

## The Human Touch

I was reading this passage and saw a number of reasons why what you are doing is so very important.

Read through the passage taking note of these questions:

1. What happened to the boy Elisha gave the women?
2. Where did the woman go for help?
3. Why did she say all was well to Gehazi, "Everything is all right"?
4. How urgent was Elisha in sending Gehazi off with his staff?
5. Why did not the woman accompany Gehazi? How adamant was she in staying with Elisha?
6. How effective was the use of his staff?
7. What did Elisha have to do to help the boy?

II Ki 4:17-37

But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

The child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers. "My head! My head!" he said to his father. His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother." After the servant had lifted him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died.

She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and went out. She called her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and a donkey so I can go to the man of God quickly and return."

"Why go to him today?" he asked. "It's not the New Moon or the Sabbath."

"It's all right," she said.

She saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Lead on; don't slow down for me unless I tell you." So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When he saw her in the distance, the man of God said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the Shunammite! Run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'"

"Everything is all right," she said.

When she reached the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone! She is in bitter distress, but the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me why."

"Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't raise my hopes'?"

Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face."

But the child's mother said, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So he got up and followed her.

Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the boy's face, but there was no sound or response. So Gehazi went back to meet Elisha and told him, "The boy has not awakened."

When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch.

He went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the LORD. Then he got on the bed and lay upon the boy, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. As he stretched himself out upon him, the boy's body grew warm. Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out upon him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.

Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite." And he did. When she came, he said, "Take your son."

She came in, fell at his feet and bowed to the ground. Then she took her son and went out.

Personal comments:

1. The situation was an urgent one. The boy was dead. Help could not be detained. Your task is urgent as well. People cannot wait to hear the gospel until another day. One Friday I helped Banjong sell his motor bike. After helping him he came to my office to thank me. After a short exchange he noticed I was studying the Bible. He asked if I would teach him God's words. We set a date for the following Tuesday. That Monday a cement truck hit him while he rode his motorcycle home. He left behind a wife 5 months pregnant with their first child. I was honored in their home during the funeral and had opportunity to share Christ with many family members. But Banjong's opportunity was past. I waited a day too long.
2. Elisha sent his staff in his stead with his servant Gehazi. Often we send physical tools and equipment to proclaim the gospel instead of people. Do not underestimate the importance of your physical presence in Thailand. You can not be replaced by a book, pamphlet, radio show, or other useful but impersonal means of communicating the gospel. The Angel that visited Cornelius in Acts 10 could have shared the gospel but it is left for Peter. One person impacting another's life for Christ.
3. What may be the significance of the physical contact between Elisha and the boy? First, the boy is a corpse. You've seen a corpse I am sure. Close your eyes and imagine your hands touching theirs. Your eyes touching theirs. Your mouth touching

theirs. Elisha made physical contact with the boy, an unseemly proposition. You too must come in contact with the Thai people. Not skim the surface but really touch the lives of the people. It will be costly. I am not referring to the types of contact westerners are familiar with, that's in your culture lessons. But I am saying let your hands meet. Work together. Be involved in their lives their way. Let your eyes meet. Do not try to get them to understand you but try to understand them. Try to see the world from the Thai perspective. Even try to see yourself as they might. The Thai does not see many common things you may do, the same way you see them. And try to connect verbally. Mouth to mouth, heart to heart. Eat their foods listen to their stories talk their language even if you have to use bits of Thai with your English.

4. Most importantly from this lesson is persevere in making human contact with people. Do not try it and give up. Pray, walk and touch again, and again. Until the Holy Spirit breaths life into their hearts. If you do so their eyes too "will open".

Praying for you  
George McBride