

Text: 2 Kings 4:1-7

Title: "The Godly Mom of 2 Kings 4"

Time: 5/14/2023 – Mothers Day

Place: NBBC

Introduction: Ordinarily Mothers Day is a happy time. For some, it can also be a time of sorrow. I can remember the first time that I preached this particular message at Colonial Hills Baptist Church in South Carolina. I did so because my pastor's wife's mother had tragically died in a car accident, and Pastor Gray and Kelly had come here to New Hampshire to be with their family on Mothers Day. There may be some here today who miss their mothers on Mothers Day.

The mother of the early verses of 2 Kings 4 was not in a celebratory mood either. She had recently lost her husband, and now she faced the prospect of losing her children too, under the crushing burden of a financial debt. Yet there is a faithfulness that drives this sister in the Lord to an outcome full of God's blessing. That faithfulness patterns well for us much of what a godly mom ought to be. I want us to observe three characteristics of the lives of godly moms from this dear lady's example this morning.

I. Godly moms serve the Lord (v. 1a).

Application: The woman we read about in the early verses of 2 Kings 4 is an example to us because she was someone who served the Lord. We are told specifically that she was a preacher's wife, a wife of one of those servants of God called the "sons of the prophets."

We first read about the company of the prophets or the sons of the prophets after the ministry of Samuel (1 Sam. 10:5). In addition to preachers, they were gifted musicians. Samuel was called of God as a child in Eli's home to be a prophet (1

Samuel 3), and he exemplified the essence of what it meant to be called as a prophet of God (1 Sam. 3:19-21). To be a prophet meant to teach God's people His word.

Part of Samuel's legacy was the fact that he left behind him schools for the training and ministry of men who shared this high calling. We need to aspire to that legacy as a local church. 2 Tim. 2:1-2, "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

But as Samuel's example demonstrated, the call of God on the lives of these men was a demanding one. A wife of the son of a prophet had to be ready to serve the Lord. She had to be ready to be married to one whose allegiance was to the word of the Lord. Note that Samuel's calling found him on the road a lot ("from Dan even to Beersheba," v. 20).

I am thankful for the example that the woman of 2 Kings 4 is to all of us as believers, and let me say if I may that as your pastor I am also very thankful for the desire my kids' mom has to serve the Lord and the love that she has for her church. Notice some details of a godly mom's service:

A. Her service of the Lord brings her little notoriety.

Application: The passage calls her a "certain woman." Unlike the prophet Samuel, we do not even know this dear sister's name. It is thought by many Bible students that Jeremiah is the likely author of the books of 1 and 2 Kings. Jeremiah's purpose in this passage is to describe the miraculous ministry of Elisha, and this "certain woman" is only incidental to this larger purpose.

She was a mother whose ministry to her husband and children did not receive many accolades. Good moms are examples of a willingness to serve without notoriety (1 Tim. 5:10, "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."). These are the works that mean little to the world but much to God.

Regardless of the amount of notoriety we receive from men, the humble example of godly moms reminds us all that we can count on the fact that the Lord sees our service for Him (Heb. 6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shown toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."). God sees what no one else can see. Keep up the good godly work, Moms.

B. Her service of the Lord required much sacrifice.

Two references hint that the lives of the sons of the prophets were lives of sacrifice:

1. In 2 Kings 5:22, when Gehazi wanted to concoct a story which would get money out of Naaman for himself, he spoke of two sons of the prophets in need. That sons of the prophets were needy was a believable tale in that day, undoubtedly because many were needy.

2. In 2 Kings 6:1-7, where Elisha miraculously causes the axe head to float, we learn that the sons of the prophets evidently shared living quarters and had been growing in number such that their place was no longer big enough. The fact that the axe head was borrowed may indicate that the prophets could not afford one of their own.

Application: This mom had lived under these conditions a life of sacrifice in order to serve the Lord. We need moms who are willing to sacrifice to serve the Lord. Serving the Lord always means putting aside something else that we could be doing, or doing without something else that we could be having.

Illustration: When I think of a mom who served the Lord, I praise God that I can think of my own mom. For most of my days as a child, Mom was in charge of Bible clubs she directed in all the public elementary schools in our town. She was one of those counted on for VBS, she canvassed for a bus route, she had Bible clubs in her home, she sang in the choir, she taught Sunday School, and she cared for people in our home. She ran the Mentor town daycare with a burden for the lost and a witness for Christ.

Because of the 20-year age difference between me, the oldest in our family, and my sister Katie, the youngest, Mom and Dad paid Christian school tuition bills for 30 consecutive years. Mom often had to work odd jobs to make this happen. She served sacrificially in spite of the fact that she had 5 kids of her own to raise. Her kitchen table did more business than any counseling center ever established, and all free of charge.

Do your kids see you serve the Lord in this local church, Moms? It will not make you famous, and it will take tremendous sacrifice, but it will also impact the next generation for the glory of God. Godly moms serve the Lord.

