

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 2 KINGS 8

2 KINGS 8:1-6 - THE SHUNAMMITE'S LAND RESTORED

V. 1-2 - WE ARE REINTRODUCED TO THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN, WHO IN 2 KINGS 4 WAS A BENEFACTOR OF SORTS FOR ELISHA'S MINISTRY, AS WELL AS A RECIPIENT OF GOD'S GRACE AND BLESSING (CHILD GIVEN, CHILD HEALED). IT SEEMS THAT ELISHA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS WOMAN CONTINUES AND HE INFORMS HER OF A FAMINE COMING TO THE LAND AND HOW TO AVOID IT (MOVE AWAY TO PHILISTIA).

V. 3-6 - UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE WOMAN, SHE RETURNS TO ISRAEL AFTER THE FAMINE TO FIND HER HOME AND LAND OVERTAKEN BY SOMEONE ELSE. HER RELATIONSHIP WITH ELISHA HELPS HER GAIN BACK ALL THAT SHE HAD BEFORE SHE LEFT. THE KING NOT ONLY RESTORES THE HOME AND LAND, BUT THE INCOME (PRODUCE) EQUIVALENT TO WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN EARNED DURING HER TIME AWAY.

2 KINGS 8:7-15 - ELISHA TRAVELS TO DAMASCUS. HAZAEL MURDERS BEN-HADAD

V. 7-9 - THE KING OF ARAM (SYRIA) IS SICK AND WANTS TO FIND OUT FROM ELISHA IF HE WILL RECOVER/BE HEALED. THE KING SENDS A VERY LARGE GIFT TO ELISHA TO GET THE ANSWER THROUGH SOME SORT OF SERVANT OR OFFICIAL NAMED HAZAEL (MORE ON HIM IN A MIN)

V. 10-15 - "YOU WILL RECOVER, BUT YOU WILL DIE" - APPARENTLY THE KING WOULD RECOVER FROM HIS SICKNESS, BUT WOULD DIE BY ASSASSINATION. ELISHA MOURNS AS HE TELLS HAZAEL THIS NEWS. WHY? WELL, IT APPEARS THAT HAZAEL WILL BE BEN-HADAD'S SUCCESSOR (BECAUSE HE KILLS HIM, V. 15) AND WILL BE A RUTHLESS AND CRUEL KING. SO WHILE IT PAINS ELISHA TO REPORT THIS, IT IS THE PLAN.

"ELISHA'S REPLY TO HAZAEL WAS AN ENIGMATIC ONE: THE ANSWER TO THE KING'S QUESTION WAS BOTH YES AND NO (V. 10). YES: IF LEFT TO NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF HEALING, THE KING WOULD RECOVER; AND NO, ELISHA WHO WAS AT THAT MOMENT ANOINTING HAZAEL AS KING, KNEW THAT THIS TREACHEROUS MAN WOULD USE THE KING'S ILLNESS TO AFFECT HIS COUP D'ETAT. ACCORDINGLY HAZAEL WOULD TESTIFY TRUTHFULLY TO THE KING. THE ILLNESS WAS NOT A FATAL ONE OF ITSELF." (R.D. PATTERSON AND HERMANN J. AUSTEL, '1 AND 2 KINGS': THE EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE COMMENTARY, VOL. 4, PAGE 200)

2 KINGS 8:16-24 - JEHOAM REIGNS IN JUDAH

BIOGRAPHY: JERHOAM (AKA JORAM V. 21), SON OF JEHOASHAPHAT BECOMES KING DURING THE 15TH YEAR OF JORAM (KING OF ISRAEL WITH SAME/SIMILAR NAME). HE BECAME KING AT AGE 32. REIGNED 8 YEARS AS KING IN JERUSALEM.

HE ALSO WASN'T A GREAT LEADER POLITICALLY/MILITARILY SPEAKING. HIS ARMY DESERTED HIM AND REGIONS THAT WERE UNDER JUDEAN CONTROL DEFECTED.

