

## **The Shunamite Woman**

### **2 Kings 4.8-37**

#### Context to 2 Kings 4.8ff

- Kings is written to the Israelites in Babylonian captivity to illustrate how they got themselves in that position
- We're in the divided kingdom period
- There's been a transition in prophetic leadership from Elijah to Elisha
- There's a group called the 'sons of the prophets', which are a group of servants/students/followers of Elisha, and the stories in this section frequently feature them.
- The stories here in the immediate context are illustrating the transition from Elijah to Elisha, the need to trust in the Lord, and to serve those that are messengers of his word.

#### 2 Kings 4.8-10 – Introduction and a show of hospitality

- We are introduced to Elisha traveling, meeting a prominent woman and her aging husband.
- The woman shows continual hospitality towards Elisha, first by giving him meals to eat, but eventually by building a room for him to stay in.

#### 2 Kings 4.11-17 – Elisha blesses the woman

- As a gift for her hospitality, Elisha wants to bless the woman
- The woman is fine without any fancy gifts or elevations of status, which leads Elisha to say that she will have a son.
- This blessing seemed too good to be true to the woman, but because of her favour towards God, He shows favour towards her, and she conceives a son.

#### 2 Kings 4.18-25a – The son dies

- Several years following the birth of the son, he goes out to work with his father, and passes out and dies in his mother's arms.
- Her immediate response in her time of distress is to go and speak to Elisha.

#### 2 Kings 4.25b-37 – The woman's faithfulness and the boy's resurrection

- The woman seems fine with the son's death because she knows Elisha will correct the situation, and he does.
- He hears the woman out, and goes to the boy and resurrects him, restoring the boy

#### Application

- God gives blessings not to make someone's life easier, but to illustrate His power to the world around them. (see John 20.31)
- Showing hospitality and putting other's before ourselves can bring blessings we do not expect. (see Hebrews 13.2)
- Faithfulness towards God is not preconditioned to our desires. The woman showed faithfulness without expecting any blessings, and continued to when her blessing seemed to be taken away. (see 2 Kings 8.1-6)