

5/12/19, 6/5/11

The Shunammite Mother
2Kings 4:8-37

The first Mother's Day happened on May 10, 1908, with events in West Virginia at the Wanamaker department store on Market Street and credited to a woman named Ann Jarvis. A day of reflection to express to mothers a deep appreciation for all the hard work and sacrifice for their children!

Abraham Lincoln said, 'I remember my mother's prayers, and they have followed me; they have clung to me all my life. All that I am and hope to be I owe to my angel mother.'

* It was said of Hudson Taylor's mother that her closed door in the middle of the busy day had a world of meaning to the household.

Elisha was known for the miracles God did through him, two of these miracles resulted in a Shunammite woman to become a mother that is laid out in three scenes. 2Kings 4:8-37

- I.** The kindness of the Shunammite was rewarded by Elisha. vs. 8-17
- II.** The heartbreak of the Shunammite drove her to Elisha. vs. 18-25a
- III.** The raising of the Shunammite's son by Elisha miraculously. vs. 25b-37

I. The kindness of the Shunemmite was rewarded by Elisha. vs. 8-17

- A.** The Shunammite was a benevolent woman to Elisha. vs. 8
 - 1.** The occasion was a normal day in the life of Elisha the prophet, "Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem." vs. 8a
 - a.** The life of Elisha and other men of God were directed by God, they did not just happen by coincidence.
 - b.** The city of Shunem was about 5 miles south of Mount Tabor, near the city of Zezreel, which was about 15 miles south-east from Carmel.
 - * The same vicinity of the Northern kingdom where Elijah ministered.
 - 2.** The encounter was through the woman's hospitable, "where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food." vs. 8ab-c
 - a.** The indication of notable "gadowl", simple means great, with the idea of being distinguished.
 - * She was a woman of wealth and means.
 - b.** The kindness of the woman led her to compel Elisha to eat, "and she persuaded him to eat some food." vs. 1d
 - 1)** The word persuaded "chazaq", means to be strong and firm, urging him.

- 2) Not ordering him, but simply being persistent in the invitation, so as not to be denied.
- c. The kindness turned into a friendship, “So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food.” vs. 8e
- 3. The woman wanted to do more for Elisha. vs. 9-10
 - a. She took the concern to her husband, recognizing his heanship, “And she said to her husband.” vs. 9a
 - b. She presented her concern, “Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly.” vs. 9b-c
 - 1) The Shunammite knew Elisha was a holy **man of God**, the key phrase in the story, appearing eight time total. vs. 9, 16, 21, 22, 25 (2x’s), 27 (2x’s)
 - 2) The Shunammite knew Elisha traveled regularly by their house performing his prophetic duties.
 - c. She made the request to her husband to provide lodging for Elisha, “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.” vs. 10
- B. The Shunemite was a content woman. vs. 11-13

- 1. The prophet Elisha arrived at the lodging made for him, “And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there.” vs. 11
 - a. This became the custom of Elisha.
 - b. This allowed him to rest in his long travels.
- 2. The prophet Elisha desired to do something for the woman, in turn for the kindness of her and her husband. vs. 12
 - a. Elisha addressed his servant, “Then he said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite woman.” When he had called her, she stood before him.” vs. 12
 - b. Elisha gave the specific word to say to the woman. vs. 13
 - 1) The words were of appreciation, “And he said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care.’” vs. 13a-b
 - 2) The words were of reciprocal kindness, “What can I do for you?” vs. 13c
 - 3) The words were not empty, “Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?”” vs. 13d
- c. Elisha witnessed the satisfaction of the woman with who she was and what she had, “She answered, “I dwell among my own people.” vs. 13e-f

C. The Shunammite was a childless woman. vs. 14-17

1. The prophet Elisha ponder what could be done for her. vs. 14-15
 - a. Elisha thought to himself aloud, “So he said, “What then is to be done for her?” And Gehazi answered, “Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old.” vs. 14
 - 1) She must have been much younger than her husband.
 - 2) He must have been unable to produce a child.
 - b. Elisha commanded his servant, “So he said, “Call her.” When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.” vs. 15
 - 1) The conversation of Elisha and Gahazi was directed by God.
 - 2) God desired to bless the woman, knowing her deepest want and needs, a child of her own!
2. The prophet Elisha prophesied to the woman. vs. 16-17
 - a. She would bear a son, “Then he said, “About this time next year you shall embrace a son.” vs. 16a-b
 - b. She cautioned Elisha about teasing or joking with her, “And she said, “No, my lord, Man of God, do not lie to your maidservant!” vs. 16c-e
 - c. She bore a son, as Elisha said, “But the woman conceived, and bore a son when

the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.” vs. 17

* This is the fifth miracle of Elisha!

