

CbC to June 13

June 7 Su Reading B158 — 2 Kings 8 — The Shunamite Returns

Audio: [2 Kings 8 \(ESV\)](#)

Divine Coincidence — The first eight chapters of 2 Kings have focused on the life and ministry of Elisha. Today, we read about a very interesting reconnection regarding the Shunamite woman, whose son Elisha raised from the dead. Earlier, Elisha had asked how he could reward her for providing a room for him at her house. Her response was, “*I dwell among my own people*” (4:13), suggesting that she was very well satisfied staying in her home and surroundings. Later, because of the seven-year famine, she had to abandon her home and people to live among the Philistines. Prosperity is not always permanent. Now, after seven years, she returned to her homeland to appeal to the king for her house and property she had to abandon. Who should be there when she came to the king but Elisha’s servant, Gehazi, telling the king about how the prophet had raised her son from the dead. Divine coincidence? Because of that timing, she not only received her property back but also was given the income that her fields would have produced in her absence. Sometimes we also see God working in our own situations to bring about good for us in His divine timing. We need to recognize it and praise Him for it.

June 8 M Reading B159 — 2 Kings 9 — Jehu Ends Ahab’s House

Audio: [2 Kings 9 \(ESV\)](#)

Got Peace? — Five times in this chapter the question is asked, “*Is it peace?*” The first four times it was asked by Israel’s King Joram as he sent horsemen to Jehu and then went himself with Judah’s King Ahaziah (vv. 17-19, 22). That was a question asked to someone when their intentions were not only unknown but also suspected. The intentions of the newly anointed King Jehu were to fulfill God’s command to “*strike down the house of Ahab*” (v. 7). It was also closely tied to wicked Jezebel, Ahab’s wife. She, in fact, was the last one to ask, “*Is it peace?*” She had just heard that her son, Joram, had been killed by Jehu, yet “*she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window*” (v. 30) before asking that question to Jehu. Was this hard-hearted woman trying to sexually entice the murderer of her son? If so, it didn’t work, because she was killed by her own attending eunuchs, who apparently were not too fond of her either. Real peace doesn’t come from war or from sex; it comes only from a personal relationship with God. The world around us is looking for peace in many things, while most of them are intentionally avoiding God because He seems so restrictive. We Christians, who have peace, should be demonstrating it and proclaiming to others where we got it.

June 9 Tu Reading B160 — 2 Kings 10 — Jehu Ends Baal Worship

Audio: [2 Kings 10 \(ESV\)](#)

Awful Judgment — Israel’s new king, Jehu, went to work enthusiastically to fulfill God’s judgment against Israel for their history of Baal worship. As God predicted, Jehu wiped out all the descendants and supporters of the 45-year dynasty of Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, plus all the priests who led in the worship of Baal. Because “*Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel*” (v. 28), God concluded that “*you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes*” (v. 30). None of us like to read about the blood that was shed in the Old Testament by God’s command of judgment. Part of our negative reaction is probably because of our limited understanding regarding the awfulness of sin. God’s judgment is awful because sin is awful. Many of us think about the severe punishment in hell in a similar way, but God is right, just, and good. We will understand that better when we dwell in His presence.

Good Timing — We already read about this story in 2 Chron. 22-23, before we followed Elisha's continuing ministry in Israel. One event in this story that I noticed today involved the logistic wisdom of Jehoiada, the high priest. The Levite guards for the temple worked for a whole week, changing shifts on each Sabbath day. That day was chosen by Jehoiada to present and crown the new and legitimate king of Judah, Joash (also called Jehoash in v. 21). Both shifts of guards were present for maximum safety against Athaliah. Twice, it was mentioned that those guards going "*on duty* ... [and] *off duty*" were present (vv. 5, 7, 9). They were amply ready to protect the new king, but Athaliah entered the temple area without any apparent security protection of her own. Did she not have any guards who supported her enough to protect her? As it turned out, Jehoiada didn't seem to need his extra guards. So ended the wicked influence of the house of Ahab with its emphasis on Baal worship.

Giving Wise Counsel — The key to King Jehoash's successful reign in Judah was the influence of Jehoiada, the high priest: "*Jehoash did what was right in the eyes of the LORD all his days, because Jehoiada the priest instructed him*" (v. 2). He had been involved in raising him from infancy and directing him as a very young king. This is another example of the benefits of putting God first. It should remind us of our responsibility to instruct our children (and grandchildren) in the ways of the Lord. We will see later that when Jehoiada died, Jehoash (or Joash) followed less godly advice, which ended badly. There is another reminder here: People left on their own without an intentional focus on God will drift into error and evil. This chapter also tells of the failure of the priests to collect enough money, or designate enough of it, to make repairs on the temple. When challenged by King Jehoash, they agreed to give up the responsibility for repairing the temple (v. 8) and to collect separate money in a special chest to be given directly to workers for the repairs (vv. 9-11). The people gave and the work was finished.

Royal Humility — There are a couple of bright spots in this summary of the reigns of two kings of Israel. One was that "*Jehoahaz sought the favor of the LORD, and the LORD listened to him*" (v. 4). His father, Jehu, had taken the positive step of removing the worship of Baal from Israel, but there remained some worship of the Asherah (v. 6). Israel also continued to mix the worship of Yahweh with the golden calves set up by Jeroboam in Bethel and Dan. In spite of this, God still listened to Jehoahaz' humble cry for help. That really shows the grace of God, who rewards a humble approach to Him despite some sin that remains. The lesson for us is that we should not let being disappointed by our sins keep us from seeking God's mercy and grace. The second bright spot in this chapter is the final influence of the godly life and ministry of the prophet, Elisha. Visited by royalty on his deathbed, the king wept and cried, "*My father! My father!*" (v. 14). Genuine humility, love, and respect were shown there. Then Elisha gave six commands to the king regarding shooting and striking the arrows to predict victories over Syria (vv. 15-19). The man rising from the dead at the end of the story (v. 21) falls like God's exclamation mark on the life of godly Elisha.

Accountability and Honor — Two days ago, we read this basic story in 2 Kings 12 but gain additional information from this account here in 2 Chronicles 24. There were two things that struck

me in today's reading. One was the emphasis on cooperation between King Joash and High Priest Jehoiada after they agreed to put the collection chest near the temple entrance. When the chest became full, it was both "*the king's secretary and the officer of the chief priest*" (v. 11) who emptied it. That is a strong example of accountability, guarding against corruption. In verse 12, it was "*the king and Jehoiada*" together who gave the money to the workers. After the work on the temple was finished, "*they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada*" (v. 14). It was a team effort. A second impressive part of this story is that after faithful Jehoiada died at the age of 130 years, living longer than Moses and Aaron, "*they buried him in the city of David among the kings*" (v. 15). That was a very unusual expression of honor to a high priest. On the other hand, because of King Joash's subsequent apostasy, "*they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings*" (v. 25). Honor is placed where honor is due.