

Raised to Life Again!

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if we turn again to the chapter that we read in 2 Kings chapter 4, if we would take a heading for this, for this sermon heading, the text would probably find it in Hebrews 11.

In Hebrews 11 at verse 32 to 35, you have these words, Through faith women received their dead by resurrection.

Or in the AV it is raised to life again. So if we had that as a text, it would be from Hebrews 11 that we would take it. But we're going to look at 2 Kings chapter 4, the Shunammite woman from 8 verses 8 onwards.

And it's remarkable that this woman, unnamed woman, is amongst the giants of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11. She's unnamed.

And yet she's there because it says there through faith women received their dead raised to life again. So there she was great.

[1 : 0 5] In the AV, she's called a great woman. In the ESV, you've got it here, she's called a wealthy woman. In another version, she's called a notable woman.

And she's all of that. Really, she's all of that. She's a wealthy woman because she's wealthy in grace. She's a great woman because she's great in faith.

She's notable because everybody around her knew her as a notable woman of faith. And we get that in the context of the reading of that chapter. That she was such a great woman.

But we're going to look at three things today. First of all, we're going to look at a son promised. And then secondly, we're going to look at a son dying.

And then thirdly, a son resurrected. These three things. A son promised, a son dying, and a son resurrected. Well, a son promised.

[2 : 1 0] Well, here was Elisha. Elisha will be called a circuit prophet. That means that he would be going from one place to another. He was forever on the move, just like Elijah before him.

He would be going down. He would be going down to visit his colleges. They had Bible colleges in these days. You read of them. They're way down.

They're way down the south. He had them in Samaria. He had them in Bethel. He had them in Gilgal. You'll find them in Gilgal in the end of this chapter. He's got 100 students in Gilgal alone.

So Bible colleges are no new thing, folks. We had their Bible colleges in Elijah's day. This is about 600 years before the birth of Christ. 700 maybe before the birth of Christ.

So he was going from one place to the other. So he was visiting them. He was teaching them. And on his way, he would be teaching other people. Because in these days, we have to remember that they had the five books of Moses.

[3 : 1 6] And the rest of the preaching was done through the likes of the prophets. Through oral study. Through oral interpretation. They would be telling them about what was happening.

So they didn't have what we have got now, the canon of scripture of the Old and New Testament. They relied pretty heavily on the prophets and what we call the sons of the prophets.

The sons of the prophets are really students. They were students. So they were going out with. So whatever Elisha was telling them, they would go out with the word of God as well. Throughout the whole of Israel.

Then Israel. And here he is. And he's traveling through. And he happens to travel through Shunem. Shunem was right in the middle. As we say. It was actually.

We've got the Sea of Galilee. At the top. At the north. And then you've got the Dead Sea down below. You've got the likes of Gilgal. It's down at the bottom. Jericho is down at the bottom.

[4 : 1 2] But right up in the middle. You've got Shunem. As it were. In the middle of the country. And then up about 15, 20 miles up. You had Mount Carmel. I'm just trying to get the geography of the

place.

Because the geography is important. When it comes to this woman. That was where it was. And here was this woman. So he would be traveling. As it were. From his base. In Mount Carmel. On the Mediterranean Sea. He would be traveling. Right down the middle. Right down to the Dead Sea. And maybe even further still. So he was forever traveling. And he was passing this woman's house.

And no doubt. They would get into conversation. And he would be speaking to her. From time to time. And she noticed. That he was a man of God. Do you notice that? She says that to her husband.

And she would take him in. For a meal. And they were so taken up. The pair of them. Her husband and herself. With a conversation they would have with the house.

[5 : 07] With the man of God. That she spoke to her husband. And she seems to be the lead woman. In most of this. I'm not saying that women are always the lead person. But generally speaking.

They are. Let's be quite honest with you. In my household anyway. That your wife suggests this. Or suggests that. And she would suggest to the man. Oh this is.

This is a man of God. We'll have to do something for him. And look what they did. They built an extension. For the man. Look at it. She says there. She says there.