Illustration

We have seen many such miracles among many of you in the church through the years.

1. Women in their difficulty to get pregnant conceived and became mothers through prayer and anointing with oil, even after all the efforts by doctors failed.
2. Children born perfectly healthy, after doctors recommended that they be aborted due to some abnormality in the tests made.
3. A woman who refused to take the doctor’s advice to abort one of three children in her womb to assure the survival of the other two, but God brought forth all three children.

* “Those who **honor Me** I will **honor**, and those who despise **Me** shall be lightly esteemed.” 1Sam. 2:30e-f

Application

1. The kindness done to the people of God by single women, mothers will not go unnoticed by God.
 - a. The motive God honors is what is done in and by agape love of God, never what we do or how much we do. 1Cor. 4:5
 - b. The responsibility is of every believer, not just to the well off, but according to our ability.
 - * “And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.” Lk. 6:33

c. This was a requirement for widows seeking help from the church.

* “well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.”

1Tim. 5:10

d. The rich are exhorted and cautioned.

* “Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” 1Tim. 6:17-19

2. The dividends that God pays to those who are benevolent and kind are great.

- a. The very joy and satisfaction of helping someone in need.
- b. The fact that you don’t want any recognition or acknowledgment.
- c. The faithfulness of God to provide your needs always.
- d. The wisdom God gives to you to make proper use of your money.
 - 1) “There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; And one who makes himself poor, yet has great **riches**.” Prov. 13:7

2) “Now godliness with contentment is great **gain**.” 1Tim. 6:6

The kindness of the Shunammite was rewarded by Elisha with a son by the revelation of God!

II. The heartbreak of the Shunemmite drove her to Elisha. vs. 18-25a

- A. The Shunemmite’s son died all of a sudden. vs. 18-21
 1. The time period was after the child had grown, “And the child grew.” vs. 18a
 - a. The lapse of time is not indicated.
 - 1) The woman had experienced the miracle of conception, the baby moving inside her.
 - 2) The woman had experienced the labor to birth that son.
 - 3) The woman had the privilege of knowing the child would be a son.
 - b. The age of the son is not given.
 - 1) The woman had enjoyed caring for her infant son, seeing his first steps.
 - 2) The woman had observed her son grow, develop and mature, as a young boy.
 2. The child God gave her now died. vs. 18b-20
 - a. The child was with his father in the morning, “Now it happened one day that

- he went out to his father, to the reapers.”
vs. 18b-c
- b.** The child complaint that his head-ache,
“And he said to his father, “My head, my
head!” vs. 19a-c
 - c.** The father ordered the child to be taken
to his mother, “So he said to a servant,
“Carry him to his mother.” vs. 19d-e
 - d.** The child died at noon, “When he had
taken him and brought him to his mother,
he sat on her knees till noon, and then
died.” vs. 20
- 3.** The woman left her dead son on Elisha’s
bed. vs. 21
 - a.** She took her dead son up to Elisha’s
room, “And she went up and laid him on
the bed of the man of God.” vs. 21a
 - 1)** She knew Elisha was a man of God.
 - 2)** She knew God had given her the child.
 - b.** She close the door, knowing he was
dead, “She, shut the door upon him.” vs.
21b
 - 1)** The door was like closing the lid on a
coffin.
 - 2)** Or rolling the stone on a sepulcher.
 - c.** She went out in faith believing God
could revive her son, “and went out.” vs.
21c
 - 1)** Hebrews defines faith itself for us; it is
the substance of things hoped for, the
evidence of things not seen...those

- that come to God, must believe....
Heb. 11:1, 6
- 2)** The woman was not hysterical.
 - 3)** The woman was not emotional.
 - 4)** The woman was calm and settled on
what she needed to do.
- B.** The Shunammite immediately prepared to go to
Elisha. vs. 22-25
 - 1.** The woman is in complete control of herself.
vs. 22
 - a.** She acted like nothing was wrong and
made a request of her husband, “Then
she called to her husband, and said,
“Please send me one of the young men
and one of the donkeys.” vs. 22a-b
 - b.** She gave her husband a general reason,
“that I may run to the man of God and
come back.” vs. 22c
 - 2.** The husband questioned her about her
going. vs. 23
 - a.** He pointed out that it was not a holy day,
“So he said, “Why are you going to him
today? It is neither the New Moon nor
the Sabbath.” vs. 23a-c
 - b.** She responded there was no problem, to
appease his curiosity, “And she said, “It
is well.” vs. 23d-e
 - 3.** The woman proceeded to go to Elisha. vs.
24-25

- a. She made the preparations, “Then she saddled a donkey.” vs. 24a
- b. She made the urgency clear, “and said to her servant, “Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you.” vs. 24b-e
- c. She headed out to Carmel, “And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel.” vs. 25
* A distance of about 15 miles north-west from Shunem.

