

## 21.09 Shunammite's Property Restored; Prediction of Hazael's Becoming Syrian King (2 Kings 8:1–15)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] Brackets indicate a remark to the teacher that will not be read aloud, and they show answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Because of a dearth of visuals for this lesson, it is suggested that the teacher use small wooden figures for the seven characters: 1) Gehazi; 2) king (crown on head); 3) Shunammite (woman's head covering or dress); 4) Shunammite's son (smaller figure even though he was likely grown by the time of this story); 5) Ben-hadad (another crowned head); 6) Hazael; 7) Elisha.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *providence*: God's having full charge of everything that happens. It is not *coincidence*—things happening by chance; rather, it is God's working all things according to His holy will.

### Scripture: (ESV)

2 Kings 8:1 Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, “Arise, and depart with your household, and sojourn wherever you can, for the Lord has called for a famine, and it will come upon the land for seven years.” 2 So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God. She went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. 3 And at the end of the seven years, when the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she went to appeal to the king for her house and her land. 4 Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, “Tell me all the great things that Elisha has done.” 5 And while he was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, behold, the woman whose son he had restored to life appealed to the king for her house and her land. And Gehazi said, “My lord, O king, here is the woman, and here is her son whom Elisha restored to life.” 6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed an official for her, saying, “Restore all that was hers, together with all the produce of the fields from the day that she left the land until now.”

7 Now Elisha came to Damascus. Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick. And when it was told him, “The man of God has come here,” 8 the king said to Hazael, “Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord through him, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this sickness?’” 9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, all kinds of goods of Damascus, forty camels' loads. When he came and stood before him, he said, “Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this sickness?’” 10 And Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover,’ but the Lord has shown me that he shall certainly die.” 11 And he fixed his gaze and stared at him, until he was embarrassed. And the man of God wept. 12 And Hazael said, “Why does my lord weep?” He answered, “Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set on fire their fortresses, and you will kill their young men with the sword and dash in pieces their little ones and rip open their pregnant women.” 13 And Hazael said, “What is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?” Elisha answered, “The Lord has shown me that you are to be king over Syria.” 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 that you would certainly recover.” 15 But the next day he took the bed cloth and dipped it in water and spread it over his face, till he died. And Hazael became king in his place.

### Introduction/Review:

God certainly was with Elisha, wasn't He? God provided for Elisha's needs in a city called Shunem through a rich lady and her husband, who made a special room for Elisha to stay when he came to their town. God rewarded her kind deeds towards Elisha by giving her a son. Do you remember what happened to that son? [He died.] What happened then? [Elisha, by God's power restored him to life.]

Gehazi had been the servant of Elisha. He is the one who took some of the reward offered by Naaman after Naaman was cured of his leprosy. Do you remember how Naaman was cured? [He dipped seven times in the Jordan River as Elisha had said to do.] What happened to Gehazi after he took a reward? [He got leprosy.]

## Story:

### *A long famine*

Seven years before today's story, Elisha had warned the Shunammite about a seven-year famine that was to come. How long had Elijah's famine lasted? [Three years.] Remember the devastation caused by that *three* years without rain. I wonder what it was like to be *seven* years without rain. It had to be bad.

Elisha had told the Shunammite woman to go live in a different country during this time, and she went to Philistia [locate]. Now, the seven years of famine had passed and the Shunammite came back home ✓ only to find that someone had taken over her dead husband's land and estate. She figured the way to get back her land was to go directly to the king and ask him to settle the matter.

### *A providential moment*

At the very moment she came to the king, in the providence of God, Gehazi, even though he was a leper, was talking to the king of Israel. "Tell me about all the great things Elisha has done," said the king.

You and I could tell the king some of those great things that God had done through Elisha. I'll give you hints, and you pretend to tell Israel's king about the miracle. [Teacher, if you have pictures to supply the hints, all the better. If you skip any miracles, be sure to tell about the Shunammite woman and her son, #6 and #7 below.]

1. Elisha used Elijah's mantle to do this. He hit the water with the coat/mantle and . . . [the Jordan River parted so that Elisha could walk over on dry land].
2. Plants were dying around Jericho because the water was so bad. Elisha put some meal in the spring at Jericho and . . . [Jericho's water was made good].
3. Some young men mocked Elisha and his God by shouting, "Go up, you bald head! Go up, you bald head!" Those young people were cursed and . . . [bears came out of the woods to devour them].
4. The kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom were going to war against Moab. They ran out of water and were sure to be defeated and to die. Elisha told them to dig ditches. In the morning God filled the ditches with . . . [water] so that they had plenty to drink. When the Moabites saw the water, they thought it looked like . . . [blood]. Israel, Judah, and Edom defeated the Moabites.
5. The widow of one of the sons of the prophets had two sons and needed to pay back a large sum of money. Elisha told her to get all the . . . [pots] she could. Then she shut the door and began to . . . [pour oil out of a little jar]. She sold the oil, paid the debt, and lived for a long time from the money left over.
6. God rewarded the Shunammite, who made a room for Elisha, when God gave her a . . . [son].
7. The Shunammite's son . . . [died]. God made Elisha raise this son from the . . . [dead] so that he . . . [lived] again.

As we have said, Gehazi was at the very point of telling the king about the Shunammite's son being made alive when the Shunammite herself came into the king's court, asking 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."

The king asked her about this story, and she confirmed its truth. Then the king assigned an official to help her. "Give back everything that belonged to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now," commanded the king. So the woman's land was restored, and she went back home.