II. Godly moms cry (v. 1).

Illustration: Mother's Day has always been a day for motherly tears. Traditionally at the Hobi house I grew up in, we would all get a card which is designed to make mom cry. You can always tell when it is coming. About half way

through the card the voice begins to crack, the lip begins to tremble, and the eyes become moist. And then as mom tries to hold back the tears long enough to articulate a sincere thank you, the flood gates would open, the tears would flow, and the best part of Mother's Day would transpire.

In our home, my sisters would traditionally get into the act as well. It is then normally up to the Dad or brothers to crack some stupid joke in order to keep themselves from crying and to get everyone back on the celebration track again. These were special emotions for special times.

Application: The godly mom of 2 Kings 4 is crying, but these are not tears of joy. She cries the cry of mourning, the cry of fear, the cry of great distress. The word that describes her action is also used in Isaiah 33:7 where we find the synonym *weep bitterly*. There was no celebration at hand.

She cried in part because she did not understand. In light of her husband's faithful service, it made no sense whatsoever that she had to face the painful loss and the insurmountable difficulty that she did. "If you fear the Lord, your family should be in perfect health! If you fear the Lord, you should never have any trouble with creditors! If you fear the Lord, you should be able to raise your sons in peace." So we are told by the prosperity preachers of our time. Yet this godly woman cries.

Illustration: C.H. Spurgeon, the great 19th century Baptist pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, said this about the Christian and suffering, "God gets his best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction. I do not know whether my experience is that of all God's people; but I am afraid that all the grace I have got at any of my comfortable and easy times and happy hours might almost be on a penny. But the good I have received from my sorrows, and pains, and griefs is alto-

gether incalculable.” [Quoted in John Murray, *Behind a Frowning Providence*, p. 19.] God has a gracious purpose designed for our good in every tear. His grace is sufficient for our times of sorrow.

III. Godly moms selflessly care for their children (vv. 1-7).

Illustration: Good mothers can be described in many ways, but *selfish* is simply not one of the choices. I originally wrote this message when Brandon was 6 and Kent was 2, and as I was working on this point my son Brandon, who should have been asleep by that time, sheepishly came up to me and asked, “Dad, where’s Mom?”

I told Brandon that she is at the grocery store. I then asked Brandon why it is he needed Mom when he was supposed to be asleep for some time now. He then explained to me that his 2-year old brother and roommate, Kent, had a stinky diaper. I’m glad that I no longer have to hear my son say things like that.

Well, I moaned as usual when I heard Brandon say that, and then my six-year old son said, “I wanted to tell Mom, because I thought she would do better than you.” He had a good point. Brandon had come to understand that he could count on his mom to be selfless in a way that his dad was not. Godly moms selflessly care for their children.

A. This selfless care is a dying virtue today.

Application: Paul warned Timothy about the days in which we live. He called them “the last days” and “perilous times.” He said, “For men shall be lovers of their own selves. . .without natural affection.” (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

Illustration: I could share with you statistics this morning about abortion, broken homes. The problem with statistics is that they can be kind of sterile; they can shield us from feeling the true impact of a mom who acts in a self-centered way.

Have you been witness to the destruction a selfish mother can bring on her family? Our church in Texas put a mother under church discipline because she deserted her husband and three kids ages 10 to 16 so that she could run away with a guy in his 20's she worked with at Walmart. She and her husband were good friends of ours when she did this. Her husband had to do what he could to pick up the pieces, but the destruction this woman left behind was hard to measure. God can heal the repentant sinner, but how we need the example of moms selflessly caring for their kids today. What a testimony for Christ it is!

B. This selfless care seeks the miraculous payment of an unpayable debt.

Application: Our moms here today are probably not facing a situation in which you are going to lose your kids because you have bills that you cannot pay. Certainly, that our families are able to pay our bills and feed our kids is no less a gift from God than it was for this sister in the Lord. We should be thankful to Him for that provision.

But every mom here does have something very important in common with this godly mom of 2 Kings 4. You are the mother of offspring who have an unpayable debt to pay, one that can only be paid through a miraculous work of God (Matt. 18:23-27). Our kids have a sin debt to pay to a holy King that is too big for them to pay on their own. Jesus Christ died on the cross, shedding his blood which was the ransom price and payment for their sin debt. When our chil-

dren trust Christ as Savior, they are freed from the debt of sin before the judgment of God's holy law. Godly moms are concerned that this debt is cared for by God's miracle of salvation. They serve, they cry, they pray, and they counsel with this in mind. He sees their service, wipes their tears, hears their prayers, and mercifully empowers their witness.

Conclusion: The famous church father, Augustine, had a godly mother like this. Her name was Monica. Her son prayed this prayer about her in his historic *Confessions*: “[She] wept on my behalf, wept more than most mothers weep when their children die. For she saw that was dead by faith and spirit, which she had from Thee, and Thou heardest her, Lord. Thou heardest her and despised not her tears from pouring down. They watered the earth under her eyes in every place where she prayed. You heard her.”

You may have a godly mom who longs to see that miracle in your life this morning. Trust Christ, and you will receive a wonderful Mothers Day gift—forgiveness and life, full and free. Your godly mom will count it her greatest gift too.

“A man came—I think it was actually in Philadelphia—on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction—the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

—David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

Preachers and Preaching