

Introduction:

God's promises are the inherent blessings of the believer the moment he/she accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior. We as believers must prepare our lives to receive what is inherently ours given to us from our heavenly Father through Christ our Lord. Our text begins in Second Kings 4 where the story of Elisha and the Shunammite woman gives us insight into a desire for a prayer to be answered. Only for that prayer to be seemingly forgotten and that desire to be placed on a shelf. We are going to identify **nine key points** in this text that will help us understand how to receive and keep the promise God has given us.

- Tonights Scripture Reference: II Kings 4:8-37

II Kings 4:8 One day Elisha went on to Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived, who urged him to eat some food. So, whenever he passed that way, he would turn in there to eat food.

The woman is described as a wealthy married woman in the village of Shunem. Shunem is a village in Israel, a town in the territory of Issachar north of Mt. Gilboa in ancient Palestine. She had no child. She was younger than her husband and of a particular status in society. This woman got permission from her husband to set up a guest room for Elisha, acknowledging Elisha as a true prophet and holy man of God. Elisha often passed that way in his travels, and he stayed in the guest room.

II Kings 4:9 And she said to her husband, "Behold now, I know that this is a holy man of God who is continually passing our way.

Point 1. Make it plain and open about who you are and whose you are. Elijah carried himself as a man of God by exemplifying Godly behavior.

How did she know that Elisha was a holy man of God? Because the woman saw that Elisha did not look at her, and whoever guards himself as regards married women is called "holy". In the Midrashim, an ancient commentary on part of the Hebrew scriptures, attached to the biblical text. The earliest Midrashim come from the 2nd century AD, although much of their content is older. This midrashic scene may hint at the beauty of the Shunammite woman and that Elisha took especial care not to gaze upon her.

II Kings 4:10 Let us make a small room on the roof with walls and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that whenever he comes to us, he can go in there."

Point 2. Make preparation to receive your promise by making God the welcomed Treasure in your home and in your life.

We must ask ourselves is the promise worth the preparation. If we want God's promise to be permanently dwelling in our lives, then we need to count the cost.

We find space for what we treasure, and we make time for what we want to make time for. Treasure God as a priority. The woman said to her husband, let us make a small room. We are going to add to the house another room. We can afford it! We are blessed to be a blessing. We want our home to receive good company! Godly company! Let's minister to great men and women of God! Let's treasure God in our home and have him come in and stay awhile.

II Kings 4:11-12 One day he came there, and he turned into the chamber and rested there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him.

Why did she stand there? The midrash answers that no woman could gaze upon the countenance of the prophet Elisha son of Shaphat, for fear lest she die.

II Kings 4:13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'See, you have taken all this trouble for us; what is to be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'" She answered, "I dwell among my own people."

But the Shunammite did not need any favors. She was happy to dwell with her own people that loved and respected her. But she didn't know that God had not forgotten the secrets of her heart. Because she made preparations to receive a promise she had forgotten by making a room for God to come in and dwell.

II Kings 4:14-17 And he said, "What then is to be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son, and her husband is old." He said, "Call her." And when he had called her, she stood in the doorway. And he said, "At this season, about this time next year, you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, O man of God; do not lie to your servant." But the woman conceived, and she bore a son about that time the following spring, as Elisha had said to her.

Resurrecting the Promise

II Kings 4:18-21 When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father among the reapers. And he said to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" The father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." And when he had lifted him and brought him to his mother, the

child sat on her lap till noon, and then he died. And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God and shut the door behind him and went out.

Point 3. God has a warranty on His promises. Only He can restore and make all things new.

A warranty is usually a written guarantee of the integrity of a product and of the maker's responsibility for the repair or replacement of defective parts. Some merchants find loopholes to not honor a warranty even when it's been purchased. The mercy of God covers areas of our promises that were not defective when He gave it to us, yet He restores and makes all things new.

II Kings 4:22-23 Then she called to her husband and said, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again." And he said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." She said, "All is well."

Point 4. Don't prepare for the burial of your promise, all is well. Prepare for the resurrection.

She didn't tell her husband the promise has died. She is not showing any signs of a grieving mother who's lost a son. A husband would eventually have picked up on that. But he didn't, which leads us to believe she was fully confident that this promise was not going to be buried. She was preparing for the resurrection.

II Kings 4:24-26 Then she saddled the donkey, and she said to her servant, "Urge the animal on; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, there is the Shunammite. Run at once to meet her and say to her, 'Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the child?' " And she answered, "All is well."

Point 5. Discern carefully with whom you will share what you're believing God for. When you need a miracle trust only miracle minded people to share it with.

The Shunammite woman didn't want Elisha to learn of her grief through his assistant Gehazi. She wanted the man of God to hear it from her own lips and sense her own grief.

The Lord may have shown her to not trust Elisha's servant with her situation. Not even her husband. She needed a miracle minded individual to agree with her.

II Kings 4:27 And when she came to the mountain to the man of God, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came to push her away. But the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for she is in bitter distress, and the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me."

II Kings 4:28 Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

The Shunammite cannot bring herself to say, "My son is dead;" but by reproaching the prophet with having "deceived" her, she sufficiently indicates her loss. She's grieving.

II Kings 4:29-30 He said to Gehazi, "Tie up your garment and take my staff in your hand and go. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not reply. And lay my staff on the face of the child." Then the mother of the child said, "As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So, he arose and followed her.

Point 6. When the Lord shows you a plan to restore your promise, believe Gods power in that plan, not yours.

Elisha gave Gehazi instructions to go and lay his staff on the child. That would have worked. The child was not healed by the laying on of the staff, though (hypothetically) the child may have been healed with only the staff if the Shunammite would have embraced this promise with full faith. The woman trusted more in the man of God than the power of God by choosing to stay with Elisha and vowing that she will not leave him.

II Kings 4:31 Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of life. Therefore, he returned to meet him and told him, "The child has not awakened."

II Kings 4:32-33 When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. So he went in and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed to the LORD.

Point 7. Prepare to close doors behind you to restore the promise in front of you.

You may have to close the door to your past, negative people, and well-intentioned

friendships who don't understand faith language to be successful at recovering your promise.

II Kings 4:34-35 Then he went up and lay on the child, putting his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. And as he stretched himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm. Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

Point 8. Being polite will not restore the promise.

You will have to fight for the promise. Lay on the promise. Stretch out on the promise. Lay your mouth on the promise. Set your eyes on the promise. Lay your hands on the promise until the promise becomes warm again.

II Kings 4:36-37 Then he summoned Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So, he called her. And when she came to him, he said, "Pick up your son." She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

Point 9. If it appears your promise has no sign of life, or your promise has not awakened, breathe life into it by speaking life into it.

Some of you might be in the same situation. You have been in the position where you have sought God and received His blessing. The promise grew for a while but then you have seen it die before your eyes. But God is faithful to his promises and can do the miraculous by raising up what appears to be hopelessly dead. You need to do just as the Shunammite woman did. Don't look to anything else.

Don't try in your own strength, you will just end up with a propped-up corpse. Don't speak negativity, telling everybody it has died. Instead lay the problem down in the Holy Spirits resting place and go straight to God's word. If your promise has died, grab hold of God and don't let go until you have seen it restored. And then pick up your promise and walk out.