Illustration

How often God has used tragic events in our lives to draw us closer to trust Him for the outcome?
I was hit by a car on my Harley on Feb. 2, 2001, my right foot was severely torn up and my neck was broken, a c-2 fracture. By all medical rights I should have died, at the very least a quadriplegic, but God in His sovereign goodness intervened on my behalf.

Application

1. The difficulties of life as a mother are to draw you to God, to bring death to self.
 - a. To be strong to resist temptations.
 - b. To be strong to be steadfast in trials.
 - c. To be wise to make the right decisions to be a good witness.
 - d. To be transformed to be more like Jesus, to prepare for your husband or wife.

- * “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same **image** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2Cor. 3:18
2. The difficulties of married life are equally to draw us to God to reckon ourselves dead when you are going through them.
 - a. Confidently going to God for unforgiveness that leads to bitterness by giving in to our emotions and feelings, rather than obedience.
 - b. Consistently seeking God’s knowledge, wisdom and guidance to be a godly mother, wife, father or husband.
 - c. Cautiously making decisions as mothers to not take the easy way out for our children or fathers.
 - * “I have been **crucified** with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20
 3. The key is not procrastinating or wasting time, but to be discrete about the difficulties or problems.
 - a. Like the Sunammite woman closing the door behind her, not allowing anyone to know the personal hurt, until she sought God.
 - b. She did not share the gravity of the situation to her husband, until she heard from God in faith.
 - c. This does not mean that we keep things from each other, as husbands and wives, but that

there are times when God wants us to go to Him alone and before anyone else.

* “I love those who love me, And those who **seek** me diligently will find me.” Prov. 8:17

The heartbreak of the Shunammite drove her to Elisha in desperation for God!

III. The raising of the Shunammite’s son by Elisha miraculously. vs. 25b-37

- A. The arrival of the Shunammite woman. vs. 25-27
1. The woman was notice by Elisha, as she arrived at Carmel, “So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, “Look, the Shunammite woman!” vs. 25
 - a. The prophet Elisha was unaware of her tragedy.
 - b. The prophet Elisha, simply pointed her out to Gehazi his servant.
 2. The prophet Elisha sent Gahazi to greet the woman. vs. 26
 - a. He was to enquire about the state of her family, “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?”” vs. 26a-e
 - * She was trusting in God.

- b. She responded in the affirmative, “And she answered, “It is well.” vs. 26f-g
3. The woman demonstrated her brokenness before Elisha. vs. 27
 - a. The woman clung to the Elisha’s feet, “Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet.” vs. 27a-b
 - * She knew he was the mouthpiece of God regarding her son!
 - b. Gahazi attempted to restrain her, “but Gehazi came near to push her away.” vs. 27c
 - * Attempting to protect Elisha!
 - c. Elisha defended her, “But the man of God said, “Let her alone; for her soul is in deep distress.” vs. 27d-f
 - * The phrase deep distress “marar” means distraught in grief.
 - d. Elisha revealed God had kept the matter from him, “and the LORD has hidden it from me, and has not told me.” vs. 27g-h
 - 1) The prophet Elisha was surprised that God had concealed event from him.
 - 2) We usually are surprised if God reveals something to us!
- B. The complaint of the Shunammite woman. vs. 28-31
 1. The woman confronted Elisha, pouring her heart out. vs. 28

- a. She asked him, if she had been the one to ask him for a son, “So she said, “Did I ask a son of my lord?” vs. 28a-b
 - b. She reminded him of her words of her reluctance to believe his promise, “Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me’?” vs. 28c-d
2. The prophet Elisha immediately commanded Gehazi to go to the child. vs. 29
- a. He was to take Elisha’s staff, “Then he said to Gehazi, “Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand.” vs. 29a-b
 - b. He was not to allow anyone to delay him on his way. “If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him.” vs. 29c-f
 - c. He was to use the staff on the child, “but lay my staff on the face of the child.” vs. 29g
3. The woman would not go to the child without Elisha. vs. 30
- a. She swore by an oath, “And the mother of the child said, “As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.” vs. 30a-d
 - b. They went together, “So he arose and followed her.” vs. 30e
4. The efforts of Gehazi failed to revive the child. vs. 31
- a. He witnessed no sign of life in the child, “Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child;

