our passage also demonstrates the necessity of faith for everyone regardless of their social standing or financial position in life. It illustrates, "the just shall live by faith," that "without faith it

is impossible to please God,” and “that which is not of faith is sin” (Rom 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Heb 11:6; Rom 14:23).

- 4. Faith comes by hearing and receiving the Word of God** - Another thing this passage demonstrates about faith is that “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). The faith of this woman and that of her husband was developed because they had not neglected gathering together at the proper times for fellowship with believers and for instruction in the Scriptures (2 Kings 4:22-23). These verses suggest (see verse 23) they gathered together with others to hear the prophets on certain holy days to get biblical teaching. This is why the woman’s husband was surprised when she wanted to go to the prophet other than on one of these special days. Their normal routine was to gather together with others for that purpose on those special days. This was the key to this lady’s faith in these terrible days of apostasy. ***How does this possible apply to us? What about the importance of the Word of God for us in our day? Are we too living in days of great apostasy? Cite example(s)! Why is being saturated and grounded in the Word of God so important (even more important) in times like these?***

The passage breaks down or centers around 2 key events:

2 Key Events in 2 Kings 4:8-37:

- (1) The Shunammite woman receives a son (2 Kings 4:8-17)** – This will be our focus in this study
- (2) The Shunammite woman received her son back from death (2 Kings 4:18-37)** – We’ll look at this one next week

Now, if will look your Bible with me... we are going to pick the story of Elisha up in 2 Kings 4:8-17 this evening... we were in the first seven verses of 2 Kings 4 last time with the story of the poor widow’s oil. Look with me at 2 Kings 4... beginning in verse 8:

THE MINISTRY OF THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN (2 Kings 4:8-17)

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.” 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, ^[a] “About this time next year you shall embrace a son.” And she said, “No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!” ¹⁷ But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her. -2 Kings 4:8-17 (NKJV)

A MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY AND FAITH (2 Kings 4:8-13)

⁸ Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a ^[a] notable woman, and she ^[b] 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 ^[c] 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.”

This story primarily centers around this great woman of faith. There are four other actors in this drama—

5 Major Players in the Shunammite Narrative:

- (1) The Prophet Elisha –**
- (2) Elisha’s servant, Gehazi -**
- (3) The Shunammite woman -**
- (4) The Shunammite husband –**
- (5) The Shunammite couple’s son –**

Elisha, his servant Gehazi, the woman’s husband, and of course her son. **But the central figure is this woman and her ministry of faith by which she showed hospitality to Elisha as a man of God.**

This illustrates again the prominent and important place women have in the Bible, in God’s work in the ministry and in the family. Though men and women are equal in Christ, Scripture makes a distinction with men being given the role of leadership. This is, of course, to be a loving servant-type of leadership in the family as well as the church. The role of women is indispensable and they can have vital ministries for which every man should have great respect and appreciation. We are very dependent upon the ministries of godly women in a multitude of ways.

This brings up some question of the role of women in the ministry... a timely topic given one of the many current controversy in our Southern Baptist Convention including indoctrination of critical race theory in many of our institution and our SBC entities like the IMB and NAMB, acceptance of same-sex marriage/relations in the church and a softening toward LGBTQX agenda in some ways, as well as a watering down of scripture concerning the clearly delineated roles of men and women... There are a couple of terms you really should become familiar with given the current controversy in our own SBC.

1. **Complementarianism** – The viewpoint that God restricts women from serving in certain church leadership roles and instead calls women to serve in equally important, but complementary roles (*Summarized by "The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood"*)
2. **Egalitarianism** – The viewpoint that there are no biblical gender-based restrictions on ministry in the church. *Egalitarians* believe there are no gender distinctions and that since we are all one in Christ, women and men are interchangeable when it comes to functional roles in leadership and in the church and the household. (*Summarized in "Christians for Biblical Equality"*)

With both positions claiming to be biblically based, it is crucially important to fully examine what exactly the Bible does say on the issue of complementarianism vs. egalitarianism. Again, to summarize, on the one side are the *egalitarians* who believe there are no gender distinctions and that since we are all one in Christ, women and men are interchangeable when it comes to functional roles in leadership and in the household. The opposing view is held by those who refer to themselves as complementarians. The complementarian view believes in the essential equality of men and women as persons (i.e., as human beings created in God's image), but complementarians hold to gender distinctions when it comes to functional roles in society, the church, and the home.

