

The Woman God said was Great (2 Kings 4:8)

As you know this is Mother's Day and I would like to talk about a mother in 2 Kings 4. She is a woman we don't hear many lessons about. Verse 8 says, "She was a great woman." Isn't that amazing? Here we have a compliment that will endure for ages to come and we don't even know her name. What is it that made this woman great?

The story takes place around 850 B.C.

The nation of Israel has been divided: 10 tribes lived in the North and 2 lived in the South. In the Northern Kingdom was King Jehoram, the son of Ahab. He was judged less harshly than his parents because he "put away the pillar of Baal which his father had made" (2 Kgs 3:2).

Elisha was God's prophet in the Northern kingdom. He was the son of a farmer and was a student of Elijah. When Elijah ascended into heaven, Elisha took his place. Elisha was traveling through a little town called Shunem. This woman, for whatever reason, was willing to "keep the preacher." What is it that made this woman great?

Her Service: Look at verses 9-10.

And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 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 stay in there."

What kind of service is God looking for?

In Matt 10:42, Jesus said, whoever gives a little child a cold cup of water in my name will not lose their reward." What's He saying? God notices unselfish service.

In Matt 6:3 Jesus said, "When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."

Her Contentment (vs. 11-13)

And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him.

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."

What's the secret to being content? In Phil 4:11 Paul reveals the secret. He learned to be content

in every circumstance.

The Shunammite woman was looking at what she had and was thankful for it, rather than griping about what she didn't have!

If you read verses 14-18, you will find that Elisha does give her a favor. He saw that she had no son and that her husband was old. In verse 16 Elisha said, "By next year you will have a son."

She had faith Vs 19-26

In these verses we read about a tragic accident. The woman's son was fatally injured. When asked by her husband why she was going to see Elisha, she says "everything is alright." When asked by Elisha's servant, "Is everything OK, she says, yes, everything is OK." Was everything OK? Was everything alright? Absolutely not. Her only son died in her arms.

One of the great blessings that comes from being a Christian is that we can get through things. We have hope.

Romans 8:28 says, "All things work together for good that love God." If we believe in that promise and have faith then we can get through things like tragedy, sickness, and even death.

She was devoted to God: She said, "I will not leave you!" (vs. 29-30)

No matter what the end result is or what the outcome will be, live or die, she was never going to Leave the Lord!

How all of us can be Great (vs. 31 - 37)

At the end of the story, Elisha raises the little boy back to life. He sneezes 7 times and then walks into his mother's arms.

In order to be great in the eyes of God, you do not have to be known in the newspaper or have a street or building named after you. You don't have to invent some great device the world cannot do without. You do not have to live in the biggest house or drive the fanciest car. What can we do to be great? Be a Christian. That's what Jesus said after he complimented John the Baptist in Matt 11. Just be a Christian.