

Church of God Sunday School

ELISHA AND THE WOMAN OF SHUNEM

2 Kings 4:8-17

The Prophet Elisha traveled around to many places, doing the work of God. Often he walked along the road that passed through the town of Shunem (*SHOO-nuhm*). One day as "Elisha passed to Shunem," a wealthy woman urged him to come and eat at her house. So, he did.

This well-respected, godly woman must have made Elisha feel welcomed at her home. After that, as often as Elisha needed to go through Shunem, he always stopped at her home to eat. She is known as the Shunammite (*SHOO-nam-might*) woman, for she lived in Shunem.

One day this woman said to her husband, "I perceive that this is an holy man of God [a man who is set apart], which passeth by us continually." This Shunammite woman loved God, and God had shown her that Elisha was a true man of God.

The woman wanted to do something special for Elisha. So, she said to her husband, "Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall." During Bible times, houses were built with flat roofs. The roof was used as a place to dry flax and fruit. The roof was also used as a place for worship. Sometimes it was used as a place to sleep during the summer. It is believed that this is where the room for Elisha was built.

In the room that the Shunammite woman planned for Elisha, she wanted to put a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick. These were things that Elisha would need to feel right at home. She wanted God's man to be comfortable; then, whenever Elisha stopped by, he would have a place of his own in which to rest. So, the couple went ahead and prepared the room.

When the room was finished, Elisha came and stayed there. He appreciated all that the Shunammite woman had done for him. He told his servant, Gehazi (*ghee-HAY-zi*), to call the Shunammite woman. Elisha wanted to do something for her.

When the woman came, Gehazi asked her if she needed Elisha to speak to the king or to the captain of the army for her. She said she did not, because she was among her own people and she needed nothing.

Elisha still wanted to do something for the woman. After talking some more with Gehazi, he said, "What then is to be done for her?" Gehazi mentioned that she had no children, and her husband was old. Psalm 127:3 says that "children are an heritage," a blessed gift from God. For a woman with an old husband and no children, especially no son, it meant that the woman would have no one to care for her in her old age and no one to pass the family name and estate to.

Elisha told Gehazi to call the woman again. She came and humbly "stood in the door." Elisha told her that she would have a son about that time next year. The woman asked Elisha not to lie about a thing like that. No doubt, she had a hard time believing this could be true!

But Elisha was not lying to her. God's men do not lie. At the appointed time (in the same season, a year later), the woman had a baby boy, just as Elisha had said she would. What a wonderful blessing to this woman and her husband!

When the woman realized Elisha was God's man, she wanted him to have his very own room in her home. God rewarded the woman for making a place for the man of God in her home.

Just as the woman made a room ready for Elisha, you must make your heart ready for the Holy Spirit. Did you know that the Holy Spirit wants to live in your heart? Then He can guide you every day, and you can be kept from sinning, or disobeying God.

When does the Holy Spirit come in? When you come to Jesus, truly sorry and asking for forgiveness, He will forgive all your sins. Your heart and life will be clean from sin. As long as you obey God, the Holy Spirit will continue to live in your heart. Have you made room in your heart for God?



MEMORY VERSE:

"I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually."

—2 Kings 4:9