An argument in favor of complementarianism can be made from 1 Timothy 2:9-15. The verse in particular that seems to argue against the egalitarian view is 1 Timothy 2:12, which reads, *"I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet."* Paul makes a similar argument in 1 Corinthians 14 where he writes, *"The women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says"* (1 Corinthians 14:34). Paul makes the argument that women are not allowed to teach and/or exercise authority over men within the church setting. Passages such as 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9 seem to limit church leadership "offices" to men, as well.

Egalitarianism essentially makes its case based on Galatians 3:28. In that verse Paul writes, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* The egalitarian view argues that in Christ the gender distinctions that characterized fallen relationships have been removed. However, is this how Galatians 3:28 should be understood? Does the context warrant such an interpretation?

It is abundantly clear that this interpretation does damage to the context of the verse. In Galatians, Paul is demonstrating the great truth of justification by faith alone and not by works (Galatians 2:16). In Galatians 3:15-29, Paul argues for justification on the differences between the law and the promise. Galatians 3:28 fits into Paul's argument that all who are in Christ are Abraham's offspring by faith and heirs to the promise (Galatians 3:29). The context of this passage makes it clear Paul is referring to salvation, not roles in the church. In other words, salvation is given freely to all without respect to external factors such as ethnicity, economic status, or gender. To stretch this context to also apply to gender roles in the church goes far beyond and outside of the argument Paul was making.

What is truly the crux of this argument, and what many egalitarians fail to understand, is that a difference in role does not equate to a difference in quality, importance, or value. Men and women are equally valued in God's sight and plan. Women are not inferior to men. Rather, God assigns different roles to men and women in the church and the home because that is how He designed us to function. The truth of differentiation and equality can be seen in the functional hierarchy within the Trinity (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3). The Son submits to the Father, and the Holy Spirit submits to the Father and the Son. This functional submission does not imply an equivalent inferiority of essence; all three Persons are equally God, but they differ in their function. Likewise, men and women are equally human beings and equally share the image of God, but they have God-ordained roles and functions that mirror the functional hierarchy within the Trinity.

Now, in verse 8 we read, *⁸ Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem...*

Elisha is seen here as a prophet moving about the country carrying on his ministry to the people while also stopping at the various schools of the prophets. Elisha was involved with his work, but he had special needs of his own and we see here how God graciously works through the lives of other believers to meet those needs.

⁸ Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman...

Literally, "a great woman." The word "great" is sometimes used of wealth, influence or character (1 Sam. 25:2; 2 Sam. 19:32), so it may mean "great in importance, influence and character (1 Kings 10:23). What made her so "great?"

- From our passage it is easy to see that she was a prominent lady in the community,
- She was perhaps somewhat wealthy
- And undoubtedly she exercised a considerable influence by her spiritual perception and godly character.

She was a great lady for a number of reasons--she was full of faith and good works and she undoubtedly had a great deal of love and respect for the teaching of the Word. Now, how do we know that... let me give you these.

How do we know she had great love and respect for the Word of God that made her such a great lady?

1. Her godliness and respect for the Word is seen in her hospitality - As we see in these verses, she willingly opened her home to those in need. She extended her hand to the needy; she shared in the good things God had given her (Prov. 31:20).

In Ancient times there were no Holiday Inns or Motel 6's. Those who traveled were dependent upon the gracious hospitality of the people in the land, especially the prophets in their itinerant ministries as they traveled about from place to place.

In the New Testament this is one of the signs of maturity, a qualification for elders, and a general responsibility for all believers, especially to fellow believers or members of the body of Christ. And it is especially mentioned as one of the requirements for widows to be placed on the list for support (cf. Matt. 10:40-42; 25:35-40; 1 Tim. 3:2 and 5:10).

Our cultural situation today in our country is quite different, but there is still the need and the application of this principal in numerous ways.

- Believers need to open their homes for Bible studies, for babysitting during the studies, for times of Christian fellowship, for visiting missionaries and speakers, for youth gatherings, and for lifestyle evangelism or outreach to neighbors.
- In addition, there is the need for housing foreign exchange students, for taking in unwed mothers, or foster children and battered women.

2. She was interested in and wanted to promote the work of God, especially the preaching of the Word of God - She did what she did for Elisha because she perceived he was a man of God, that is, a prophet teaching the Word and doing the work of God (vs. 9). By her concern and her actions she was promoting the preaching of the Word.

