

Commentary on Second Kings chapter 4, by Chuck Smith 11.2.22

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November memory verse Isaiah 7:14 (KJV)

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

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Now there was a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets who came to Elisha, saying, My husband is dead; and his creditors is come to take my two boys as slaves to pay for his debt. And Elisha said, What shall I do for you? what do you have in your house? She said, All I have is a pitcher of oil ([2Ki 4:1-2](#)).

He said, "Alright, send your sons out and let them borrow every kind of a bucket and container they can find from the neighbor. Get all of the pitchers, everything they can. Not a few. Just get as many as they can. And then when you come into the house, close the door and take the pitcher of oil you have and fill all of the vessels."

So she went from him, and borrowed all the vessels; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when all the vessels were full, that she said, Isn't there any more vessels? They said, Not any more ([2Ki 4:5-6](#)).

And so the oil sort of multiplied to fill all the vessels. She came to Elisha and said, "What shall I do now?" And he said, "Sell it and pay your debts and live off the rest."

Now it came to pass on a certain day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, and there was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, as often as he passed by there, that he stopped to eat bread at her house. And she said to her husband, I perceive that this man is a prophet. Let's build him a little chamber here so that whenever he comes by, he has a place to lie down and rest and we'll always have provision for him. So they made a little chamber for him there on the wall; and they put a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick. And so it came to pass one day

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as he came to the chamber and turned in there, he said to Gehazi his servant, Go call the woman to me ([2Ki 4:8-12](#)).

And so she came and he said, "You know, you've been gracious to me. What do you want me to do for you? Shall I speak to the king for you? You've taken great care of me and all. I like to return a favor." And she said, "I dwell among my own people. I don't have any ambitions to meet the king or the captain of the host. I mean, I'm very content right here." So Gehazi said, "Look, she doesn't have any children, her husband's an old man."

And so he said, Call her. And when she stood there in the door. He said, [You're going to get pregnant,] you're going to have a son about this season. Next year about this time you're going to be holding a little boy. And she said, [Oh,] don't lie to me now ([2Ki 4:16](#)).

Don't build up my hopes. But yet within a year she was holding her own son.

Now it came to pass as the child grew up that he was out in the field with his dad. And he began to cry, Daddy, my head aches. My head aches. And so the dad ordered the servants to carry him back to his mother and she held him until he died. And so she laid him on Elisha's bed. She shut the door and she called her husband, and she said, Send me, I pray you, one of the young men, and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God, and return home. And he said, Why do you want to go to him? It's not the new moon or the Sabbath day. And she said, It's going to be well ([2Ki 4:18-23](#)).

Now it's sort of a, "Why do you want to go to church today, it's not Sunday kind of a thing, you know."

And so she saddled the donkey, and she said to the servant, Drive, and go forward; and don't slack thy riding for me, unless I tell you. So when they came to the man of God in mount Carmel. It came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, here comes that Shunammite woman: Run now, I pray, and meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with you? is it well with your husband? is it well with your child? And she answered, It is well. And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: and Gehazi started to push her away. But

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Elisha said, No, let her alone; her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me ([2Ki 4:24-27](#)).

Now this is lest the people get hold of the story of Elisha today and his capacities of being able to know things, people's thoughts and so forth. Lest they attribute that to some kind of mental capacities, mind reading or whatever. God inserted this into the stories so that you would know that his was a gift of God and God could withhold that gift. And if God withheld the gift, he didn't know anything just like the rest of us. He only knew as God would reveal. And he was a little surprised that God had hid from him what was wrong with the Shunammite woman. Now, I'm surprised whenever God reveals something to me. But he was surprised that something wasn't revealed. The fact that here she's got real problem and the Lord hasn't revealed to me what it is.

And so she said, Did I ask you for a child? ([2Ki 4:28](#))

Now you know my heart was bound up in this child.

And he said to Gehazi, Quick, put on your coat and take my staff in your hand, and run: and lay it on the head of the child. [Don't stop and talk to any men on the way, just run.] And the mother of the child said, As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I'm not going to leave you. So he arose, and followed her ([2Ki 4:29-30](#)).

I see here a mother's love demonstrated. I see here the determination and the power of a mother's love. I mean, she's not going to accept any substitutes. "Don't send a servant. You think you're going to get by with that? I'm not leaving you. I came for you." And her determination that Elisha should go with her. And she's not about to just accept Gehazi running with his staff to put it upon her son's head.

And so Gehazi ran on before them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. And so he came back to meet them, and he told Elisha, The child did not wake up. When Elisha was come to the house, behold, the child was dead, and laying there on Elisha's bed. And he went in, and he shut the door upon the two of them, and he prayed unto the LORD. And he laid upon the child, put his mouth upon his mouth, eyes upon his eyes, his hands upon his hands: stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child began to warm. Then he returned,

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and walked around in the house; and then he went back and stretched himself on the child again: and the child sneezed seven times, and opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call the Shunammite. And they called her. And when she was come in, he said, Take up your son. And she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out. So Elisha then came down again to Gilgal [coming south and west]: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said, Set up a big boiling pot on the fire there and boil up some pottage for the sons of the prophets. And so these guys went out and gathered the wild herbs, [wild vegetables, and all the greens in the field, and some guy got hold of some wild gourds, not knowing any better]. And he shred them into this great bowl of pottage that they were cooking up for the prophets. So when they started to dish it out and these guys started eating, oh, it was horrible and they began to cry, There's death in the pot. And so Elisha said, Bring me some meal. And he poured the meal in, stirred it, cooked it, and then they poured it out again and the noxious pottage was palatable. Then there came a man from Baalshalisha, and he brought Elisha some bread and some ears of corn. [And there were a hundred prophets there.] And Elisha said, Ah, we're going to have a feast. They said, You can't feed a hundred men with that little bit of bread and corn. And he said, Give to the people that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, They shall all eat, and they will have some leftover. So he set it before them, and they did eat, according to the word of the Lord ([2Ki 4:31-44](#)).

And we are reminded of the miracles in the New Testament of Christ feeding the five thousand men, besides women and children with the five loaves and two fish. That same kind of a miracle, the same type happened here where the hundred men all ate and there was food left over from the bread and the ears of corn that this man has brought.