

Elisha ~ Part 6

In my last post, we continued to explore the ministry of **Elisha** by looking at **2 Kings 4:1-7** where we learned that **Grace Pays the Debt**. In this post, we learn in about another **Great Woman** in **2 Kings 4:8-10**.

"⁸ One day Elisha visited Shunem, and a well-to-do woman living there pressed him to stay and eat a meal. After this, whenever he came through, he stopped there for a meal. ⁹ She said to her husband, 'I can see that this is a holy man of God who keeps stopping at our place. ¹⁰ Please, let's build him a little room on the roof. We'll put a bed and a table in it for him, and a stool and a candlestick. Then, whenever he comes to visit us, he can stay there.'" ~ 2 Kings 4:8-10 (CJB)

In the previous passage, a widow of one of the **guild prophets** supporting **Elisha** seeks out his assistance in her dire need. In this second story, a woman of means urges the prophet to accept her hospitality whenever he passes by on his journeys through the **Yizre'el Valley**. **Shunem**, also the home of **Avishag** (1 Kings 1:3), was in **Yissakhar** (Joshua 19:18). The valley between **Shunem** and **Yizre'el** formed a pass to the Jordan River.

Elisha has to pass the location regularly on his journeys from **Karmel** (4:9); like **Sh'mu'el** (1 Samuel 7:15-17), he probably follows a circuit in the administration of his duties. The average traveler on foot could cover fifteen to twenty miles per day, so **Shunem** was the perfect halfway point for **Elisha** whenever he went to Mount Carmel to pray, meditate, and seek the Lord in a new way. Since **Mount Karmel** was a very special place because of **Eliyahu's** ministry, perhaps there was also a school of the prophets there.

Elisha is regarded as a holy man, distinguished from the other prophets who continue to have regular vocations. This status may have been the reason for providing a separate room for him. Separate quarters protect the family from having inappropriate intimacy with this man of God. The room is furnished simply but adequately for a regular guest.

A Great Woman

This unnamed woman discerned that **Elisha** was a man of God, and she wanted to serve the Lord by serving His prophet. We get the impression that her husband might have lacked his wife's spiritual insight, but at least he did not oppose her hospitality to the itinerant preacher. He permitted her to have a permanent room built on the roof of the house and to outfit it with ***a bed and a table in it for him, and a stool and a candlestick***.

In this day of motels and hotels, hospitality to God's people, and especially God's servants, is becoming a neglected ministry and a lost blessing. One of the qualifications for an elder is to be **hospitable** (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8). Messianic Jews 13:2 exhorts all believers to practice this virtue. We should open our hearts and homes to others and not complain about it (1 Kefa 4:9).

In my next post, we continue to explore the life of **Elisha**. In this post, we continue to learn more about this **Great Woman** from **Shunem** in **2 Kings 4:11-17**. We will be learning a lot more about her and her family over the next three posts.