**A SHEPHERD OF THE NATIONS**

2 Kings 8:1-29

Key Verse 11

“He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed. Then the man of God began to weep.”

**Introduction**

 Although today’s passage is a long passage with several stories, the word “restore” may stick out to us. The meaning of “to restore” is **to bring back, return, and recover**, put back in order, and to adjust back together. The mercy and grace of God is what motivated Jesus to go to the cross, shed His blood, and rise again. It is through the cross and the resurrection that our restoration is possible. John 1:9-13 reads, “The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.” Praise Jesus who restored us as God’s children. May the Lord help us to participate in the same work of restoration for His glory.

1. Read verses 1-6. What did Elisha say to the Shunammite woman? (1) What problem did she have with the king as she came back to her hometown despite her obedience? (2-3) How did the king help her? (4-6)

1-1, Read verses 1-6.

Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, “Go away with your family and stay for a while wherever you can, because the Lord has decreed a famine in the land that will last seven years.” 2 The woman proceeded to do as the man of God said. She and her family went away and stayed in the land of the Philistines seven years.

3 At the end of the seven years she came back from the land of the Philistines and went to appeal to the king for her house and land. 4 The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, and had said, “Tell me about all the great things Elisha has done.” 5 Just as Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, the woman whose son Elisha had brought back to life came to appeal to the king for her house and land.

Gehazi said, “This is the woman, my lord the king, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life.” 6 The king asked the woman about it, and she told him.

Then he assigned an official to her case and said to him, “Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now.”

1-2, What did Elisha say to the Shunammite woman? (1)

***Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, “Go away with your family and stay for a while wherever you can, because the Lord has decreed a famine in the land that will last seven years.”***

* In chap 4, she had asked her husband to build a room on their roof for Elisha to stay in whenever he and his servant Gehazi came to town.
* She offered this out of her own free will and wanted to be a blessing to the man of God. Because of her kindness Elisha wanted to bless her.
* So she was blessed with a baby boy. Later her son became sick and died. She ran to get Elisha and her boy’s life was restored.
* Today’s passage started with this story as a kind reminder. In verse one, she finds out from Elisha that a terrible famine is coming.
* How nice it would be to know about disasters or economic downturn before they happen. That way we could avoid them.
* Most of the time people are caught unaware and unprepared when a disaster occurs and they have little or no time to prepare.
* We may wonder the reason why Elisha did not tell everyone about the coming famine? God wanted to let the people of Israel repent and to turn from their evil.
* Therefore God has determined to get their attention through this famine. God does not delight in punishment, but he won’t ignore wickedness forever.
* God is patient, but at some point his patience runs out and he punishes in the hopes to humble people and to turn their hearts back to him.
* However, the upcoming famine was revealed to the woman through Elisha because she was willing to serve God and His servants.
* So she was qualified to know it in advance. She was also blessed with the personal direction about what she should do during that time period.
* “The Lord decreed” indicates that the Lord God issued an absolute command over nature to begin a famine. Why? It was not based on His random feeling, but on His covenant in Deuteronomy 28.

1-3, What problem did she have with the king as she came back to her hometown despite her obedience? (2-3)

***2 The woman proceeded to do as the man of God said. She and her family went away and stayed in the land of the Philistines seven years.***

***3 At the end of the seven years she came back from the land of the Philistines and went to appeal to the king for her house and land.***

* She accepts Elisha’s direction instead of ignoring it. She was wealthy and yet she abandoned her house with a risk to be forfeited to the king.
* She might have reasoned that she would be ok due to her well to do condition. But she put her faith in God and His leading.
* So they went next door to the land of the philistines. She would undoubtedly experience hardships, being in foreign land with a different language.
* Seven years is a long time to dwell in a land that was the land of enemies and idol worshippers. It was amazing faith. Our faith is to be based on the word of God!
* It is also quite interesting to take note of the fact that the famine seems only to affect Israel and not the neighboring countries. God’s hand was in it!
* When she returns from her journey, her greatest fears have come true, her property is occupied. She made the appeal to the king.
* This would be uncommon in a male dominated society and her husband must have died. Now she is the head of the household and deals with this problem.
* She doesn’t have a husband to rely upon, she has to take care of it herself. She had to have courage to approach the king.

