

IF THE LORD SHOULD MAKE WINDOWS IN HEAVEN

2 KINGS 7:1 – 8:29

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~ The Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ are not welcome any longer in contemporary American public society. Our government, schools, universities, public gatherings, marketplace, many homes – and even the liberal church simply wish for any and all mention of Scripturally centered truth and wisdom be wiped from their thought of remembrance. Religion is tolerated – with the exception for insisting on the inerrant laws and precepts of the True and Living God according to Holy Writ. They acknowledge God; but only as a form of a mysterious and undefined higher being who may or may not be in control of the world. Their concept of Jesus is an errand boy that sometimes comes through as promised – sometimes not.

The cheap philosophy of contemporary society is “me-ism” and “what-about-ism;” and both are cocktails of spiritual death the church has labeled “the Christian life.” It’s beyond tragic. It has led to *almost* total apostasy. The emphasis in modern culture is on “self” and how “I” can overcome being the victim of other people’s deception, incompetence, fraud, hate, love-gone-cold, and other weaknesses of the flesh. Everyone wants to be a victim. But that which God calls sin has been re-engineered to simply mean faults, flaws and mistakes. People simply cannot – and will not – believe God when he says they are sinners who need a Savior.

Self comes first and foremost in this modern day of “Christian living.” Most so-called Christians are cosmetically enhanced zombies who are the finished products of a liberal church system of easy, cheap believism. All that is important to them is how they can have a better marriage, live in a bigger house in a gated community, drive a foreign luxury car, belong to all the right clubs and organizations, receive the best service, eat the best foods, wear the latest clothes, exercise properly, have beautiful and smart children, find a better job, earn more money, eliminate all offensive odors and remove any hurdle that prevents them from reaching their best life ever. They trust their own abilities through exploiting their highest

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potential and by ignoring anything that even remotely threatens their self-importance and self-esteem. What they deem to be deep spiritual matters are really just a surface, presumptive and superficial religious imagination gone wild. That was Israel's condition at the time in which we are studying; and God gave Elisha a message to give to His chosen people. It wasn't nice.

What the church erroneously calls "Bible teaching" is nothing but entertainment and refreshments anymore. In our churches, no one is getting saved; because getting saved has somehow gone out of style in religion. Sometimes, a decision is allegedly made for God, but typically only produces a hypocrite who sits in a pew doing what the rest of the hypocrites are doing for Christ – which is absolutely nothing! Philippians chapter two verse three has been cut out of most people's Bible; never to be pasted in their literature again. Paul said, "... *let nothing be done through pride....*" But no one is esteeming others better than themselves – don't kid yourselves. That one verse alone is a pin in the balloon of the self-esteem crowd.

Modern religion and that which is labeled Christianity today have literally everything pertaining to Christ convoluted, adulterated – and just plain wrong. The church has the teachings of the Bible *SO* backwards, they don't even know where the front is anymore. Their horse is not before their cart; their horse is *IN* their cart. That's why they're going nowhere. It's no wonder the world laughs at Christianity and dismisses the believer as a fruit cake. Philippians chapter two verse four is totally dismissed and ignored wholesale in the Christian community.

Contemporary society is seeing a world of foreign nations beginning to come together. We all speak many different languages and have very different lifestyles; but what we have in common is that we honestly desire to further the proper, correct and complete teaching of the Gospel according to the Word of God so we can reach our lost and dying world. While we make ourselves comfortable and cozy claiming blessings in our local American church, we have forgotten those who are suffering for Christ; except to see a snapshot or two from their lives on the misinformation capital of the world – the internet.

Well, our commission from the Lord Jesus never mentions finding a comfortable, agreeable place to hang out. The American motto today is: *'let's unite and feel great about ourselves'* – presumably so we can make the rest of the world feel good about themselves. The intention is admirable; but our theories and philosophies are straight from the pit of hell – the same pit most of those people will spend their eternity in – because the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Some of them profess a belief in the Bible but deny hell exists. We have some abject fools and simple-minded dolts running around with a sword in their hands today. They know just enough to be thoroughly dangerous. You might want to make a note, friends.

Do you feel good about yourself today, friends? Does the world outside mean anything to you besides an opportunity to criticize what is happening *'over there'*? Does your church support the man who believes God and who actually teaches sound doctrine? I'll bet the man who teaches you the Gospel correctly won't even get a thank you today. May I say that a scandal riddled church and personal life is no match for the fiery darts of the devil – I don't care how much you claim defeat over Satan and all that garbage, my beloved readers. I don't see many with the whole armor of God on anymore – let's keep this real. The average church is a spiritual nudist colony performing spiritual pornography on its stage every time they open the door. Well, even so, by God's grace, we still have a marvelous and gracious opportunity today to fulfill our apostolic commission.

