



Church of God Sunday School

ELISHA RAISES A LITTLE BOY TO LIFE

2 Kings 4:18-37

The great woman of Shunem (*SHOO-nuhm*) had a room made for the Prophet Elisha. In appreciation, Elisha promised her that she would have a son, as she had no children. A year later she did have that son, just as Elisha had said. The years went by, and the little boy got older and bigger. When the boy was old enough, he went to the field where his father and the reapers were working.

During the day, the boy came to his father, saying, "My head, my head." His head was hurting badly! (He might have suffered a sunstroke.) The boy's father told a young servant to carry the boy to his mother.

The boy was given to his mother, and she held him on her lap until noon, when the boy died. The poor mother must have been heartbroken! This child was a miracle from God. Why had He seen fit for this child to die so young? The mother's faith was being tried.

The mother did not make preparations for her son's burial. She did not call for the mourners to come and weep and wail. No doubt, she had heard how God used Elijah to raise another young boy from the dead many years before. Elijah's spirit was now resting on Elisha. The mother's actions show us she had faith that Elisha could help her.

The mother took her son to the room built especially for Elisha. There she laid him on the bed, went out, and shut the door behind her. She called to her husband, telling him that she needed a donkey to ride and a young man to go with her, as she needed to see the "man of God." Her husband wanted to know why she wanted to go, because it was not a special day of worship. The woman only said, "It shall be well."

When the donkey was brought to the woman, she quickly saddled it. She told the servant to go as fast as he could and not to slow down for her sake unless she asked him to. Then away they went to find Elisha!

When the mother and the servant were still a distance from Mount Carmel, Elisha saw her coming. He said to his servant Gehazi (*ghee-HAY-zi*), "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: Run now . . . and say unto

her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?"

Gehazi ran to the mother and asked her all the questions. But she answered, "It is well," for she wanted to speak to Elisha, not his servant. When she reached Elisha, she got off the donkey and grabbed Elisha by the feet. (This was how she showed her sorrow and plea for help.) Gehazi came to pull her away, but Elisha said, "Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me."

Then the mother said to Elisha, "Did I desire a son of my lord [or 'Did I ask you for a son']? did I not say, Do not deceive me?"

Elisha knew something was terribly wrong with her son. He told Gehazi to make himself ready. Elisha gave Gehazi his own staff and told him go to the woman's house. On the way, Gehazi was not to greet anyone or answer anyone who spoke to him. He was told to lay the staff on the child's face. Gehazi hurried away.

But the mother told Elisha she would not leave without him; so Elisha "arose, and followed her." As they traveled together, Gehazi returned and met them. Although he had done as Elisha instructed, the boy was still dead. (Why did God not raise the boy when Gehazi laid the staff on his face? God's miracles do not come through objects alone, such as a staff or a cloak. God's Spirit must be working as well. As we will learn in later stories, Gehazi's spiritual heart condition was not what it should have been.)

When Elisha got to the house, he went into his room and shut the door and "prayed unto the LORD." Just as Elijah had done to the widow's son, Elisha climbed up on the bed and laid on the cold, dead body of this little boy. Elisha put his face on the boy's face and his hands on the boy's hands. His body covered the boy's body. Soon the boy's skin was warm, but he was not breathing.

Elisha got up. He walked back and forth in the room. Finally, he laid down on the child once more. That time, the boy sneezed seven times—then he opened his eyes!

Elisha called for Gehazi. He told him to bring the

boy's mother. When she came, she was told to "Take up thy son," but the woman fell at Elisha's feet again. This time, she bowed to show her thankfulness and gratitude, because she knew that the God of Elisha was the One responsible for her son's return from death. Then she "took up her son, and went out."

The Shunammite woman was truly happy! Her faith in God must have increased. She had an even greater reason to please God and do His will now.

God continued to take care of her and her family. Soon another famine would come upon the land. God, through Elisha, warned the Shunammite woman of this famine, saying that it would last for seven years. The

woman took heed, and she, her family, and her household moved to the "the land of the Philistines [for] seven years." (See 2 Kings 8:1-2.)

This Shunammite woman's faith was great! She is mentioned with other men and women of faith in what is often called "the faith chapter": "By faith . . . women received their dead raised to life again" (Hebrews 11:31, 35).

MEMORY VERSE:

"By faith . . . women received their dead raised to life again."
—Hebrews 11:31, 35

Word Search

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      c w
    w m a h
  j w l y f s
g r x c s j n n
h r z w y c y e q z
h q s v o u r j e p p o
b d n g u s s c k z n h f i
j e t i c v h t r c e k i r i w
g w l x o g p u h y v d b u d j y t
h o s i l d a g n q e i e l y s u s e c
t r q s h z i i e s z l o n j e k w o q
q w h c u q c m a b h y n x i q w x
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- donkey
- Elisha
- Gehazi
- seven
- Shunem
- sneezed
- staff