1-4, How did the king help her? (4-6)

 ***The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, and had said, “Tell me about all the great things Elisha has done.” 5 Just as Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, the woman whose son Elisha had brought back to life came to appeal to the king for her house and land.***

***Gehazi said, “This is the woman, my lord the king, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life.” 6 The king asked the woman about it, and she told him.***

***Then he assigned an official to her case and said to him, “Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now.”***

* It is very interesting to see that Gehazi was in the palace. Thanks to his comment, the king has an official assigned to her case.
* This shows that they have the consulting staff to handle these types of problems. And not only was she given all her property back, but she was even compensated for all the income she lost during the famine.
* Her situation was completely restored. She was even given all she could have earned in one lump sum.
* She was at the mercy of the king. It’s his kingdom, he is in charge and he has the authority to do what he wants. This is a glimpse of God and his kingdom.
* Ultimately we are at the mercy of God. Romans 9:15-16 reads, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”
* Just like this woman was at the king's mercy, we are at God’s mercy. When she went to the king, she was restored as well as blessed with so much more.
* And this is true with God as well. God always restores beyond what we deserve, it just may not be what we expect.
1. Read verses 7-15. Why did Ben-Hadad send Hazael to meet the man of God, Elisha? (7-9) Why did Elisha say that the king would recover, even though he knew he would die? (10-13) How did Ben-Hadad die? (14-15) What does this show about our Lord God? (10:32-33, 13:3-7)

2-1, Read verses 7-15.

7 Elisha went to Damascus, and Ben-Hadad king of Aram was ill. When the king was told, “The man of God has come all the way up here,” 8 he said to Hazael, “Take a gift with you and go to meet the man of God. Consult the Lord through him; ask him, ‘Will I recover from this illness?’”

9 Hazael went to meet Elisha, taking with him as a gift forty camel-loads of all the finest wares of Damascus. He went in and stood before him, and said, “Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to ask, ‘Will I recover from this illness?’”

10 Elisha answered, “Go and say to him, ‘You will certainly recover.’ Nevertheless,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9738a)] the Lordhas revealed to me that he will in fact die.” 11 He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed. Then the man of God began to weep.

12 “Why is my lord weeping?” asked Hazael.

“Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites,” he answered. “You will set fire to their fortified places, kill their young men with the sword, dash their little children to the ground, and rip open their pregnant women.”

13 Hazael said, “How could your servant, a mere dog, accomplish such a feat?”

“The Lord has shown me that you will become king of Aram,” answered Elisha.

14 Then Hazael left Elisha and returned to his master. When Ben-Hadad asked, “What did Elisha say to you?” Hazael replied, “He told me that you would certainly recover.” 15 But the next day he took a thick cloth, soaked it in water and spread it over the king’s face, so that he died. Then Hazael succeeded him as king.

2-2, Why did Ben-Hadad send Hazael to meet the man of God, Elisha? (7-9)

***7 Elisha went to Damascus, and Ben-Hadad king of Aram was ill. When the king was told, “The man of God has come all the way up here,” 8 he said to Hazael, “Take a gift with you and go to meet the man of God. Consult the Lord through him; ask him, ‘Will I recover from this illness?’”***

***9 Hazael went to meet Elisha, taking with him as a gift forty camel-loads of all the finest wares of Damascus. He went in and stood before him, and said, “Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to ask, ‘Will I recover from this illness?’”***

* Ben Hadad might have been reminded of how Elisha healed Naaman and did the same thing and sent Hazael with many gifts to consult the Lord through him.
* He cannot buy God’s mercy. He doesn’t need his money. God will always speak the truth, even if it’s something people don’t like to hear.

2-3, Why did Elisha say that the king would recover, even though he knew he would die? (10-13)

 ***Elisha answered, “Go and say to him, ‘You will certainly recover.’ Nevertheless,[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9738a)***] the Lord Has revealed to me that he will in fact die.” 11 He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed. Then the man of God began to weep.***

***12 “Why is my lord weeping?” asked Hazael.***

***“Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites,” he answered. “You will set fire to their fortified places, kill their young men with the sword, dash their little children to the ground, and rip open their pregnant women.”***

***13 Hazael said, “How could your servant, a mere dog, accomplish such a feat?”***

***“The Lord has shown me that you will become king of Aram,” answered Elisha.***

* Elisha has just revealed the secret heart of Hazael. Elisha is in effect saying, with irony, “Go ahead and say what you were planning on saying to him, but I know you are planning to kill him.”
* Hazael was embarrassed when Elisha stared at him. Then the man of God began to weep. This was a convicting stare.
* Hazael was embarrassed because his secret was exposed. Hazael did not share his plan with Elisha, and he probably had no intention. God knows(Omniscience).

