

## TESTING IN SHUNEM. 2 KN. 4:18-37. 08/2023. #08.

~~~~~  
18And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. 19And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. 21And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door upon him, and went out. 22Then 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." 23So he said, "Why are you going to him today? *It is* neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "*It is well.*" 24Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25And 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! 26Please 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.*" 27Now 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." 28So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?" 29Then 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." 30And 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. 31Now 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." 32When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord. 34And 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. 35He 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. 36And 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." 37So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.  
~~~~~

### 1. The Lord gives & takes away

- a. God had blessed the Shunammite woman with a child as a gift for helping Elisha
- b. Gifts from God are often for a season
  - a1. God can use the gift to test the faith of the recipient, as Abraham told to sacrifice Isaac
  - a2. Many blessings were temporary: Job's children, Ezekiel's wife, Rachel...
- c. God gives no reason for sending tragedy in our lives except the exhortation to trust Him
- d. The child grew & his parents loved him
  - a1. As they became accustomed to the child, they considered him a permanent gift
  - a2. When a gift becomes an entitlement, then we believe God owes us to own the gift
- c. The child was with his father in the field during harvest time when he suffered heatstroke
  - a1. Dad tells the servant to take the child to

- his mother (Dad does not check on him)
- a2. The child sits on mom's lap until he dies at noon (no mention of treatment)

### 2. A trip to the prophet

- a. The child is laid on Elisha's bed
- b. The Sh. woman is distressed & piqued at Elisha
- c. The Sh. keeps the knowledge of her son's death a secret from her husband & servants
  - a1. She asks for a donkey from her husband, but tells her husband that all is well
  - a2. She tells her servant to run ahead of her to the prophet on Mt. Carmel
  - a3. Elisha sees her afar off & sends Gehazi to check on her welfare
    - b1. God had not told Elisha of the death
    - b2. El. knows that something is wrong
  - a4. She tells Gehazi that all is well
- d. The Sh. wanted to confront the prophet personally
  - a1. She had served Elisha & expected no gift
  - a2. To give a gift of a son & then to take him away seemed to mock her (giving her evil in exchange for her good deeds)
- e. God will test us, but it will often seem like punishment (growth in faith comes through grievous trials)

### 3. Miracle in Shunem

- a. Elisha is as puzzled as the mother
  - a1. Prophets are tested as well (Ezekiel, Hosea, Jeremiah)
  - a2. Elisha had to trust that God would work
- b. A double miracle: not only did Elisha seek to raise the child, but reverse brain damage)
- c. Elisha has Gehazi run ahead & put his staff on boy
  - a1. The Sh. refuses to leave Elisha
  - a2. The staff has no effect on the situation
- d. Elisha enters the room alone
  - a1. He lays on the boy, eye to eye, mouth to mouth (1<sup>st</sup> mouth-to-mouth resuscitation?)
  - a2. The boy's body gets warm & he sneezes 7 times & then revives
- e. Mom takes her boy, knowing the power & grace of God that can't be taken for granted nor challenged
- f. Jb. 38 God's ways are beyond uncovering