

"The Faith of the Shunammite Woman"**PRAYER & WORSHIP****Suggested Song: Faith is the Victory****INTRODUCTION**

- Today we will have a Character Study about the Shunammite woman
- She is one of the great women of faith in the Bible whose level of faith and commitment to God is worth studying. The lessons from her life we can meditate and apply in our life.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE**2 Kings 4: 8-37 (ASK SOMEONE TO READ LOUD AND CLEAR)**

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, "**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.

18 And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers.

19 And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother."

20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door upon him, and went out.

22 Then 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."

23 So he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath." And she said, "**It is well.**"

24 Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you."

25 And 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!"

26 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?'" And she answered, "**It is well.**"

27 Now 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."

28 So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

29 Then 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."

30 And 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.

31 Now 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."

SPECIAL TOPICS CATEGORY: LESSONS IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

LESSON NUMBER: ST-A08

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32 When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed.

33 He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord.

34 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, and the flesh of the child became warm.

35 He 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.

36 And 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."

37 So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.

CHARACTER STUDY**Main Characters:**

- Elisha, God's prophet in Israel;
- Gehazi, Elisha's assistant;
- the **Shunammite woman**, a wealthy and pious woman in Shunem
- her young son, miraculously born
- The husband

As this is a character study of the woman from Shunem, lets us learn the following actions and traits of this great woman of God:

1. DISCERNING:

(Verse 9) This woman was spiritually sensitive enough to discern that Elisha was not just any man, but is a holy man of God.

The Shunammite woman's husband must have also been seeing the prophet too but didn't perceive anything. We should have spiritual lenses activated so that we can sight dangers or blessings from afar like an eagle.

2. ACCOMMODATING (HOSPITALITY):

How did the woman showed hospitality to Elisha? (Ask the group)

ANS.:

- Made a room for Elisha to stay during his visits
- Put bed, table, chair, lampstand

3. CONTENTMENT:

What did Elisha offered to the Shunammite woman because of her hospitality? (Ask)

ANS.:

- Speak on her behalf to the King/commander

The Shunammite woman could have asked for material things or other worldly or selfish things, but did not asked even the one thing that she did not have (a child).

- **Elisha prophesied that she will soon have a son.**
- **Later as the child grew, the woman will be tested as the child died (many years later).**

4. FAITH:

What actions did the woman do when she found out her son have died? (Ask the group)

ANS.:

1) Placed her son on the prophet's bed

*When her son died, instead of arranging a funeral she placed him in Elisha's bed and took off. That was an **act of faith**, because she believed that God could raise her son from the dead.*

2) Shut the door and went out to see the prophet.
She knows that she and even her husband will not be able to help but only God.

5. FOCUSED AND DEDICATED:

In times of great distress and trouble would greatly affect our actions, but the woman was able to do the following:

- 1) She is 'composed' enough to ask from her husband a servant and a donkey to travel.
- 2) Ask the young man to not slack for her (**v. 24**)
- 3) Many times when she was asked she just said **"IT IS WELL"** (**v. 23, 26**)
- 4) Her dedication made her not to lose sight of the prophet Elisha (**v. 30**)

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**6. APPRECIATIVE (GRATEFUL):****What happened to the boy, did he live?****ANS.:**

- Yes. The boy lived, resurrected.

What did the Shunammite woman do? (*Ask the group*)

- The Shunammite woman fell at the feet of Elisha appreciating him and thus appreciating God.

Note:

- She KNOW that the "gift of the child" was from God (as everything else is).
- If God chooses not to bring the child back to life, what can she do? **Nothing!** It is not going to change the fact that God Almighty is Forever God.
- Whatever we are going through doesn't change who God is. If we do not praise Him it is not going to decrease Him --instead we are destroying ourselves the more. We should just keep worshipping, thanking and praising Him for Who God is.

QUESTIONS:**1. What kind of service is God looking for from us?**

We often struggle for service because we think that it should be a great act. We serve God with what we have and with the clear and pure intention of glorifying God. **As Christians we look forward for the day the lord will say to us:**

"... *Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!*" (**Matt. 5:21**)

2. What is the secret of being content?

As for the Shunammite woman, she was looking at what she had rather than griping at what she didn't have.

We live in a society where everyone wants more, more and more. A bigger house, a higher paying job, a new car and so on and so forth, the list never ends. It's not about how much money you have in your bank, not about how big your house is nor how new your car is. It has nothing to do with what you have. (**read: 1 Cor.1:10**)

REFLECTION

- **God had given the Shunammite woman her own measure of faith** and now it needed to grow (**Romans 12:3**). Like the Shunammite woman, so are all people who has been given a measure of faith.
- **She did what she thought is needed in that situation** – her actions led the man of God back to place where her son is placed. God honored her faith and her humble attitude, for in the end, he brought her son back to life.
- **God hears & respond on our prayers.** Sometimes we don't like and understand the answers. That doesn't mean He's against us, or punishing us. He's will for a greater purpose is often hard for us to see.
- We should wholeheartedly submit ourselves in obedience to God's authority and allow Him to refine our faith and let it grow. God is Merciful and faithful to help us in times of trouble – **but whatever His answer will be, we should always give the highest praise and worship to our Living God!**

ASK THE GROUP, WHAT THEY HAVE LEARN ABOUT THE LESSON.