

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's open up our bible to 2 Kings 8.

Over the past couple of weeks, in our study through 2 kings, we have been walking alongside the life and the ministry of the prophet Elisha.

And we have studied many of the miracles that God did through Elisha –

And I have tried to show you how these miracles and interactions – all point to Jesus Christ.

But in order to fully understand the work of God here in 2 Kings – we must grasp what was occurring at this time.

Israel had turned their back on God.

Unbelief had invaded the land.

And it started with the leaders – the kings.

They had forgotten the faithfulness of God, the goodness of God and instead, turned to idolatry to worship the pagan gods of prosperity and pleasure.

So the miracles were to remind the people of who God is –

He is the Deliverer

He is the Restorer

He is the Healer

He is the Provider

He is Almighty God

But for the most part – the hearts of the people remained the same.

So what does God do when a nation turns it back on Him, what does God do when a family has turned its back on Him, what does God do when an individual has turned his / her back on Him –

He disciplines them.

He chastens them – like a Father chastens His son.

In order to correct their path.

Let's pray...

[2Ki 8:1-29 NKJV] 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 having an encounter again with the Shunammite woman we saw back in chapter four.

She was the notable woman – who used her prosperity to help out Elisha by providing him a place to stay every time he passed through.

And we remember that Elisha promised her a son – just like Elisha said, she had a son.

The son got sick and died – and the Shunammite woman brings Elisha back – who then brings the son back to life.

And the reason for the encounter is that God is bringing a famine to the land for seven years –

Famine is one resource that God uses to bring discipline to His people.

He did during the times of Elijah – 3.5 years of drought in the land – resulted in famine

We saw famine at the end of Chapter four – where Elisha purifies the pot of stew and feeds the 100 men

And we saw that there was famine in the land in our studies that last two weeks as the Syrian army had surrounded Samaria.

The important thing to remember is that whether the famine is a result from lack of rain or an army besieging the city – God is the One who made it happen – He is the One in complete control.

And He desires correction.

So famine is coming to the land – but notice that Elisha doesn't provide a miracle to sustain the Shunammite woman for the seven years – he doesn't tell her to go collect jars and fill them with oil – like Elisha did to the widow in chapter four.

He doesn't multiply barley loaves in front of her and give her provisions to live by.

He gives her practical instructions and simply tells her – “You need to get out of here and go find a place where there is food”

One of the biggest mistakes we can make as a child of God – is to put God in a box.

To set limits on when and how God is to respond to our circumstances – I talked about this last week of when we offer directive prayers – when we tell God what to do instead of laying it before at His feet.

If we put God in a box – then we will always be expecting a miracle and in the process ignoring any practical direction that He has for us.

And when the miracle doesn't happen – “Why did you abandon me God???”

When in reality, He was giving us a practical solution from the beginning.

So the Shunammite woman listens to Elisha and obeys – she goes to live in a foreign land waiting patiently on the Lord.

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.

So the Shunammite woman returns after seven years – and during these seven years, it appears that squatters may have moved into her house and land or it could be that even the king himself had taken ownership of her property.

So she sets out to go before the king to so that he can restore her land back to her.

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." 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."

So the Shunammite woman comes to the palace and as she walks in – Gehazi is standing before the king telling him what Elisha had done for her and her son.

Her ears must have been burning right! Coincidence??

There is no coincidence with God.

It was God's perfect timing that brought her into the palace at the perfect time.

And as the king had been listening to what Gehazi was saying, he was so moved by what God had done in the life of the Shunammite woman – that he restored everything back to her.

He didn't have to do it – after all, he was the king.

But God gave her favor –

Turn with me to Proverbs 21 –

And I want you to remember this verse.

[Pro 21:1 NKJV] 1 The king's heart [is] in the hand of the LORD, [Like] the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Those in authority over us, whether they are government officials or even our boss at work, their hearts are in God's hand. So we are to pray for them not criticize -

And as we pray for them, God will work in our lives and show us His favor.

Once again, God is sovereign. He is in complete control.

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."

Turn with me to 1 Kings 19

Here in 1 Kings 19, Elijah is on the run from Queen Jezebel.

And it is here that the Lord speaks through Elijah through the still small voice.