2 KINGS 8:21-22 (NLT) - SO JEHOAM WENT WITH ALL HIS CHARIOTS TO ATTACK THE TOWN OF ZAIR. THE EDMITES SURROUNDED HIM AND HIS CHARIOT COMMANDERS, BUT HE WENT OUT AT NIGHT AND ATTACKED THEM UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS. BUT JEHOAM'S ARMY DESERTED HIM AND FLED TO THEIR HOMES. 22 SO EDM HAS BEEN INDEPENDENT FROM JUDAH TO THIS DAY. THE TOWN OF LIBNAH ALSO REVOLTED ABOUT THAT SAME TIME.

WE ALSO LEARN THE FOLLOWING FROM THE PARALLEL RECORD IN 2 CHRONICLES:

2 CHRONICLES 21:16-17 (NLT) - THEN THE LORD STIRRED UP THE PHILISTINES AND THE ARABS, WHO LIVED NEAR THE ETHIOPIANS, TO ATTACK JEHOAM. 17 THEY MARCHED AGAINST JUDAH, BROKE DOWN ITS DEFENSES, AND CARRIED AWAY EVERYTHING OF VALUE IN THE ROYAL PALACE, INCLUDING THE KING'S SONS AND HIS WIVES. ONLY HIS YOUNGEST SON, AHASIAH, WAS SPARED.

SPIRITUAL MATTERS: WALKED IN THE WAYS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, MARRIED AHAB'S DAUGHTER, "DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD" (V. 18)

THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF OUR STUDY OF LATE HAS BEEN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL WHICH WAS RULED BY IDOLATROUS KING AFTER IDOLATROUS KING. MEANWHILE THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM (JUDAH) HAD GOOD AND BAD KINGS THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS. THE LAST KING WE HEARD OF IN JUDAH WAS JEHOASHAPATH WHO WAS DESCRIBED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

1 KINGS 22:42-46 - JEHOASHAPATH WAS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN HE BECAME KING, AND HE REIGNED TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN JERUSALEM. AND HIS MOTHER'S NAME WAS AZUBAH THE DAUGHTER OF SHILHI. 43 HE WALKED IN ALL THE WAY OF ASA HIS FATHER; HE DID NOT TURN ASIDE FROM IT, DOING RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. HOWEVER, THE HIGH PLACES WERE NOT TAKEN AWAY; THE PEOPLE STILL SACRIFICED AND BURNT INCENSE ON THE HIGH PLACES. 44 JEHOASHAPATH ALSO MADE PEACE WITH THE KING OF ISRAEL. 45 NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF JEHOASHAPATH, AND HIS MIGHT WHICH HE SHOWED AND HOW HE WARRED, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH? 46 THE REMNANT OF THE SODOMITES WHO REMAINED IN THE DAYS OF HIS FATHER ASA, HE EXPELLED FROM THE LAND.

NOTICE THE PHRASES "HOWEVER" IN VERSE 43. WE SEE IN JEHOASHAPATH A KING WHO DO "RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD" (V. 43) BUT DID NOT ALLOW THIS DEVOTION TO SPREAD FAR ENOUGH IN HIS LIFE AND HIS KINGDOM TO FULLY REMOVE EVIL FROM THE LAND. THE RIGHTEOUS STANDARD OF "GOOD" KINGS DURING THIS PERIOD WERE NOT MEN MARKED WITHOUT FAILINGS OR SINS, BUT A PASSION AND DEVOTION TO THE LORD THAT LED THEM, MOST NOTABLY, TO REMOVE IDOLS FROM THEIR HEARTS, HOME AND LAND.