- Her actions illustrate the principle of the body functioning together with every believer using their gifts and talents to promote the evangelization of the lost and the edification of the saints.
- This godly lady took God seriously and got involved with God's work according to her abilities and the opportunities God gave her (1 Pet 4:10-11; Gal 6:15).
- She made no excuses, nor sought any.
- She was available and as a result she became a vibrant testimony for the Lord and a source of comfort and encouragement to Elisha who for the most part was ministering in a hostile and idolatrous environment.
- This family was like an oasis in the desert.

3. She had a gift of discernment and the degree of her concern, no doubt informed from her grounding in the Word of God- In verses 9-10 we see a third way the Shunammite demonstrated her prominence; she was great because of her discernment and the degree of her concern. Notice verses 9-10, .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."*

2 Ways We See Her Discernment:

- (1) **First, as a discerning believer she demonstrated her concern for God's work -** But note, she did this with respect for her husband's authority and leadership. She politely involved him in this matter and appears to have left the final decision up to him. This beautifully illustrates the influence, aid, and support a godly wife can have on her husband. I can't begin to remember how many times my dear wife has shown discernment in areas of need that I didn't notice for one reason or another. It naturally works both ways, but our wives often show a special capacity for the benevolent concerns of others that men are so often blind to. The point is that husbands and wives are a team. Scripture describes her as the husband's helpmeet, a helper especially suited to him. They are to compliment, help, and fulfill each other's needs and potentials. However, husbands must recognize this, and capitalize on it, rather than react in proud arrogance or stubbornness. Men, draw on your wife's insight and perception. Further, wives must be wise and submissive, showing respect for their husband's position of leadership as did this Shunammite woman. (*strongly supports the idea of "complementarianism"*)
- (2) **Second, she also discerned the degree of Elisha's need and their responsibility to the prophet because of the ability God had given them -** She was not simply satisfied with a place for Elisha to turn in. She knew he needed a private place, a place to pray, meditate, study, relax and be alone with the Lord. This woman knew they had the capacity to do all of this. What a thoughtful and caring lady. The principle is she was concerned for the details of his needs. In general, women tend to generally be more detail-oriented whereas men tend to think in more general terms. It reminds me of a man who wants to surprise his wife with a two-week Caribbean cruise, so he plans the date, buys their tickets, and plans how he will surprise her. Thinking he's taken care of everything, he takes his wife out for a special dinner and presents her with the tickets. Immediately her mind goes into gear: Who'll keep the kids? What about the dog? Who in the world can I get to teach my Sunday school class on such short notice? Help! I don't have anything to wear! I'll need a nails, hair, the works! How in the world can we afford a trip like this? The poor man is totally surprised because it takes her a while before she can respond with any semblance of the excitement he expected!

But there is more. In her discernment she demonstrates the principle of Galatians 6:6-10... *“⁶ Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”*

This was manifested in her actions and in God’s reward for her faithfulness.

How the Shunammite Woman Demonstrates the Principles of Galatians 6:6-10:

- (1) **She shared with/blessed the one who taught her God’s Word** - As one who shared in the things Elisha taught, she wanted to share with him in all good things which she had (v.6). So she saw to it that all his needs were met according to her ability.
- (2) **She sowed good toward others and in her life** - She was sowing, properly using the blessings God had given. She was laying up treasure in heaven.
- (3) **She didn’t put off doing what she knew to do** - She did this while she had the opportunity; she didn’t procrastinate. She used her blessings for the blessing of others. How we need to seize the opportunities and redeem the time.

One more note to make concerning this ladies life before leaving what made her great... notice that she was a great lady because of her contentment...

Look at **verses 11-13** and Elisha’s reaction/response to the Shunammite woman’s noble and good character... godly Christian characters, *“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.”*

Did you notice her response to Elisha’s request to do something for her... ***What might this be saying about her character and her life? CONTENTMENT***

- When Elisha, being appreciative for her warm hospitality, wished to reward her by offering to use his influence with the king or his military commanders, she politely refused.
- She had no desire for worldly advancement; she was not wanting to climb the social ladder of success.

- She was content with what God had provided her and with her place of service and ministry in the community.
- She was content with her home, her position, her friends, and her ministry.
- What a rare attitude!
- She knew and believed she was where God wanted her and with that she was content.
- This lady had it together!

Compare this to Paul's words in 1 Timothy 6:6-9, "*6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 How does this compare to the woman in our story? What is this saying to us in our own personal lives?*"

GOD'S REWARD OF THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN'S SERVICE (2 Kings 4:14-17)

Look at our passage again... notice verses 14-17, "*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.' And she said, 'No, my lord. Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!' 17 But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.*"

This has to say something of what Elisha, the prophet, thought of this woman, his respect for her, his inspiration and admiration for her faith and how she conducted her life and affairs.