Whenever he passed by. They were going to eat food. And then she said. Behold now. Verse 9. You know. There the man of God. Is continually passing away. Let us make a small room. This is on her suggestion.

It is here. Let us make a small room for him. And look at the precision of scripture. You know. I can't help it. But look at the prescription here.

[6 : 03] Let us make a small room with him. And she's telling her husband. What to put into the room. And wives. I'm sure you do that. You ask what furniture. You're going to put.

It's so normal. Really. Isn't it? You put in the furniture. She says to. Let us put. A bed. It's her speaking. She's going to put a bed.

A table. For him to study. A chair. For him to sit at the table with. And a lamp. And so. So. There they are. She's. In other words.

We provide for him. And I think. Behind it all. I think she was wanting. Maybe. My imagination. I think she wanted him. To stay a little bit longer. Because.

She enjoyed his company. She enjoyed. Alicia's talk. She wanted him to stay. Why would. Would she put in. All. All the furniture as well. Not only the. Because. Really. All he needed was a bed.

[6 : 57] Because he was just passing by. He had less than 20 miles. To go to Gilgal. And he had a wee bit. Probably about 40 miles. To go down further. To. To. To.

To. To. To. To. To. To. I should say. To.

one time visit, we've got a visit here one day Elisha came, verse 11 and he turned into the chamber and rested there and he said to Gehazi look what he said to Gehazi he suggested to Gehazi this hospitality is so good not only did the woman enjoy the conversation with Elisha Elisha enjoyed the conversation with the woman and her husband, it was reciprocal wasn't it?

because he was so taken up with the hospitality that he was getting and friends, when you go into a house it's just not the furniture that you're looking at, is it?

it's the way that your host treats you and if your host is nice to you you'll come back again and again and you'll only enjoy to be in that house and this is to Elisha this was an enjoyment to him and he said to her, so overwhelmed with her we've got to do something, we've got to give her something and he said to her well let's he told Gehazi to go and get her and Gehazi gets her and he says to it's interesting to notice the way they were talking Gehazi seems to be almost the middle person and he seems to be the middle person be talking whereas there's almost no direct talking at this stage at this stage now we can find out that later on but it was that's custom we can only say that that is custom but anyway he called her and he asked her what do you want me to do for you?

[8 : 54] do you want me to speak to the king? and you'll get a better house get better look what her answer was I have enough I dwell amongst my people I'm quite happy I don't want to move I don't want to move away from my people I'm very happy she was not only a contented woman she was not only a wealthy woman she was a contented woman she was content with what she had she didn't want to get any more she didn't want to she was quite happy she was contented and friends

that is a thing for ourselves are we contented with what we have?

because I believe we live in a time a day of discontent I think we're living in a time where we're not we're wanting this more or we're wanting that more or we're wanting this this woman she was quite happy with a little home that she had rather than go to a palace she was quite happy with this little home because and I think she had it she had this extension built for Elisha there was a deep love in her heart to Elisha the prophet as well she loved the word of God so there we have it she was there Elisha gives her then he thought about this and of course Gehazi suggests she hasn't got she hasn't got a family and the promise then that Elisha gives her she's an oldish woman and he's an old man she's past the time of bearing children and here we have the promise and you know friends it's a wonderful but in 17 you know the but of scripture she did not believe in verse 16 that this this would ever come to pass and then you have there beginning of verse 17 but the woman conceived she got exactly what she did and she got her son now it's remarkable

I was thinking over this this is an unnamed woman getting an unnamed child now you've got we've got go through scripture you know your scripture you go back to Genesis there in Genesis 18 God is speaking to Abraham he's promising him a son he's promising him a son his son was going to be Isaac then you have the promise to Rebecca Rebecca was going to get Jacob and Ezo and throughout his scripture there is the promise of a son it's not it's not it's it's you go back to Mrs. Manoa for instance she not told her name but she's Manoa's wife she's promised a son and then and then you have it you go right through through the scripture you've got Hannah Lionel going outside promised a son Samuel so you've got all these promises but this there's something uniquely different with this because it's not in the lineage of of the saviour it's not necessarily as Samson was in Israel

