

## 2 Kings 8 – Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

1 Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years." 2 So the woman arose and did according to the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and dwelt in the land of the Philistines seven years.

- The chapter begins with Elisha remembering this Shunammite woman from back in chapter four concerning a coming famine.
- It's interesting to note that this seven-year famine was localized only to the land of Israel, and not the land of the Philistines.
- This because, God brought judgment on Israel for not repenting of their Baal worship. Baal was known as the god of weather.

3 It came to pass, at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went to make an appeal to the king for her house and for her land.

- It seems someone took over this woman's home while she was in the land of the Philistines, which is why she goes to the king.
- If you really think about it, she loses here home all because she was obedient in listening to the prophet of God and leaving it.
- The reason I mention this is that sometimes we may have to give up something in our obedience to the call of God on our lives.

Matthew 19:28–30 (NIV) 28 Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first."

4 Then the king talked with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done."

- It's important to note that this is the same Gehazi that was struck with leprosy for going after Naaman in order to get his money.
- The question becomes one of whether or not this conversation between Gehazi and Jehoram took place prior to his leprosy.
- I'm of the belief that it was after Gehazi had leprosy, and that he kept his distance from Jehoram who wanted to get information.

Adam Clarke - "Some think that this conversation might have taken place after Gehazi became leprous; the king having an insatiable curiosity to know the private history of a man who had done such astonishing things: and from whom could he get this information, except from the prophet's own confidential servant?"

5 Now it happened, as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealing to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life." 6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now."

- The world calls this coincidence; God's Word calls this providence, such that this was divinely orchestrated by the hand of God.
- At the risk of sounding to hyper spiritual, this is why we as Christians do not believe in luck, which comes from Lucifer's name.
- Be that as it may, God has clearly gone before this woman in faithfully providing for her by virtue of the king restoring her land.

7 Then Elisha went to Damascus, and Ben-Hadad king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, "The man of God has come here." 8 And the king said to Hazael, "Take a present in your hand, and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, 'Shall I recover from this disease?'" 9 So Hazael went to meet him and took a present with him, of every good thing of Damascus, forty camel-loads; and he came and stood before him, and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I recover from this disease?'" 10 And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'You shall certainly recover.' However the LORD has shown me that he will really die." 11 Then he set his countenance in a stare until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept.

- I find it rather interesting that someone that Ben-Hadad would call upon the prophet of God in this his time of pain and suffering.
- This is usually how it is when it comes to the unbelievers who only seek out the believers when they are on a bed of suffering.
- The problem is we don't know if Ben-Hadad repented, but we do know Hazael didn't, which is evidenced by Elisha's long gaze.

G. Campbell Morgan, "The prophet gazed long and fixedly into the eyes of Hazael. It would seem that he saw far more in the soul of the man than any other had seen, perhaps more than the man himself was conscious of."

- There's something else here that I would like to point out before we move on and it has to do with where we're told Elisha wept.
- The question becomes one of why. Why would Elisha weep when he sees prophetically into the future of the children of Israel?
- I'm of the belief that the more we know about the evil that is coming upon the world yet future, the more sorrow comes with it.

Ecclesiastes 1:18 (NKJV) — 18 For in much wisdom is much grief, And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

F.B. Meyer - "The nearer we live to God, the more we deserve to be known as men and women of God, the more will our tears flow for the slain of the daughters of our people."

G. Campbell Morgan - "His tears were in themselves signs of his understanding of the necessity for those severe judgment which must fall upon the guilty nation; but they were the outcome of his deep love for his people."

12 And Hazael said, "Why is my lord weeping?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you will dash their children, and rip open their women with child." 13 So Hazael said, "But what is your servant—a dog, that he should do this gross thing?" And Elisha answered, "The LORD has shown me that you will become king over Syria."

- I find Hazael's response to Elisha's prophecy rather telling in the sense that he doesn't see himself as being capable of this evil.
- Here again, this is textbook when it comes to most people as well, in that, we don't realize just how capable we are of such evil.
- Replete throughout the pages of holy writ there is scripture after scripture concerning the propensity for evil in the heart of man.

Jeremiah 17:9–10 (NKJV) — 9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

Charles Spurgeon - "Our ignorance of the depravity of our own hearts is a startling fact, Hazael did not believe that he was bad enough to do any of the things here anticipated.... I appeal to you, Christian men and women, if anyone had told you that you would have loved your Savior so little as you have done; if any prophet had told you, in the hour of your conversion, that you would have served him so feebly as you have done, would you have believed it!"

14 Then he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me you would surely recover." 15 But it happened on the next day that he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water, and spread it over his face so that he died; and Hazael reigned in his place.

- What we have here is yet another precise fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy that the king of Syria would die by some other means.
- Namely, an assassination, which would mean Hazael would reign in his place, and ultimately do that which Elisha prophesied.
- That's not to say Elisha's prophecy was self-fulfilling when it came to Hazael carrying it out. He did so because of his evil heart.

Charles Spurgeon - "It was absolutely foretold that Hazael would be king of Syria. The prophet knew the fact right well, and he clearly described the means; else, why should he look into Hazael's face, and weep? God foreknew the mischief that he would do when he came to the throne; yet that foreknowledge did not in the least degree interfere with his free agency."

16 Now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat having been king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah. 17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

- It's important to know this Joram mentioned here is the same as Jehoram, but it's not to be confused with Jehoram in 2 Kings 3.
- While it is somewhat confusing the narrative is sort of picking up the story of the kings from back in the book of 1st Kings 22:50.
- When we get to the books of 1st and 2nd Chronicles, we'll have many of the blanks filled in, as it were, related to all of the kings.

18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. 19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of his servant David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever. 20 In his days Edom revolted against Judah's authority, and made a king over themselves.

- I suppose shouldn't come as any surprise that we read the way of the kings of Israel were just as the house of Ahab had done.
- This because, there were no good kings of Israel, and there were only nine good kings of all the kings and they were in Judah.
- I'm looking forward to doing a teaching in the not too distant future of the good kings of Israel, of which only one finished well.

21 So Joram went to Zair, and all his chariots with him. Then he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; and the troops fled to their tents. 22 Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day. And Libnah revolted at that time. 23 Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 24 So Joram rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that Jehoram had created the very thing he tried to avoid.
- More specifically, in seeking an alliance with Ahab and Jezebel, Jehoram had thought he would become stronger as a result.
- The fact of the matter is, this was in direct disobedience to the commands of God, and as such, it significantly weakened him.

25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. 27 And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab, for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab. 28 Now he went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29 Then King Joram went back to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

- The narrative turns a corner here, going from the northern kingdom to Judah in the south where we find the same evil alliance.
- I think the lesson here becomes quite clear and it's that of the ungodly influence that comes packaged with an ungodly alliance.
- Lest you think this only applies to kings let me hasten to say, this plays out everyday with ungodly marriages and relationships.