With that reiteration of several previously examined truths, we arrive at the seventh chapter of second Kings. I hope you have your Bible open, have prayed for wisdom, judgment and discernment, and have read this section of Scripture before you read this report. This is one of the most unusual incidents in the life of Elisha. In our previous report, we left Israel in the middle of a severe famine. Can you imagine eating an asses head? If so, how about boiling your son and eating him? It's repulsive. The price of something as disgusting as an ass's head, in the inflation of the economy in Israel in the days in which we are studying, probably made most people unable to afford one anyways. That's what the rich man ate. The poor ate dirt – or family. A famine is always physical evidence in the Bible of the judgment of God upon His people. These types of judgment are always

warnings that come from the Lord. This is a serious, severe, terrible and awful period in history we are considering in this section of the Bible. So, with that background, Elisha makes a remarkable prophecy....

VII

1 Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.

~ I have seen many exchange rates given for a shekel, and I don't think we know how much one was worth; suffice it to say Elijah was predicting the Israeli recession was over, and their crippling famine would virtually disappear overnight. Typically, a famine would end by planting a crop. A few months later, they would reap a harvest. Well, Elisha narrowed that way down when he said "tomorrow" the famine would end. So, you can understand most people thought Elijah had lost his mind. A mis-prophecy on this would mean certain death by stoning; and no one believed it....

2 Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

3 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

~ Most people do absolutely nothing for the cause of Christ. The average Christian refuses to do *anything* to help me get the Word of God out to this world. I know many safari readers are capable of supporting this ministry, but don't lift a finger to help me. It's utterly amazing how people can sit on the sidelines and take such a passive approach to other ministries. I'll be honest with you, because I always am honest with you dear readers: it disturbs me and gives me no motivation to continue this soi-called safari. Well, these men figure they're going to die anyways, so they decide to surrender to the enemy....

4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

~ Most fundamental conservative Bible scholars estimate there were probably one hundred thousand Syrians in this camp. Personally, I believe there were *many* more than that. Likely, a million were camped around because they were poised to take Israel wholesale. Well, the Syrians were made to go into a panic by God Himself; and God only did this because of Elisha's prophesy - and because of His word - given by just one man! The Syrians were spooked into believing this was the end for them; and the enemy had snuck up on them in the middle of the night. So, they abandoned camp....

6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it.

9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

~ There is a tremendous spiritual lesson in this passage. Today, we are enjoying the Word of God on safari – at least, I trust you are enjoying reading these reports – and, from my end, there is nothing I would rather do than teach the Bible. I enjoy writing these reports and I love to go through the Bible over and over and over again. That means today is a day of good tidings for both of us – but – what about other people? What about continuing this ministry? Does it matter to ANYONE? I am deeply suspicious of people who say they love the Lord but aren't interested in the Bible being taught properly, correctly and completely to the entire world.

Not everyone can teach and not everyone can speak for God – and *MOST* cannot sing, to be sure – but those people can usually earn money. Supporting the man who believes God and teaches sound doctrine is a spiritual gift. I don't understand why everyone thinks they have a "gift" of speaking in tongues and healing and prophecy – but *NO ONE* seems to have the gift of giving. I hope some of you will think about this and pray about it, too. God wants you to take part in helping to get His Word out, my beloved...

10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

12 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.

13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even

as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed) and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.

17 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

18 And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

VIII

1 Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

~ Well, the times of plenty didn't last very long. Another famine has been announced because judgment is upon the northern kingdom. I think God gave Israel a temporary reprieve in the last chapter for Elisha's sake – and *NO OTHER REASON*. The king of Israel wanted to kill Elisha for the last famine but, in this chapter, the king is going to ask to hear about all the great things Elisha had done. This king knows Elisha is a man of God now – but the king still didn't like it; and it didn't make one bit of difference in his heart! He was still a very bad king. I think he only restored this woman's property because she was associated with Elisha, and he didn't want *another* famine pronounced....

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

4 And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried 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 unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.

~ The movement, action and excitement in Elisha's life just never seemed to stop; and here we have another remarkable incident. Benhadad knew his life likely hung in the hands of this prophet. We were introduced to Hazael back in first Kings in chapter nineteen, when God told Elisha to go anoint him king over Syria, you may recall. See, God is the God of ALL nations, friends. This is the first time we have seen the Lord get involved in the rule of other nations – but it has been this way forever.

