

RETURN TO SHUNEM. 2 KN. 8:1-6. 10/29/23. #16.

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Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years." ²So the woman arose and did according to the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and dwelt in the land of the Philistines seven years. ³It came to pass, at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went to make an appeal to the king for her house and for her land. ⁴Then the king talked with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done." ⁵Now it happened, as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealing to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son whom Elisha restored to life." ⁶And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, "Restore all that *washers*, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now."
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1. A time of reflection

- a. Time debate: when did this event take place?
 - a1. Most commentators believe that this is out of order, since Gehazi had become a leper
 - a2. Was this a flashback or in the right order?
- b. 3 possibilities:
 - a1. This is in the right order & the king allowed a leper in his palace to tell story of Elisha
 - a2. This event occurred before Namaan's cure
 - a3. Gehazi had repented & been healed (goes against Elisha's pronouncement of judgment)
- c. King Joram (or Jehoram) wanted to hear of Elisha's exploits
 - a1. He calls Gehazi to tell the story
 - a2. Joram is curious, but not converted

2. Shunammite saga

- a. The Shun. had provided Elisha a place to stay
 - a1. God gave her a son for her kindness
 - a2. Elisha restored the son after he died
- b. Elisha tells the Shun. to leave her land since God was going to bring 7 years of famine

- a1. Dt.. 28 God sent both invasion & famine into Israel in an effort to motivate them to repent
- a2. She settles in Philistia with her household
 - b1. Her husband, who was older than her, probably had died
 - b2. This widow returned to find that someone had moved onto her land

3. Providence in the palace

- a. The widow takes her case to the king
- b. As providence (from Latin *provideo*, meaning *seen ahead of time*) had it, Gehazi was in the midst of telling her story when the widow showed up
- c. The king had to decide if the widow truly owned the land, for possession is 90% of the law
- d. Gehazi confirmed that the widow was the person who owned the land & that her son was restored to life through Elisha's ministry
- e. Due to Gehazi's confirmation the king restored the land to the widow & made the squatters pay all back revenues earned off the land since she left
- f. Providence turns tragedy into triumph
 - a1. Had the widow's son not have died & been restored, Gehazi wouldn't have been telling her story
 - a2. The restoration of her son was the evidence that led to restoring her land to her
 - a3. God had protected her through the famine & had provided income while she was away via restoring her land & earnings
- g. No matter what trials overtake us, God is still in control & has a purpose for each event
 - a1. Faith demands trust in testing (Rom. 8:28)
 - a2. Faith demands trust without explanation (Job 1)
 - a3. Even in martyrdom (Abel, Stephen; James) & persecution (Jeremiah, Peter; Paul), God is using our situation for His eternal glory
- h. The Shunammite's blessing stems from her kindness to Elisha (she reaped what she had sown)
- i. Those who extend grace will receive grace