



Can you trust God? In this study, we will see that the answer is a resounding yes. In 2 Kings 8, we learn that Elijah warned the Shunammite woman to leave Israel during the famine, and she obeyed, trusting God. Rather than think God had abandoned her because of the many trials she had faced, she continued to rest in God and the Lord showed Himself faithful to her. Then God fulfilled His word to Elijah about who the next kings of Aram and Israel would be. God kept His word despite Elijah's partial obedience and fulfilled His prophecy after Elijah's lifetime. But despite God's faithfulness, sometimes man chooses to go his own way. Jehoshaphat chose a wicked wife for his son, prioritizing an alliance with men over an alliance with God. Because of his folly, his son brought evil to his household and the disharmony that Jehoshaphat sought to avoid came to pass. We must learn that the wisest course of action is always to trust God.

1. Review of chapter 7
 - a. The siege
 - i. Ben-Hadad, king of Aram (or Syria), had besieged Israel.
 - ii. This siege led to a famine in Israel.
 - iii. Elisha prophesied that the famine would be over, but an officer of the king scoffed and earned himself a curse.
 1. Never underestimate the power of the Lord.
 - b. The blessing
 - i. The next day, some lepers agreed to go out to the Syrian army.
 1. They were already dying of leprosy and hunger.
 2. They chose to risk going to the Syrian army to ask for mercy and food, for all they could do was kill them faster.
 - ii. The four lepers saw that the armies of Syria had left, fleeing so quickly that they had left behind their provisions.
 1. God made the Syrian army hear chariots that were not there.
 2. The Syrians thought that these chariots were from an army Israel paid off.
 3. The lepers were eating the Syrian's food and taking their gold and silver, till their consciences reminded them that they needed to share the good news with those inside Samaria.
 - a. Do not keep the good news to yourself.
 - iii. The good news spread (**2 Kings 7:10–20**).
 1. The king did not believe the lepers' good news, so he sent people to investigate.
 2. The messengers returned to the king and verified the good news first shared to him by the lepers.

3. The people heard the good news and rushed out of the city, trampling the doubting officer of the king, so that Elisha's prophecy against him was fulfilled.
 4. **DISCUSS:** How should the death of the king's officer warn us against mocking and doubting God's promises?
2. **2 Kings 8:1-6** – *“Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, ‘Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years.’ So the woman arose and did according to the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and dwelt in the land of the Philistines seven years. It came to pass, at the end of seven years, that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went to make an appeal to the king for her house and for her land. Then the king talked with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, ‘Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done.’ Now it happened, as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the woman whose son he had restored to life, appealing 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.’ And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, ‘Restore all that was hers, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now.”* (NIV)
- a. Out of order
 - i. The Shunammite woman was from Shunem.
 1. Shunem was town in northern Israel, south of the Sea of Galilee.
 - ii. This woman was first introduced in chapter 5.
 1. Sometimes, Elisha would pass through Shunem.
 2. The Shunammite woman set up a room for Elisha to stay in every time he passed through the area.
 3. Grateful, Elisha asked what he could do for her, and she said that she was content.
 4. Elisha's servant, Gehazi, told him that the woman's husband was old and she was barren.
 - a. In that culture, a woman without a husband or son would be left without anyone to care for her.
 5. The Shunammite woman's son had a headache, maybe from heat stroke, and died.
 6. The woman rode over 20 miles to find Elisha, bringing him to her son so that her boy could be healed.
 - iii. In chapter 8, the Shunammite woman appeared again before and after the famine.
 - b. The woman's return
 - i. Elisha warned the woman to leave Israel during the seven years of famine.

- ii. At the end of the seven-year famine, the Shunammite woman returned.
- iii. The woman asked for her land to be returned to her, and the king complied.
 - 1. God is faithful, regardless of our circumstances or feelings.
 - 2. **Luke 12:24** – *“Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?”*
 - 3. The Shunammite woman did not doubt God’s faithfulness when she had an old husband and was childless, or when her son died, or when she left her country for seven years. She trusted God.
 - 4. **DISCUSS:** How has God strengthened your faith so that you would be able to stand amid hardships?

3. The historical moment

a. The history of Israel

i. Creation

- 1. God made the world in six days.

ii. Fall

- 1. Adam and Eve’s sin brought death and decay.

iii. Flood

- 1. God brought a flood to judge man’s wickedness, and only Noah and his family escaped.

iv. Covenant

- 1. God made a covenant with Abraham, to bless his seed, which became the Israelite people.

v. Exodus

- 1. The children of Israel became a great people but were enslaved by Egypt, so the Lord sent Moses to deliver them.

vi. Promised Land

- 1. God raised up Joshua to take Israel to the Promised Land.

vii. The failed conquest

- 1. Despite initial victories under Joshua’s leadership, the Jews did not fully kick out the Canaanites, so they opened themselves to pagan influences.
- 2. During the time of the judges, when there was no king in Israel, every man did what he saw fit.

viii. The Kingdom of Israel

- 1. Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel.
- 2. David was the next king, and he was a man after God’s own heart and closely aligned to the standard set for kings in Deuteronomy, so God made a covenant with him, that he would always have a son on the throne.