- but there was neither voice nor hearing.” vs. 31a-c
 - b. He started back and met Elisha and gave him the bad news, “Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, “The child has not awakened.” vs. 31d-g
- C. The confident faith of the Shunammite woman. vs. 32-37
1. The arrival of all three to the house. vs. 32-33
- a. Elisha entered the room, “When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed.” vs. 32
 - b. Elisha excluded the two from entering, “He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the LORD.” vs. 33
2. The procedure Elisha went through to raise the child. vs. 34-35
- a. Elisha prostrated himself on top of the child, “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.” vs. 34a-e
 - b. The result was encouraging “and the flesh of the child became warm.” vs. 34f
 - c. Elisha got off the child and paced the room, “He returned and walked back and forth in the house.” vs. 35a

- d. Elisha repeated the same process, “and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.” vs. 35b-d
- 1) The miracle is much like Elijah’s in the raising of the widow’s son of Zeraphath, the similarities of the procedure and both were in their upper rooms. 1Kings 17:17-21
 - 2) The contrast is that the prophet Elijah demonstrated the power of God to reveal Himself to convert the Gentile woman, while the prophet Elisha demonstrated the promises of God to be true and comfort the woman.
3. The prophet Elisha presented the dead son alive. vs. 36-37
- a. Elisha summoned Gehazi, “And he called Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite woman.” vs. 36a-b
 - b. Elisha presented her son, “So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” vs. 36c-f
 - c. Elisha was acknowledged to be “A man of God” by the Shunammite, worshipping God, not Elisha, “So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground.” vs. 37a-c
 - d. The woman left with her son, “then she picked up her son and went out.” vs. 37d

- 1) This is the sixth miracle of Elisha!
- 2) Women received their dead raised to life again.” Heb. 11:35a

Illustration

We have witnessed the last stages of cancer healed by God’s hand in the church.

1. Wendi Hanagraph had severe stages of cancer in her blood and bones, God touched her and went on to have another baby.
2. Ammi Kenz had a very large cancer growth that covered all of her torso area and God in His mercy touched her.
3. We have been praying for our brother Marco and God has allowed veins to tributary around the foot to supply blood to the toes and God has done it.

Application

1. As a mother your broken-heartedness may be over a wayward son or daughter.
 - a. You must warn and pray for them constantly and remind them of God’s forgiving grace.
 - b. You must trust God, knowing He will do everything to reach them, but they alone can call on the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved.
 - c. The choices of some of our children will brake our hearts, so we must draw close to Jesus and look to Him for strength and wisdom!
 - * God is not willing that any perish, but that all come to repentance. 2Pet. 3:9d

2. As a mother and wife your broken-heartedness may be over an unfaithful spouse.

- a. You must go to God to see what He would have you to do, though you may have the Biblical grounds of adultery for divorce. 1Cor. 7
- b. You must pray in faith that the will of God be done, not your own.
- c. You must trust in faith that the grace and love of God is more than sufficient for his will.
* Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Matt. 6:10b

3. As a mother your broken-heartedness may be over the loss of a love one.

- a. You need to understand that God does not mind your grieving, it is normal, as you miss them.
- b. You need to know if they were a Christian they are with the Lord, they no longer have to suffer or be dealing with illness.
- c. You need to obey the word of God and not be driven by your emotions that will cause you to be a mess.
* “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His

love. “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and **that your joy may be full.**” Jn. 15:7-11

4. As a mother you will reap the blessing of your obedience.

* “Her children **rise up** and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her: “Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all.” Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.” Prov. 31:28-31

The raising of the Shunammite’s son by Elisha miraculously resulted in the exaltation of God!

Conclusion

The two miracles of Elisha resulted in a childless Shunammite woman to become a mother that is laid out in three scenes.

- I.** The kindness of the Shunammite was rewarded by Elisha with a son by the revelation of God!
- II.** The heartbreak of the Shunammite drove her to Elisha in desperation for God!
- III.** The raising of the Shunammite’s son by Elisha miraculously resulted in the exaltation of God!