

## A Great Mother

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2 Kings 4:8-37 (read vs. 8-17)

This is the only reference in the Bible to “*a great woman.*” This is significant! And what makes even more significant is she is unnamed! There are people history calls “Great”— Alexander the Great, Gregory the Great, and Leo the Great. But, they are not so great when compared to whom God calls great.

God calls this Shunamite woman was “*a great woman.*” And when God calls this Shunamite “*a great woman,*” you can be sure, she was great!

**Wherein was her greatness?** It was not in her popularity, prestige, prominence, or plenty.

➤ **FOUR THINGS** that attributed to her greatness:

**I. She was CONSCIENTIOUS of her spouse.** (vs. 8-10).

- A. She would not do anything without first conferring with her husband. Instead of acting independently, this “*great woman*” sought her husband’s consent and cooperation (cf. v. 22).
- B. The first thing about being a good mother is to be a submissive wife. No woman is a great mother who is not first a good wife. A mother’s first responsibility under God is to her husband. A mother who puts her children ahead of her husband out of tune with God.
  - How much martial strife could be avoided if wives would follow this great woman’s example???

**II. She was CARING to God’s servants** (vs. 8, 10 cf. v. 13).

➤ It was her care for God’s servants that lead to her having a child.

A. Her OPPORTUNITY.

1. She took notice of Elijah passing by her way regularly. Here she saw an opportunity to be a blessing to one of God’s servants and took advantage of it!
  - Galatians 6:10— *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

2. Often people complain of a lack of opportunity when really it is a lack of observation! Opportunities abound to be a blessing if we would look for them. [ILLUS: Meals for the sick].

B. Her OBSERVATION.

1. She discerned that Elisha was not just “*a man of God,*” but “*a HOLY man of God.*” Her perception showed she was holy herself.
2. This kind of perception comes only by walking with God and knowing the Scriptures. You can only recognize holiness by being acquainted with holiness.

C. Her OPENNESS.

1. She opened her home. She TOOK INITIATIVE in providing for God’s man. She given to HOSPITALITY.
  2. We should open our hearts and homes to caring for those doing God’s work without complaining about it (1 Pet. 4:9).
    - *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love... Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.* Romans 12:10, 13 [ILLUS: Abing’s hospitality to Hurte.]
- ➔ Her provisions (v. 10) speak of (1) thoughtfulness; (2) simplicity; (3) wise stewardship.

**III. She was CONTENT in her situation** (vs. 12-13).

- ➔ Elisha wanted to show his appreciation for this great woman’s kindness by giving her a reward (Mt. 10:41-42). Have you shown your appreciation for someone’s caring for your needs?
- A. She didn’t ask for any special treatment.
  - B. She was content to remain unknown. Although God considered her “*a great woman,*” she did not see herself as anyone special.
    1. True greatness is never self-promoting.
    2. True greatness is rooted in humility.
    3. True greatness is about serving others (Mt. 10:26-28).
  - C. She was content to “bloom where she was planted!”

**IV. She was COMMITTED to her son.** (vs. 14-26).

- Elisha prophesied a pregnancy (v. 14-16).
  - The Shunamite woman can't believe it (v. 16). She really wanted a son, but didn't want to get her hopes up!
  - Elisha's prophecy came true in spite of her unbelief! God gives us gifts to enjoy even when we don't deserve or expect them.
- ➡ v. 20—Sudden TRAGEDY! God's people are not exempt from tragedy. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away (Job 1:21). Why (Rom. 8:28)? The answer comes out later (8:1-6).
- A. COMFORTING the son's trauma (vs. 18-20).
- ➡ Difference between a father and mother
    - Fathers PITY their children. Psalm 103:13— *"Like as a father piteth his children, so the Lord piteth them that fear him."*
    - Mothers COMFORT their children (Isa. 66:13— *"As one whom his mother comforteth..."*).
- B. CALM in her tragedy (v. 20). She was NOT hysterical or in a panic!
- ➡ APPLICATION: Our FIRST response in a crisis should be go to God. We need not waste time complaining or plotting.
    1. She realized God was in control.
    2. She realized her son was given by God.
    3. She returned her son to the place where Elisha promised he would be born.
      - ILLUS: If you buy a new car, and the engine dies, where do you take it? Where you bought it!
    4. She sought *"the man of God"* (cf. v. 22)—She wasn't seeking Elisha to perform the funeral! She was seeking a resurrection! If Elisha could prophesy life from her dead womb, he could restore the life to the son born from her womb.
      - Mom, do you have a child that needs to be resurrected?
- C. CONFIDENT in her trial.
1. A **probing** question (v. 26). It is good to ask yourself...

- Is it well with your-SELF—SPIRITUALLY (self-examination)...  
Is it well with your SPOUSE... Is it well with your SON....
2. A **positive** response. She said "*It is well*" (v. 26). This is the equivalent to saying, "Everything is all right."
    - "*It is well*," yet the son is dead! It was her faith in God that was speaking. As Romans 4:17 says, she called "*those things which be not* [her son was not well] *as though they were*" [she said he was well].
    - It is easy to say, "*It is well*," everything is going your way. It takes faith to say "*it is well*" amidst the gloom of death.
  3. A **persevering** faith (v. 27-30).
    - Mothers, have you "taken hold of God" in prayer for the spiritual wellbeing of your children, even when the situation appears hopeless?
  4. A **patient** release (vs. 32-37)—She didn't even follow the man of God into the room! She trusted him with her child. Most people tell God how to deal with their children instead of trusting God with their children! Let God handle them!
- D. COMPENSATED for her trust (see 8:1-6).
- The death of her son turned out to be a blessing in disguise (Rom. 8:28)! God cared for this mother's welfare all the time.

**SUMMATION:** Lessons from this great mother teach us that:

1. To be a good mother starts with being a good wife.
2. Caring for God's servants will be rewarded.
3. Godliness with contentment is GREAT gain (1 Tim. 6:6)!
4. God honors a mother's persistence regarding the well-being of her children.
5. We must persevere in faith regardless of the outward circumstances.
6. All things will work together for our good in the end.