Samson was very necessary for the for the for the destruction of the Philistines but this is something different and you know friends I think it's and I'm just putting this forward I think it's generally just for the happiness for the general happiness of the woman and her husband why do I say that well if you go back to Timothy you follow Paul's writing to Timothy I think it's probably in the last verse in 2 Timothy he says there not to set our hopes on uncertain things but he says but on God who richly provides us with everything to enjoy now friends God gives us things in this world to enjoy he gives us things to enjoy he gives us family to enjoy he gives us homes to enjoy and that's what he's doing here he's providing us he's giving us health we're here today we've got our health and strength we've got the word of God to enjoy he's giving us these things just simply for enjoyment and I believe that was one of the things that he gave but he was also doing it as well to try this woman's faith later on we'll find that and that's why we have in the second place a son dying the son promised promised son had come and then we have tragedy six or seven years have passed the home has been wonderfully happy you can take that from the context here you read that story and the more you read it and you see a happy family a contented family and everything is going well and then one day tragedy comes the morning started well she sent her she dressed her son now I've taken that the boy was about six or seven how do I think that well look at the context she's got him in her hands in her arms she's not going to put a teenager the way she did and place him up into the bed and the way she carries him in her arms the way she does

I think the boy was only about six or seven years old and he dies as I say it started well she dressed him up put him out to his father and his father was taken up there it's the harvest time it's a wonderful scripture harvest time and there's sorrow see how the Lord sometimes mixes up scripture harvest time where there's plenty and yet here we have the time of plenty she goes she sets out and she goes back to her routine in the house you can just picture it and he's out with his father his father and he's got a headache and the headache now some people say that the father was quite callous I don't think so this happens to many of us who have had children if a boy has got a sore head or he's suffering you say to him go and give him to his mother maybe that's just simply what fathers do I'm talking you give him to his mother his mother has sorted out you know do you know the way it is we're all through that

[15 : 09] I've done it so often his mother has sorted out and then I go away and give a problem to my wife so these are things that are just and I think the man he just says he's got a headache and he just gives him to his servant and he says to him go on take him to his mother his mother holds him but look the mother's instinct is different oh friends I'm taking this you talked today about the equality of this and that the mother's instinct what does she do she puts him on her lap as only a mother does as only a mother can she puts him on her lap and there she is she's she's I can picture

it they're almost rocking him and I think she's praying as well because I think that the mother's intuition is getting is better than the father because I think she knows that things are getting worse and she's seeing the child getting worse because verse 20 it says there the child sat on her lap till noon now that word told me that he was there for a little while do you get that he was there till noon and the scripture is telling us that he was there for a little while and then he died oh friends what a catastrophe and death is such a catastrophe isn't it but that doesn't seem to kick into this woman yet that's the time for irrational thinking isn't it when death comes and you speak to those who want death but she's rational this woman is a woman of faith folks what does she do she takes him up and puts him into

Elisha's bed and notice what scripture says there she shut the door now that's interesting she shut the door now I think she shut the door for a reason and you find out later on she shut the door for a reason because I think she hid it from her husband because it was a custom in these days once a child or an individual died the child would have to be buried right away I don't know maybe I'm maybe I'm wrong she hid it she hid the child on the bed of Elisha and she shut the door and she called a servant there you have it and then you've got the husband coming she called the servant she was going to go right away she's putting the child there and she's heading for Elisha she says there she calls her husband to ask him of the servants notice the interaction between the husband she says