And part of the revelation was a to-do list for Elijah.

[1Ki 19:15-16 NKJV] 15 Then the LORD said to him: "Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael [as] king over Syria. 16 "Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi [as] king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint [as] prophet in your place.

So, in this todo list, the scriptures only reveal to us that Elijah only fulfilled the last one – the anointing of the prophet, Elisha.

Therefore in our text, Elisha is going to fulfill one of the other items in the todo list and that is the anointing of Hazael.

So in our text, Ben-Hadad is sick and he gets word that Elisha is in Syria and he sends out Hazael with gifts to find out if he is going to get over his sickness.

Elisha's response – the king is going to recover but he is still going to die.

11 Then he set his countenance in a stare until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept. 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."

Why did Elisha weep?

Because he knew that the anointing of Hazael as king over Syria, it was going to be the beginning of a period of judgment / punishment for Israel.

Because the sons of Ahab and the Kingdom of Israel failed to turn back to God – they rejected grace (prophet Elisha) therefore, they will now face judgment.

We see a parallel of this in the gospel of Luke – when Jesus returns to Jerusalem.

What does He do? He weeps.

Why? Because He knew what they had done to the prophets of the past, He knew what they were going to do to Him and He knew what was going to become of them when the Romans destroyed the city years later.

That is why Elijah couldn't anoint Hazael -

Grace had to be rejected in order for judgment to come.

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.

Hazael goes back to the king – he tells him the good news that he is going to recover.

And then he pretends to be caring for the king and smothers him with the wet cloth.

Back then, there was no forensic science to bring out the truth – Hazael made it appear that the king simply died in his sleep.

And that is how Hazael became king of Syria – just like Elisha had prophesied.

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. 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.

The name Joram and Jehoram are the same name –

King Ahab of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah decided to name two of their sons Jehoram.

So, here both Jehoram's are ruling at the same time.

And although Jehoshaphat was a good king – his son followed the ways of the kings of Israel and did evil in the sight of the Lord.

And one of the catalysts for his behavior was that he marries one of the daughters of Ahab – the wicked king and Jezebel.

He becomes unequally yoked.

He married the unbelieving daughter and she became an influence on him.

And the worship of Baal is introduced to the kingdom of Israel.

2 Chronicles 21:4 tells us that one of the things that Jehoram does is that he kills all of his brothers with the sword as well as others of the princes of Israel.

(2 Co 6:14–16 NKJV) —14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.”

We need to be cautious of making binding relationships with unbelievers.

We might think that we will lead them to the Lord.

But more often than not, they lead us away from the Lord.

This doesn't mean that we cut off all relationships with unbelievers.

We need to have relationships with unbelievers, or else how will they hear about Jesus?

But we need to be careful about putting ourselves into the kind of hard-to-get-out-of relationships, because we will find ourselves having to compromise our walk,.

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. **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?

Even though the actions of Jehoram were evil enough to justify God's judgment upon Judah – God did not destroy it because of the covenant that He had made with King David.

King Jehoram was a total failure –

He was a weak king – not just spiritually but in the way he ruled Judah.

The Edomites – who were under the rule of Judah, they rebel against the king and when Jehoram goes to war against them, all of his men abandon him in the battlefield – that is how weak of a king he was.

But he didn't die there –

2 Chronicles 21:15 tells us that God's judgment comes upon him as he suffers from an intestinal disease that causes his insides to come out.

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. 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.

Ahaziah, is the next king to rule over Judah –

Just like we have two Jehoram's there is also two Ahaziah's (2 Kings 1 – Israel)

Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab that Jehoram (Ahaziah's father) had married.

And we see that Ahaziah also did evil in the sight of the Lord.

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.

Ahaziah, was a weaker king than his father.

He makes an alliance with the king of Israel – Jehoram.

And when Jehoram get injured in battle, he decides to spend some time with him during his recovery –

And this sets the stage for God's judgment in chapter 10 –

Because both of them don't even realize what's coming next.

[Exo 34:5-7 NKJV] 5 Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6 And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing [the guilty], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

God is merciful, God is gracious, He is longsuffering – not willing that anyone should perish –

But because He is holy and just, He cannot simply look away at our sin.

Once grace is rejected, judgment will come.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word

and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