### *The sick Ben-hadad*

Now, Elisha went to Damascus, the capital city of Syria [locate]. Yes, this is the country that had besieged Syria in last week's story. Yes, Elisha was in enemy territory. ✓ Perhaps he came to see and encourage Naaman, the man who had been cleansed from leprosy. But he had a more important job to do. I'll tell you

about it in a minute.

Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, was sick. This was the same king who had raided and warred against Israel. He had sent soldiers to slay Elisha. God had made those soldiers blind, and Elisha had led them right into Israel's capital city, Samaria. Ben-hadad had besieged Samaria and had almost brought it to utter ruin.

Yet, Ben-hadad ✓ seemed to respect Elisha. He called for his servant, Hazael. "Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God, and ask of the Lord through him, saying, 'Shall I recover from this sickness?'"

So Hazael loaded forty camels with all kinds of goods from Damascus and went to meet Elisha. When he came to Elisha, he said, "Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I recover from this sickness?'"

Elisha answered, "Go, say to him, 'You shall certainly recover.'" Ah! the king will get well. "But," Elisha continued, "the Lord has shown me that he shall certainly die."

### ***The sad message***

What is this message? He will get better; yet, he will die? What a strange answer.

Then Elisha did something strange: he stared at Hazael and stared at Hazael. [Teacher, stare with sad and disturbed countenance at an object.] Hazael was getting uncomfortable. Why was Elisha staring at him so? Then Elisha began weeping.

"Why does my lord weep?" asked Hazael.

"Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set fire to their forts, you will slay their young men with the sword, you will savagely kill their little ones and women carrying babies."

"How could I, a mere dog, do such horrible things?" asked Hazael.

"The Lord has shown me that you will become king over Syria," answered Elisha. This is exactly what God had told Elijah in the quiet, whispering voice in the mountain years before (1 Kings 19:15). ✓Elijah had passed this information on to Elisha, and now Elisha was informing Hazael himself.

Hazael left Elisha and returned to his master. "What did Elisha say to you?" asked Ben-hadad.

"He told me that you would certainly recover." ✓Ben-hadad probably thought, "That's good news."

But the next day, Hazael took a thick cloth, soaked it in water, and spread it over the king's face so that Ben-hadad suffocated. Then, Hazael set himself up as king over Syria.

Will he be a good king? Probably not. Why not? He started out badly by murdering Ben-hadad. Elisha had said he would be brutal. This is not what a good king does. He will do many things to hurt and kill God's people, Israel. Yet, God was in control. He knows what He is doing, and He does all His holy will.

### **Lessons from This Lesson:**

- We see Jesus:

God's providence, His having full charge over everything that happens, can be seen in His sending Jesus to earth to become a man in order that He might die on the cross for the sins of those who believe in Him. "But *when the fullness of the time came*, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4, emphasis added). Even the exact time of Christ's death was involved in God's providence. Jesus said, "My time has not yet fully come" (John 7:8) or similar expressions until He said, "[T]he hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners" (Mark 14:41). God is in control.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: the numeral 7; crown; eyes; tear drops
- Snack: Chicken noodle soup is generally a good food for the sick.

- Have students retell the story of the Shunammite’s son being raised from the dead. Let them use flashcards or flannelgraph figures if you dare.
- Play “Elisha Says” (“Simon Says”). Students do what is commanded only when the leader says, “Elisha says.” (Make the application that we do what God tells us to do.) It is the teacher’s choice which commands to introduce with “*Elisha says.*” Here are some commands to use:
  - (1) Put your hands on your head.
  - (2) Walk in place to Damascus.
  - (3) Stare sadly at the teacher.
  - (4) Say, “Please give me my house and land.”
  - (5) Weep like Elisha.
  - (6) Walk (in place) to Philistia like the Shunammite.
  - (7) Feed yourself after the famine.
  - (8) Ask, “Will Ben-hadad get better?”
- Play staring game. Put students into pairs. They stare at each other until one or the other blinks. Have students look sad, as Elisha did, as they stare.
- Review questions: (Game: Prepare the numerals 1–7 (found at the end of this lesson) by printing them on card stock. Cut them out on the box lines. A student who answers a question may place a numeral in a pocket chart. All seven numbers show how long the famine was.)
  1. About what did Elisha warn the Shunammite woman? [That she should go to a different country because a seven-year famine was about to occur.]
  2. With whom was Gehazi, Elisha’s servant, visiting? [The king of Israel, probably Joram.]
  3. What was the providential thing that happened as Gehazi was talking about Elisha’s raising the dead? [The Shunammite woman and her son, who was raised from the dead, entered the court.]
  4. Who was sick in Damascus, Syria? [Syria’s king, Ben-hadad.]
  5. What did Elisha say about Ben-had’s health? [He would recover, but he would die.]
  6. What did Elisha say Hazael would become? [King of Syria.]
  7. What kind of king would Hazael become? [Very cruel and brutal.]

### Memory Verse[s]:

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. 7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. 10 “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” 11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

### Handwork:

- Print the picture found at [The King Ordered to Give Back Everything That Belonged to the Woman coloring page | Free Printable Coloring Pages \(supercoloring.com\)](http://www.supercoloring.com). Students will color the picture.

**providence**





[Biography of King Solomon: The Wisest Man Who Ever Lived \(learnreligions.com\)](http://www.learnreligions.com) Use for Israel's King Joram





By Oldtidens\_Israel\_&\_Judea.svg: FinnWikiNoderivative work: Richardprins (talk) - Oldtidens\_Israel\_&\_Judea.svghttp://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/map-of-israel-and-judah-733-bce, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10872389







[Image: sweet bible 1Ki 01 01 0 \(st-takla.org\)](https://www.st-takla.org) Use for Ben-hadad

1

2

3

4

5

6

7