**The Shunammite Woman**

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The story of the Shunammite woman, as recorded in the fourth chapter of II Kings, is full of beauty and instruction to the Christian Scientist. This woman must have possessed some spiritual perception, else she would not have noticed the prophet Elisha, as he passed her house, and have invited him in to eat bread. Tarrying at her home for a brief rest, as he went to and fro on his journeyings, became a regular practice with the prophet, just as Christ Jesus loved to stop at the home of Mary and Martha at Bethany; and who can tell what these seasons of spiritual refreshment meant to the Shunammite as she listened to the words of truth from the lips of "the man of God"?

When the thought came to her of preparing "the little chamber on the wall," with its simple furnishings of "a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick," she, no doubt, never connected this act of disinterested ministration with the solving of her own problem, the fulfillment of her heart's desire. She may have given up all hope that her desire would ever be fulfilled, but this one act of unselfed love opened the way for the answer to her prayer. She must have grown to love that little room, where the promise was made which afterwards came true in her human experience, for we read that when her child died she took him up and laid him there, while she went out to find Elisha.

What wisdom she showed in refusing to discuss the seeming grief which had come to her, until she could talk with "the man of God" himself! In answer to her husband's inquiry as to the cause of her sudden journey, she merely answered, "It shall be well." Instinctively she knew that his fear would not help the situation and that it must be quieted. Not even with Gehazi, when he came to meet her, would she discuss the matter. Beyond a further denial that sorrow or death had entered her home, her lips were closed. Then came her wonderful, intuitive compliance with the great demand which Mrs. Eddy has voiced on [page 495](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=When+the+illusion+of+sickness+or+sin+tempts+you%2C+cling+steadfastly+to+God+and+His+idea.&book=tfccs.main.sh) of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," "When the illusion of sickness or sin tempts you, cling steadfastly to God and His idea." In the words, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee," was evidenced the Shunammite's quiet determination to "cling steadfastly to God" and to the spiritual idea as represented by Elisha. The result was what might have been expected; the prophet went with her and her child was raised from the dead. Can we not imagine the serene confidence and gratitude which filled her heart when in response to his admonition, "Take up thy son," she bowed herself in silent thankfulness at his feet, took her son up in her arms, alive and well, and went out?

All the steps necessary to demonstration are set forth in this simple narrative: the exercise of whatever spiritual perception one has gained, the expression of unselfed love, wisdom in not talking unduly about our problem, denial of the false claim of life in matter, and the steadfast clinging "to God and His idea." There is a simplicity, strength, and sincerity about this woman which wins our hearts at once. How many of us to-day would have the courage to offer to a guest such a room as that which she placed at the disposal of Elisha? How often when the impulse comes to us to do some kindly deed, does the whisper immediately follow that the amount we have to give is so small, the thoughtful act too trivial to be worthwhile, the place where we would entertain a friend too humble, too unlike that to which the friend is accustomed? When such suggestions come to us let us remember the little chamber on the wall, which the Shunammite woman prepared for Elisha, and which to the prophet was furnished as no room in the king's palace was furnished, for it was equipped with that which cannot be reckoned or measured by material objects, and with which luxury has nothing whatever to do—unselfed love. Let us also strive that our home may become such an one as hers, or as the home of Mary and Martha, where all that represents the spiritual idea is honored and welcomed, and where "the man of God" will love to tarry a while, and we shall prove, as did they, that sickness and death cannot long hold sway there.

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