HERE'S WHERE THIS IS RELEVANT FOR 2 KINGS 8. EACH GENERATION STANDS ON THEIR OWN FAITH. JEHOAM'S IDOLATRY WAS HIS OWN CHOICE AND DECISION. HOWEVER, WHAT THE CURRENT GENERATION MUST RECOGNIZE IS THAT THE CHOICES AND DECISIONS WE MAKE (OR DON'T MAKE), THE PATH WE WALK ON (OR DON'T TAKE) DOES INFLUENCE THE NEXT GENERATION. WE LEAVE BEHIND A STANDARD TO FOLLOW OF WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE, WHAT IS ALLOWABLE, WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG. THE NEXT GENERATION MUST LEARN FOR THEMSELVES BUT, THEY WILL LOOK TO THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE THEM, FOR BETTER OR WORSE.

JEHOASHAPATH LEFT IDOLS IN THE LAND. GRANTED, THEY WEREN'T IN HIS HOUSE OR HIS HEART. BUT THEY WERE IN PLACES THAT HE HAD CONTROL OVER AND LEFT THEM UNCHECKED. AND JEHOASHAPATH MADE PEACE WITH THE KING OF ISRAEL (AHAB AT THE TIME). AND SO HIS SON, JEHOAM SAW WHAT HIS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS DID FOR WORSHIP AND HIS HEART WALKED FULLY DOWN THAT ROAD. AND JEHOAM HUNG OUT WITH ROYAL "COUSINS" AND COMPANIONS FROM ISRAEL WHO NEVER WORSHIPPED YAHWEH. WHEN IT WAS TIME FOR HIM TO MARRY, HE MARRIED AHAB'S DAUGHTER, WHAT WAS JEZEBEL'S DAUGHTER. AND SO WHEN IT WAS HIS TIME TO MAKE HIS PERSONAL AND NATIONAL CHOICE...HE CHOSE THE IDOLS.

IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE SMALL THINGS WE OVERLOOK AND LEAVE UNDONE IN OUR LIVES MATTER THAT MUCH. BUT EVEN A SMALL STONE THROWN INTO A POND STILL CAUSES RIPPLE EFFECTS. WHAT KIND OF RIPPLE EFFECTS ARE WE CAUSING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION IN OUR LIVES?

V. 19 - THAT BEING SAID, GOD HAS SOMETHING AT WORK WHICH ENDURES BEYOND THE FOOLISHNESS AND CHOICES OF THE CURRENT (OR EVEN NEXT) GENERATION. HIS COVENANT TO DAVID. THROUGH THE UPS AND DOWNS OF FAITHFUL AND UNFAITHFUL KINGS, GOD WAS (AND IS) STILL COMMITTED TO BRING ABOUT HIS ULTIMATE WILL AND PURPOSE THROUGH THE ETERNAL AND ENDURING DAVID-LIKE KING WHO WILL RULE OVER THE NATIONS (CP. 2 SAMUEL 7:12-15, ETC). FOR THOSE FEW FAITHFUL WORSHIPPERS LOOKING AT THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF THEIR TIME IN

JERHARAM'S DAY, THEY LOOKED AT THE DIM, BUT LIT FLAME OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT. "THE MESSIAH WILL COME, THE MESSIAH WILL COME" WOULD HAVE BEEN THEIR REFRAIN. FOR THOSE FEW WORSHIPPERS LOOKING AT THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF OUR DAY, WE LOOK AT THE LIT FLAME OF THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AND PRAY AND CRY FOR THE MESSIAH TO COME.