2-4, How did Ben-Hadad die? (14-15)

***14 Then Hazael left Elisha and returned to his master. When Ben-Hadad asked, “What did Elisha say to you?” Hazael replied, “He told me that you would certainly recover.” 15 But the next day he took a thick cloth, soaked it in water and spread it over the king’s face, so that he died. Then Hazael succeeded him as king.***

* Hazael only told Ben-Hadad the half truth. He did not give the whole story to him. Elisha also told Hazael that Ben-Hadad would in fact die, but Hazael conveniently hid this revelation from his master.
* This means that Elisha told the truth, but Hazael is the liar. He deceived Ben-Hadad, and lulled him into a false sense of security.
* The next day he took a thick cloth, soaked it in water and spread it over the king’s face, so that he died.

2-5, What does this show about our Lord God? (10:32-33, 13:3-7)

***In those days the Lord began to reduce the size of Israel. Hazael overpowered the Israelites throughout their territory 33 east of the Jordan in all the land of Gilead (the region of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh), from Aroer by the Arnon Gorge through Gilead to Bashan. (10:32-33)***

***So the Lord’s anger burned against Israel, and for a long time he kept them under the power of Hazael king of Aram and Ben-Hadad his son. Then Jehoahaz sought the Lord’s favor, and the Lord listened to him, for he saw how severely the king of Aram was oppressing Israel. 5 The Lord provided a deliverer for Israel, and they escaped from the power of Aram. So the Israelites lived in their own homes as they had before. 6 But they did not turn away from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, which he had caused Israel to commit; they continued in them. Also, the Asherah pole[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+13&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9878a)***] remained standing in Samaria. 7 Nothing had been left of the army of Jehoahaz except fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand foot soldiers, for the king of Aram had destroyed the rest and made them like the dust at threshing time. (13:3-7)***

* It might seem like a coincidence that Elisha has come up to Damascus at this time, and a coincidence that he met Hazael at this time.
* But none of this was random, this was all set by God. Before even Elisha was called to serve, God told Elijah what he would do.
* 1 Kings 19:15 says, “The Lord said to him, ‘Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.”
* Now according to His words, the Lord was raising up Hazael to be an instrument of judgment against Israel, who were putting to death the prophets of God.
* Elisha may have come to Damascus to fulfill the task given to Elisha, and to anoint Hazael king over Aram.
* He definitely came to prophecy, to predict the death of Ben-Hadad and the judgment over Israel.
* These predictions confirm again that the God of Elisha, the God of Israel, is the true God who has power over all people and all nations.
1. Read verses 16-29. Why did Jehoram walk in the ways of Ahab, the king of Israel? (16-18) Why was the LORD not willing to destroy Judah? (19) Which nations rebelled against Judah? (20-24) What caused Ahaziah to become an evil king? (25-29)

3-1, Read verses 16-29.

16 In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah. 17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. 18 He followed the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord. 19 Nevertheless, for the sake of his servant David, the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah. He had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever.

20 In the time of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against Judah and set up its own king. 21 So Jehoram[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9749b)] went to Zair with all his chariots. The Edomites surrounded him and his chariot commanders, but he rose up and broke through by night; his army, however, fled back home.22 To this day Edom has been in rebellion against Judah. Libnah revolted at the same time.

23 As for the other events of Jehoram’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? 24 Jehoram rested with his ancestors and was buried with them in the City of David. And Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king.

### Ahaziah King of Judah

25 In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother’s name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri King of Israel. 27 He followed the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as the house of Ahab had done, for he was related by marriage to Ahab’s family.

28 Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram; 29 so King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramoth[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9757c)] in his battle with Hazaelking of Aram.