I'm going to go to the servant of God at Mount Carmel and he questions why are you going what's wrong look at verse and she repeated it twice verse 23 all is well all is well friends could you say that could I say that when I'm seeing a child gee there was faith in this woman because she was going to head for the only person standing on this earth that could help her then and that was Elisha she was she was going to go that's what she said and notice that she saddled the donkey now you would expect the servant to have saddled it but she was in such a hurry she was in such a rush she wanted to get to Mount Carmel because the child was there dead and she had to get to Elisha so she rushed quickly she saddled the donkey and look at the order she gave to the servant to go quickly get a move 15-20 miles now I was thinking coming down here

I came from back today now we took 20 minutes in the car my son-in-law Christopher was driving I can't say he's driving it's brilliant but he managed to get us here in 20 minutes so and that was rushing a wee bit past because he was he was late in leaving but this lady she had to go so she had to go the distance between Garibust and more than likely past my house in Upper Col more than likely to caress now you think of that distance folks saddled on a donkey now she would have taken quite a while but she told the man to make the donkey go fast and that's where she went so she went as quick as she could because she believed that the cure was in this person Elisha Elisha God saves that's what Elisha stands for God saves there she was she was determined she must get to she convinced that this was her help was an

Elisha God's man friends that is something for ourselves today is our trust in somebody that will help us I know it's difficult it's difficult to tell somebody that's cradling a child number of years ago I was with a young woman who at three months of age her child in her womb was diagnosed by the doctor that he would not live but she says my trust is in God and she carried that child for nine months and the child was born and she knew that the child wasn't going to live and she said she says I caught the child in my hands and I had joy for 45 minutes

[21 : 35] I looked at him for 45 minutes she timed it and in 45 minutes he closed his eyes and death and her reasoning was like David he shall not come to me but I shall go to him because she had the promise that the child was going to a better place and that's why she carried him she wasn't going to get rid of the child at six months at eight months she was going to carry and that child was put in a little coffin and put it into a little graveyard in Dunfermline and she goes every year at the birth and at the death because he died that day and it's difficult for us to tell that woman it's difficult for me to tell another person there a family who lost their only child at 23 years of age the world before her her career before her and she dies like that oh friends when death comes in it's serious business and it's when irrationality comes in that we don't look at and this woman this was her in her sorrow in her desperate sorrow all my friends if you're in desperate sorrow and I know you are here today

I know you may be in desperate sorrow in desperate need I don't know your circumstances turn to Elisha's God turn to him turn to him because he's the only help he was the only help for this woman he's the only help for you and for me what a friend we have in Jesus what a friend we have in Jesus

all our sins and griefs to bear what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer oh what peace we often forfeit oh what needless pain we bear all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer well that's what she did she approached Mount Carmel and you find it and you find Elisha there and he sees her coming he sends Gehazi to meet her and you find it interesting interesting isn't it interesting she does some people think that she knew who

Gehazi was I don't think so I don't think so I don't think was she a woman of discernment and she knew you see Gehazi in the next chapter he's not a true servant really but I don't know I think I think she again repeats it she again repeats in verse 26 she answered him it's all well with it's all well with she says all is well all is well and she goes and she casts her feet and there we have her she wants Elisha in person nobody else will do she stays with Elisha and Elisha is there and he says he can see that there's something wrong something is wrong it's interesting to notice what he says there there's something wrong with her he says but the man of God said leave her alone she's in bitter distress that's in verse 27 but the

Lord has hidden it from me and has not told me he has hidden it from me has not told me that was the son dying but we have to close I see time is running the son resurrected well look at Elisha he goes with her interesting to note that it's Elisha goes with her we find that we find that so look at verse 30 the end of verse 30 she starts to go the impression she's made on Elisha so great so he arose and followed her amazing isn't it it's not Elisha that goes first she goes forward because she's wanting Elisha to follow her oh friends what faith this woman has got she then goes look what he does when he goes we'll move forward very quickly to the house he comes to the house he comes to his own room and we notice what he does comes to the room he goes into the door opens the door and closes the door after him he's alone he's alone with the child he wants to be alone look what he does what's the first thing he does he prays