2 PETER 3:9-15 - THE LORD IS NOT SLOW ABOUT HIS PROMISE, AS SOME COUNT SLOWNESS, BUT IS PATIENT TOWARD YOU, NOT WISHING FOR ANY TO PERISH BUT FOR ALL TO COME TO REPENTANCE. 10 BUT THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME LIKE A THIEF, IN WHICH THE HEAVENS WILL PASS AWAY WITH A ROAR AND THE ELEMENTS WILL BE DESTROYED WITH INTENSE HEAT, AND THE EARTH AND ITS WORKS WILL BE BURNED UP. 11 SINCE ALL THESE THINGS ARE TO BE DESTROYED IN THIS WAY, WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE OUGHT YOU TO BE IN HOLY CONDUCT AND GODLINESS, 12 LOOKING FOR AND HASTENING THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD, BECAUSE OF WHICH THE HEAVENS WILL BE DESTROYED BY BURNING, AND THE ELEMENTS WILL MELT WITH INTENSE HEAT! 13 BUT ACCORDING TO HIS PROMISE WE ARE LOOKING FOR NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, IN WHICH RIGHTEOUSNESS DWELLS. 14 THEREFORE, BELOVED, SINCE YOU LOOK FOR THESE THINGS, BE DILIGENT TO BE FOUND BY HIM IN PEACE, SPOTLESS AND BLAMELESS, 15 AND REGARD THE PATIENCE OF OUR LORD AS SALVATION:

HEBREWS 10:37 (ESV) - FOR, "YET A LITTLE WHILE, AND THE COMING ONE WILL COME AND WILL NOT DELAY:

AT LAST, JEHORAM DIES, AS 2 CHRONICLES 21:

2 CHRONICLES 21:18-20 (NLT) - AFTER ALL THIS, THE LORD STRUCK JEHORAM WITH THE SEVERE INTESTINAL DISEASE. 19 THE DISEASE GREW WORSE AND WORSE, AND AT THE END OF TWO YEARS IT CAUSED HIS BOWELS TO COME OUT, AND HE DIED IN AGONY. HIS PEOPLE DID NOT BUILD A GREAT FUNERAL FIRE TO HONOR HIM AS THEY HAD DONE FOR HIS ANCESTORS. 20 JEHORAM WAS THIRTY-TWO YEARS OLD WHEN HE BECAME KING, AND HE REIGNED IN JERUSALEM EIGHT YEARS. NO ONE WAS SORRY WHEN HE DIED. THEY BURIED HIM IN THE CITY OF DAVID, BUT NOT IN THE ROYAL CEMETERY.

2 KINGS 8:25-29 - AHAZIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH

BIOGRAPHY: SON OF JERHARAM, BECAME KING DURING 12TH YEAR OF JORAM OF ISRAEL'S REIGN. 22 YEARS OLD WHEN HE BECAME KING AND REIGNED FOR 1 YEAR. PROMINENT MOTHER NAMED ATHALIAH (MORE ON HER LATER IN 2 KINGS), WHO WAS THE GRANDDAUGHTER OF OMRI, KING OF ISRAEL (THE EVIL KING AHAB'S FATHER). HE WAS "SON IN LAW" OF THE HOUSE OF AHAB (REMEMBER HIS DAD JEHORAM MARRIED AHAB'S DAUGHTER).

SPIRITUAL MATTERS: WALKED IN THE WAYS OF AHAB (KING OF ISRAEL), DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.

WE WILL LEARN OF THE SHORT REIGN AND FATE OF AHAZIAH, KING OF JUDAH IN THE CHAPTERS TO COME. FOR NOW, WE LEAVE OUR STORY WITH THE HOUSE OF OMRI/AHAB RULING ON THE THRONE OF BOTH KINGDOMS. IDOLS FILL THE LAND, EVIL KINGS REIGN, YAHWEH'S HOUSE IGNORED...BUT EVERYTHING IS ABOUT TO CHANGE. JUST BECAUSE THE TRUE GOD IS IGNORED IN THE NATION DOES NOT MEAN HE IS NOT AT WORK.

AHAZIAH THINKS HE IS TRAVELING TO JEZREEL TO SEE HIS WOUNDED COUSIN KING. THEY BOTH THINK THEY ARE IN CHARGE. BUT IN FACT, AHAZIAH IS WALKING INTO THE DIVINELY ORDERED AND SOVEREIGNLY PLANNED DAY OF DECISION. AND THE LORD IS THE REAL KING. WE MUST READ ON - BECAUSE 'YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET.'