

**THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD
CHRIST THE LORD PARISH, LEKKI PHASE 1, LAGOS.
DIGGING DEEP (18/07/2023)**

TOPIC: THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF ELISHA

TEXT: 2 Kings 8: 1-15

INTRODUCTION:

We are gradually coming to the end of our study on Elisha – His Life and Ministry.

As a reminder last week the study was on the need to spread the good tidings as demonstrated by the four Lepers who made amazing discovery of wealth and instead of keeping it to themselves, felt compelled to spread the good news.

We were also taught the desperate needs of the spiritually famished multitudes around us and our responsibility to tell them of the provision God has made for their salvation.

Outline 1 - THE SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE – (2 Kings 8: 1-6)

Despite the siege on Samaria with all its horrors and the grace of God in all its fullness. The hostility of Syrians to God's people remained. God revealed His secrets to His prophets. As much as God chastises His people, He also sets limits to the trial they pass through. Read 1Cor 10:13

* For the Lord has called for a famine, and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

2 Kings 8:1

* The woman was singled out – Grace

* The Lord knows the end from the beginning.

* The way maker- The king was having a conversation with Gehazi just before the return of the women.

* God does not owe anyone - On her return, She was fully restored. 2 King 8:6, Joel 2:25

* The Lord used Gehazi to prepare for the restoration of the Shunammite woman's land -2 Kings 8:6

*** The lord proved himself as Shepherd and Restorer – (2 Kings 8:6, Psalms 23:1)**

We can however trace the hand of the Lord using men — whether as Prophets, Servants, or as Kings — and behind every circumstance and coincidence, making all things work together for good to them that love Him. Rom 8:28

Elisha was used as one who is in the intimacy with the Lord and enjoying the confidences of the Lord. Gehazi was used as the friend and intimate of a wicked king.

Outline 2- THE KING OF SYRIA (2 King 8:7-15)

Elisha's service is not confined to Israel and the Land. Thus we read he "came to Damascus," and is found amongst the Gentiles. Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, is sick and in his sickness he recognizes and honors the man of God. Despite what transpired between them in the past. (2

Kings 6:11-14) “when the King was determined to capture the Man of God, (2 Kings 6:32-33) the King sought to slay the prophet contrary to (Psalms 105:15)

God revealed what Hazael would do and Elisha shed tears. 2 Kings 8: 12 .

Hazael was greatly surprised at his prediction. He had to ask “Is thy servant a dog that he should do those great things” Hazael protests that he is not a dog that he should act with such callous brutality. Probably his protest is entirely sincere. He did not know his own heart. He was not aware that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jer 17:9 As with ourselves, too often, he little realized the depth of wickedness and cruelty in the heart.

In Hazael's history the immediate circumstances were ripe to manifest the wickedness of his heart. Thus Elisha simply answers, "The Lord has shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." (The Lord knows what will happen tomorrow)

Without further word, Hazael "departed from Elisha, and came to his master." He acts the hypocrite before the king, giving part of Elisha's message, but keeping back the fact that he would surely die. 2 Kings 8:14

The idea of wielding great power, as the reigning monarch, had such irresistible attraction to Hazael that he is ready to contemplate even murder to gain his end. The sickness and weakness of the king made murder appear so easy. The sickness would be such a simple way to cover the murder. 2 Kings 8:15.

LESSONS

*God's grace is in abundance – Eph 2: 8- 9

*Power is Transient (Temporal).

* The King was full of pride.

*The predestination of God does not destroy the freedom of Man.

* In the matter of salvation, God has given the grace.

*He was not afraid to say what the Lord had reveal to him in Verse 10, Elisha remained true and obeyed God totally.

*Elisha offered God's salvation to Hazael 2 kings 8;12. He gave him a choice to recognize God as the Lord and humble himself before Him or reject Him. - God has given us the choice to choose life or death. Instead of asking, "Is thy servant a dog?" far better would it have been for Hazael, to take the ground of the Syrophenician (Gentile) woman who owned that she was indeed a dog, only to discover that there is grace in the heart of God even for a dog (Mark 7:24-30).

*Hazael did not give the full message to the King 2 Kings 8;14 Hazael left the second part of God's message for his benefit. Sometimes God gives us a complete message and we in turn deliver part and leave the rest, why not look at the prophet Elisha who obeyed God totally and delivered the message without fear or tremble.