2 Things We See from Elisha (toward the woman):

- 1. He was appreciative and thankful to/for her** - First, note that Elisha was very appreciative and thankful for what this woman had done for him and his servant. There is a mental attitude of thankfulness and appreciation that characterizes the godly. One of the products of a Spirit-controlled, Word-filled life is *thankfulness*, not only to God, but to others for what they mean to us, to our ministry, and to others (cf. Eph 5:18-20 and Col. 1:9 with vs. 12 and Phil. 4:10-19).
- 2. He wanted to somehow express or show his thanks to her** - Second, Elisha was not just thankful, he wanted to express his thanks in concrete terms so he sought something he could do for her to show his appreciation. People cannot read our minds, we need to say and do things to express our appreciation. That is encouraging to them and honors the Lord.

We all need to do this more... *Have you demonstrated to God and to others how thankful you are? How much and in what ways can you express your appreciation for your parents,*

friends, and others who have ministered to your life? Let's not just take people for granted? They are really gifts from God.

So, in verse 14, Elisha turned to his servant and said, “what then is to be done for her?” **First, this illustrates a bit of on-the-job-training.** He was involving his servant in his ministry and at the same time even seeking his help. This is bound to have been encouraging to Gehazi. Gehazi had noticed that she was without a child, which for Jews was a great burden. So he called this to Elisha's attention. This showed discernment on the servant's part. He was learning to watch for needs and he knew that God could meet such a need because God had provided Abraham and Sarah a child even when they were old.

When Elisha promises she will embrace a son next year, she begs him not to raise her hopes unless he could truly deliver what he promised. Undoubtedly she said what she did because it had been a real matter of grief to her for many years. But Elisha was speaking for the Lord, the One who is able to bring the nonexistent into existence and to make dead things alive (cf. Rom 4:17f).

CONCLUSION

In this story we see a great lady, a lady of faith, appreciated and soon rewarded and blessed for her service to the Lord and to His prophet. But I think there are some things that need to be said here lest we come away with a wrong perspective, a one-sided perspective, especially in our day. And we really should leave this study without at least making note of or forgetfulness at times... people are not always appreciated, thanked, and encouraged for their work and ministries, nor do we always appreciate others as we should. So what then? May I make some suggestions:

Truths for the Unappreciative and the Unappreciated:

- (1) **When we are unappreciative of others, we need to deal with it** - This means we may need to go the person--mom, dad, Sunday school teacher, friend, neighbor, etc., whoever it might be, and make things right by expressing our appreciation. Further, we need to strive to be more alert and ask the Lord to help us in this area. **“Lord, make me more discerning and aware of others around me who are a blessing to me, and help me to know how to bless and affirm them in it.”**
- (2) **When others are unappreciative of us, we feel like nobody cares, and we are tempted to throw in the towel and go off in something of a pity party** – When we feel this way (and we may at times) we need to remember these things...

Some things to remember:

- **Remember that the Lord cares (1 Pet. 5:7) and our service never goes unnoticed by Him (cf. 2 Tim 2:8-10).** Remember--ultimately, we serve the Lord Christ (cf. Col. 3:22-25).

- **Remember that our responsibility is to simply do our work as unto the Lord and not for the notice of men or to please them.** Our need is to please the Lord. That's what counts (1 Thess. 2:1f; 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11).
- **Remember that the fact others do not show their appreciation does not mean they do not appreciate us.** It may just mean they are people preoccupied with problems and other things just like you and me.

Doing our work as unto the Lord will help us get your eyes off the grandstands and people's applause (Col. 3:17). Let us deal with our attitudes. Let us remember the Lord. Let us do our job or service as unto Him! That's unselfish living and service.

Remember that many times we see some rewards for our service in this life in special blessings which God lovingly gives us. But we need to remember we may not and often do not. But that does not mean we are not rewarded. It just means God is waiting for eternity or for a better time and a better reward.

Let us then, as this great lady of faith did, keep on abounding in the work of the Lord--the Lord is faithful. Two final thoughts... may more calls for believers (1) First from Paul's words in Galatians 6:9, "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*" Don't give up!

(2) James' words in James 5:7-9, "*⁷ Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸ You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord ^[a]is at hand. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be ^[c]condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*"