3-2, Why did Jehoram walk in the ways of Ahab, the king of Israel? (16-18)

 ***In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah. 17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. 18 He followed the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord.***

* The author of this book now comes back to the next king of Judah, and explains how Israel has influenced Judah.
* Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah. He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.
* He followed the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord.
* Political peace was established by the marriage between Jehoshaphat’s son and Ahab’s daughter, but that marriage resulted in the corruption of Judah.
* It was Ahab’s wife, Jezebel, that brought Baal worship into the kingdom of Israel. Now Ahab’s daughter, Athaliah brought Baal worship into the kingdom of Judah.
* Jehoram killed all his brothers and established Baal worship, and led the people of Judah to commit idolatry. (2 Chronicles 21:4)

3-3, Why was the LORD not willing to destroy Judah? (19)

 ***Nevertheless, for the sake of his servant David, the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah. He had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever.***

* It was for the sake of his servant David. For David’s sake God had mercy. Not for his own sake, but for David’s sake.
* God remembered his promise to David that through him, he would establish his kingdom forever.
* This promise cannot be fulfilled if he purges all of David’s descendants. That is what he should do, but for David’s sake he was not willing to destroy Judah.
* God promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever. Forever. This is something no human can ever do or accomplish.
* But God made this promise, he kept it, and he fulfilled it. God kept the light on in David’s dynasty. David’s dynasty still stands today.
* Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Son of David, and he has succeeded David to become king.
* Jesus Christ is God come into the flesh, he came to die on the cross for our sins, and he rose again from the dead, never to die again.
* Jesus lives, he lives today, and he lives forever – therefore he is the fulfillment of God’s promise to establish the throne of David forever.

3-4, Which nations rebelled against Judah? (20-24)

***20 In the time of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against Judah and set up its own king. 21 So Jehoram went to Zair with all his chariots. The Edomites surrounded him and his chariot commanders, but he rose up and broke through by night; his army, however, fled back home. 22 To this day Edom has been in rebellion against Judah. Libnah revolted at the same time.***

***23 As for the other events of Jehoram’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? 24 Jehoram rested with his ancestors and was buried with them in the City of David. And Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king.***

* Although he did not purge David’s descendants, he still dealt with the wicked kings. In the time of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against Judah.
* Edom had been paying tribute to Judah since the time of King Solomon, and a governor from Judah ruled over there. Now we see that Edom set up its own king, the nation wanted to establish its independence, and rebelled against Judah.
* Jehoram brought an army, but they surrounded him and had him trapped. He had to attack by night in order to escape, and he succeeded, breaking through, but the battle was considered a defeat, and all of his army fled.
* Because of idolatry, Judah was weakened to the point they could not stand up against Edom.
* The city of Libnah revolted at the same time. Libnah was a city that belonged to the Levites, the ordained priests of Judah.
* They may have revolted because of the idolatry that was brought in. As for Jehoram, because he introduced Baal worship into Judah, God would afflict him with a disease of the bowels.
* In his last 2 years, the disease took effect, and at the end of that second year, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great pain. He was not honored by the people of Judah after his death, and he was not buried with his fathers in the royal tombs.

3-5, What caused Ahaziah to become an evil king? (25-29)

***25 In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother’s name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri King of Israel. 27 He followed the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as the house of Ahab had done, for he was related by marriage to Ahab’s family.***

* Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king, but he too followed in the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the eyes of the Lord. His mother was Athaliah.
* Though his father brought Baal worship into Judah, he allowed it to continue. Perhaps he was also influenced by his mother, just as his father was.

***28 Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram; 29 so King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramoth[***[***c***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9757c)***] in his battle with Hazael, king of Aram.***

* Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram.
* Ramoth Gilead was an important city to both Israel and Aram. Ahab was unable to take it back from Ben-Hadad, but now that there’s a new king, Hazael, Joram may have thought that he could attack and try to take the city back.
* Ahaziah joined him, so again Israel and Judah fought side by side, and it seems that this time, they were able to retake the city, but not without cost. Joram was wounded in battle, and had to retire to Jezreel to recover.
* We have seen the darkness come over Israel when Baal worship was introduced. Not very long afterwards there were hundreds of prophets of Baal who did not know what they were doing.

**Conclusion**

 Thank God! Jesus Christ, the eternal king, is the Son of God and the Son of David. Christ died to pay the price for our sins. He came down from heaven to be with us and he revealed to us who he is. Through his life, he brought healing and restoration. And in the greatest act of love, he laid down his life for us so that through his death and resurrection, he could give us hope of eternal union with him, an eternal love relationship full of everlasting joy. Jesus is the promised Son of David who is everlasting and eternal.We will be restored fully in and through Jesus and His blood sacrifice. Praise Jesus!

**One word: Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah!**