So, the Lord has already decreed Hazael is to follow Benhadad to the throne. Hazael is just hanging around now until old man Benhadad drops dead. One of the big problems in the days we are studying is that, as a king, your successor – be it your son or friend – wasn't likely to shed very many tears for you when you are on your death bed. I'm not sure how much enthusiasm Hazael could muster up when taking this gift to Elisha – but he found some!

Well, Benhadad wants to hear he would recover – and Elisha tells Hazael to tell Benhadad that he would recover from the illness – but Elisha knew Benhadad was really going to die. Hazael must have had a smirk on his face as he went back and lied to Benhadad in the name of the prophet of God. Elisha didn't think it was quite so funny because Elisha knows what Hazael is going to do to Israel. And Elisha knew Hazael was already a liar. Elisha loved his people, and he loved the office of prophet God had given him; announcing that Benhadad was going to die broke his heart....

8 And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover.

15 And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

~ Scripture becomes almost hopelessly confusing at this point unless we have the chart of the kings of Israel and Judah below – and unless we use that chart to follow along, it can be quite difficult to understand the history of the kings from here. We have overlapping histories of Israel going forward. Joram – or Jehoram – has married the daughter of Ahab, as we have already alluded to in previous reports. This is why God doesn't approve of mixed marriages between a believer and an unbeliever. Here, we begin to document Israel on their downward slide from being a great nation to being a nation in captivity. Libnah revolts against them and is successful in their rebellion. We read about the death of Jehoram as we read on, and we see Ahaziah take the throne of Judah. It is only a matter of a brief period of time from here before Israel – the northern kingdom – goes into captivity and out of the Word of God altogether....

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

JUDAH					ISRAEL				
King	Reign	Character	Prophet		King	Reign	Character	Prophet	
1. Rehoboam	931-913 BC	(17 yrs.)	Bad	Shemaiah	1. Jeroboam I	931-910 BC	(22 yrs.)	Bad	Ahijah
2. Abijam	913-911	(3 yrs.)	Bad		2. Nadab	910-909	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
3. Asa	911-870	(41 yrs.)	Good		3. Baasha	909-886	(24 yrs.)	Bad	
4. Jehoshaphat	870-848*	(25 yrs.)	Good	Obadiah	4. Elah	886-885	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
5. Jehoram	848-841*	(8 yrs.)	Bad		5. Zimri	885	(7 days)	Bad	Elijah Micaiah
6. Ahaziah	841	(1 yr.)	Bad		6. Omri	885-874	(12 yrs.)	Bad	
7. Athaliah	841-835	(6 yrs.)	Bad		7. Ahab	874-853	(22 yrs.)	Bad	Elisha
8. Joash	835-796	(40 yrs.)	Good		8. Ahaziah	853-852	(2 yrs.)	Bad	
9. Amaziah	796-767	(29 yrs.)	Good		9. Joram	852-841	(12 yrs.)	Bad	Jonah Amos Hosea
10. Azariah (or Uzziah)	767-740*	(52 yrs.)	Good		10. Jehu	841-814	(28 yrs.)	Bad	
					11. Jehoahaz	814-798	(17 yrs.)	Bad	
			Isaiah		12. Jehoash	798-782*	(16 yrs.)	Bad	
					13. Jeroboam II	782-753*	(41 yrs.)	Bad	
11. Jotham	740-732*	(16 yrs.)	Good	14. Zechariah	753-752	(6 mo.)	Bad		
12. Ahaz	732-716*	(16 yrs.)	Bad	15. Shallum	752	(1 mo.)	Bad		
13. Hezekiah	716-687*	(29 yrs.)	Good	16. Menahem	752-742*	(10 yrs.)	Bad		
14. Manasseh	687-642*	(55 yrs.)	Bad	17. Pekahiah	742-740	(2 yrs.)	Bad		
15. Amon	642-640	(2 yrs.)	Bad	18. Pekah	740-732*	(20 yrs.)	Bad		
16. Josiah	640-608	(31 yrs.)	Good	19. Hoshea	732-722	(9 yrs.)	Bad		
17. Jehoahaz	608	(3 mo.)	Bad	<i>(Capture of Samaria and captivity of Israel)</i>					
18. Jehoiakim	608-597	(11 yrs.)	Bad	Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Jeremiah					
19. Jehoiachin	597	(3 mo.)	Bad						
20. Zedekiah	597-586	(11 yrs.)	Bad						

(Destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah)

*Co-regency

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16 And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.

17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: 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 David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a light, and to his children.

20 In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.

21 So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him: and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.

22 Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time.

23 And 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 And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.

26 Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter 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, as did the house of Ahab: for he was the son in law of the house of Ahab.

28 And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramothgilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram.

29 And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given 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 ~