I'm not going to get at Elisha I shouldn't really be getting at Elisha but it's strange it's strange first of all the Lord hadn't told Elisha so Elisha's knowledge was limited at this time but his action was also limited he sent Gehazi to put a staff on the child therefore his action was limited he had to go himself and he had to pray himself with the child he had to be in there he locked himself in and friends I don't believe I don't believe for one minute that was a simple prayer I believe that Elisha spent time urging the Lord look at Elijah previous to that if you could time go to 1 Kings chapter 17 today and you see Elijah when he's raising the widow of Sareptus as son it's in 1 Kings 17 you read it yourself it's from verse 8 onwards you find the cry that he has there

[27 : 45] Elijah crying to the Lord to raise the child I believe myself that there was something in the prayer and there was an urging in the prayer there was a sweating in the prayer notice the actions I know there's actions here and we haven't got time neither would I go into it it's actually the actions he made he lay on the child his eyes to his eyes mouth to his mouth and his he must have done that in three different actions I don't believe that he the child was too small but I don't know that's my own belief in the denom and then after that he stretched himself out and the flesh of the child became one then he got up again look at him this is Elijah then he got up verse 35 he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house and went up and stretched himself walking back and forth in the house oh friends what's he doing he's imploring the

Lord of heaven to come down and intercede this is what is called this is what we call real prayer this is earnest prayer desperate prayer importunate prayer fervent prayer this is what comes and this is what he he cried to the Lord oh friends that's an example to us have we a need is there a need in our family we have needs have you a problem with your family do we how much do we spend in prayer how much how much time do we spend with the Lord in secret do we fervently pray for our children do we really really spend time in prayer an earnest prayer if you are like me I have to confess my inadequacy in prayer I don't do what I should do I don't spend the time that I should and friends that's what we should do because results come out of fervent prayer and the result was this again

Spurgeon has got a wonderful sermon on the seven sneezes we can't go into the seven sneezes and we won't even try to go into but he sneezed one person says why did he sneeze seven times because he had sneezed six times so the seventh was the seventh so because he had done six before so he sneezed seven times so there it is he sneezed seven times but I think it was I think there was something in it I think the woman next door heard the sneezes I think the mother heard the sneezes mother mother I'll teach you today you recognize the sneeze of your child and I think she knew she heard the sneeze the next door and she knew that her child was then living and that

would have put her heart up oh the Lord works in wonderful ways doesn't he even for a sneeze the mother hearing the next door what my child he's awake he's awake what wonder this is oh friends what a wonderful miracle it is and that's but

I have to say I said to my son in law that I would be finished if I passed but if I wander on he has to forgive me forgive me for this Chris I'm getting carried away with it as usual but anyway this is it the child was awake the child was back in life and wonderful and he says go call the mother take up look what the mother did first of all she didn't go directly to the child she went to Elisha scripture is wonderful isn't it she went to now mother would you have gone straight to Elisha I think you would have gone if you were like me you would have gone to the child she bows down before Elisha thanking Elisha for what he's done her heart is over because she knew she knew this was the person oh friends that's where we have to go at the end of the day because this reminds us what is this telling us what is this telling us promise son dying of a son and resurrecting of a son what does it tell us it's a four type it's that was to come the saviour that was promised to

Mary the saviour that came the saviour that died the saviour that was resurrected and the saviour in whom your hope and my hope is to be found today in no other but in this saviour this is the one that we are to go to this is the old testament telling you it's remarkable again we haven't got time through you said Capernaum at the beginning of it seven verses down he said name name you know what name is shunem what does he do what does he do name he raises a widow's son doesn't he put in touches on he delivers the son and look at what they say they say a prophet has come the prophet has come isn't it wonderful what scripture tells us shunem we've got this child we've got the name and his reputation went out this is the great savior this is the one to whom we to go to this is the one that will raise us up and this is the one this

[33 : 46] Jesus will come again and raise us up as I say to the children this is the one that will hear heard what God has prepared for them who love him all friends love him turn to today and if you are in deep distress today this is the one to go to because this is the one that you'll find helping may he bless our meditation