

February
18, 2017



CHRISTIAN HOME DAY

Homes That Receive and Give Blessings

Objective:

ENCOURAGE ADVENTIST HOUSEHOLDS to have missionary families. Encourage families to have homes that are channels through which the blessings of God flow to other households that do not yet have Christ.

Introduction

The couple always saw him pass by the front of their house, and his figure seemed familiar to them. There was something in his appearance that impressed them mightily. There are times when we see people who have something about them that draws us to them and who exert some type of positive fascination over us. That is what happened with this man. The couple decided to approach him and get to know him better. They weren't sure whether to invite him to their home. After all, you do not take people into your home without first knowing that they will bring blessings. But this man seemed so different that they decided to do so, and they invited him to their home to eat.

Another day he passed by again and once more sat down at the table with them. The now-frequent visits confirmed what they had perceived: he was a very special man. His presence radiated blessings, and it was pleasant to be in his company. They were so happy in his presence that he was no longer a stranger to them; he was now a friend. One day, the wife had a brilliant idea: Why not invite him to live with them? She spoke with her husband, and he agreed.

So the next time the man passed by, they invited him to stay. Now this man not only had a place at the table in the house, but a beautiful bedroom with a comfortable bed as well. He enjoyed the affection and warmth that this home offered him.

One day he thought about how he could reward such gestures. What could he do to bring more happiness to his hosts? It seemed that the family lacked nothing, but he knew that they had no children, so he decided to give them one. He promised to give them a son, but the couple did not believe him. They were already too old to have a family. However, he reiterated the promise. The following year this family received the promised gift, and now they had a child at home.

This story took place in Israel. It is found in 2 Kings 4:8-37. The man who was invited into their home was none other than the prophet Elisha.

These are some of the lessons we can extract from this story:

1. *God wants to be a blessing in our homes.*

Just like Jesus told Zacchaeus, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house" (Luke 19:5), the prophet Elisha liked staying in that house and eating bread. The story that we are studying says, "So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food" (2 Kings 4:8).

**OPENING
HYMN:**
SDA Hymnal,
n° 430:
"Joy By
and By"

**SCRIPTURE
READING:**
2 Kings 4:8-37

CLOSING HYMN:
SDA Hymnal,
n° 652:
"Love
at Home"

SERMON

The apostle John reminds us that Jesus still knocks at the door in hopes of entering. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). God wants to be a blessing to all homes who allow Him to enter. The homes of today need to invite friends in who are a blessing. And God is the first and the best Friend we should invite into our homes. Ellen G. White wrote, "The first work to be done in a Christian home is to see that the Spirit of Christ abides there" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 20).

2. *Families should seek the best for their home.*

It is not enough that God wants to reside in every household; family members must express interest in this occurring. In addition, they must do what is necessary: effort, work, and sacrifices so that this becomes a reality. The biblical account tells us what the owners of the house did, "And she said to her husband, 'Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there'" (2 Kings 4:9, 10).

3. *Homes should be a source of blessings.*

Now the home of this couple from Shunem was the house of this holy prophet of God. They were a source of blessings, because this pilgrim now had food and a comfortable room (2 Kings 4:9-11).

4. *Homes preach without saying a single word.*

The home of this couple must have had something desirable. Apart from the bread and the bedroom, they possessed something that made the prophet visit them frequently. Seventh-day Adventist homes are called to be homes that preach without saying a single word. Some counsels from the Spirit of Prophecy serve as inspiration:

The family speaks in favor of the truth. "The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 304).

The influence of a true home is powerful. "Far more powerful than any sermon that can be preached is the

influence of a true home upon human hearts and lives" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 352).

Each household present here is called to live the experience described in the two previous quotes.

5. *The world needs homes that are a blessing.*

The responsibility of Adventist households is very great. The commitment goes beyond the four walls of the house or the church environment. It has to do with society in general. Ellen G. White says, "Out of the heart are 'the issues of life' (Proverbs 4:23); and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 349).

Adventist households have been called to contribute to the construction of a society and of a better country.

6. *Participate in the "Friendly Families" program.*

Just as the family in Shunem opened their home to give support to the prophet, Adventist households must open their doors to be a blessing to other households who do not know the truth of the gospel.

"If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power. From our homes will flow streams of healing, bringing life and beauty and fruitfulness where now are barrenness and death" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 355).

Family Life and Women's Ministries are promoting a program called "Friendly Families." The objective is for each Adventist family to find a family of nonbelievers and work with them in trying to bring them to Christ. Start by establishing bonds of friendship and camaraderie. Share with them outings, recreational activities, other social activities, and meals to show them in a practical way our lifestyle as Seventh-day Adventists. Once the bonds of friendship have been strengthened, it will be easier to talk to them about the truths of the gospel.

Altar call: Invite families to be part of the chain of blessing that God wants their homes to be, to receive blessings from heaven, and share those blessings with others. This chain should never be broken.

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