3. David's son Solomon was the third king, and God gave him wisdom, so he wrote Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.
4. Solomon's sin and his many wives led him away from God, so the Lord judged him by giving his son a divided kingdom.
- ix. The divided kingdom
 1. The rest of the kings reigned over a divided kingdom.
 2. The 20 kings to the north were all evil, and 12 of the 20 kings to the south were evil too.
 3. The Israelites were falling into idolatry despite the prophets God sent to them.
- x. The exile
 1. Because the Jews refused to listen to God's prophets, they went into exile.
 2. The north went into exile in Syria.
 3. The south went into exile in Babylon.
- xi. The return and rebuilding process
 1. Ezra and Nehemiah helped lead the efforts to rebuild the walls and the temple.
- xii. The birth of Jesus
- b. **1 and 2 Kings** and **1 and 2 Chronicles** took place during the divided kingdom.

4. **2 Kings 8:7-15** – *“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,’ 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?”’ 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?”’ Elisha answered, ‘Go and say to him, “You will certainly recover.” Nevertheless, as the Lord has revealed to me that he will in fact die.’ He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed. Then the man of God began to weep. ‘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.’ 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. 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.’ 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.”*

- a. The anointings
 - i. Elijah went to Mount Oreb frustrated and complaining to God.

1. Elijah called for God, but did not find Him in the strong wind, earthquake, or fire. Instead, God spoke to Elijah through a still, small voice.
 2. Elijah was still frustrated that Israel was not listening to him, and that the queen, Jezebel, wanted him dead.
 - ii. God responded by giving Elijah something to do.
 1. God did not rebuke or comfort Elijah in that moment.
 2. God gave him three tasks (**1 Kings 19:15–16**):
 - a. Anoint the new king of Aram at Damascus
 - b. Anoint the next king of northern Israel
 - c. Anoint Elisha as Elijah's successor.
 3. **DISCUSS:** How has God used tasks to redirect you?
 - iii. Elijah was partially obedient.
 1. Elijah performed the third task: anoint his successor.
 - a. God likely gave these instructions in a specific order on purpose.
 - b. **1 Kings 19:17** – *"Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu."* (NIV)
 2. Elisha anointed the kings of Aram and northern Israel, two tasks that God had commanded Elijah to do.
 - b. Ben-Hadad's illness
 - i. Ben-Hadad, though the king of Aram—a foreign and pagan nation—asked for the prophet Elisha's help.
 1. Perhaps Naaman had shared with the king about how the prophet of God healed him.
 - ii. Ben-Hadad sent Hazael to enquire of God's prophet.
 1. Elisha said that Ben-Hadad could recover but would die of something else.
 2. Elisha prophesied about the kind of evil that Hazael would commit as the next king of Aram.
 3. Hazael reigned from 841–801 B.C. despite calling *himself* "a mere dog."
 - a. History tells us that he was initially a mere servant, the son of a nobody, yet somehow became king.
5. **2 Kings 8:16–24** – *"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. 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. 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. In the time of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against Judah*

and set up its own king. 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. To this day Edom has been in rebellion against Judah. Libnah revolted at the same time. 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? Jehoram rested with his ancestors and was buried with them in the City of David. And Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king."

- a. Joram
 - i. Joram was the son of Ahab.
 - ii. Joram was over the northern kingdom of Israel.
- b. Jehoram, the man
 - i. Jehoram was the son of Jehoshaphat.
 - ii. Jehoram had six brothers (**1 Chronicles 21:2**).
- c. Jehoram, the king
 - i. Jehoram became king of the southern kingdom of Judah on the fifth year of Joram's reign.
 - ii. Jehoram followed the evil example of the kings of Israel.
 1. Though Jehoram's father, Jehoshaphat, was overall a godly man, he still had his son marry one of Ahab's daughters.
 2. Jehoshaphat was more concerned with an alliance with the northern king than an alliance with God. Trying to create peace, he created strife for his family.
 - a. **DISCUSS**: How did the cares of this world lead Jehoshaphat to find refuge in the wrong things? Have you fallen into worldly concern? How is God the true solution to the problem(s)?
 3. This evil alliance negatively affected Jehoram.
 4. **1 Corinthians 15:33** – Paul, quoting the Greeks, said, "Bad company corrupts good character." (NIV)
 - a. **DISCUSS**: How have your loved ones positively or negatively influenced you?
 - iii. **2 Chronicles 21:3–4, 6–7** – "Their father had given them many gifts of silver and gold and articles of value, as well as fortified cities in Judah, but he had given the kingdom to Jehoram because he was his firstborn son. When Jehoram established himself firmly over his father's kingdom, he put all his brothers to the sword along with some of the officials of Israel. . . . 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. Nevertheless, because of the covenant the LORD had made with David, the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David. He had promised to maintain a lamp for him and his descendants forever." (NIV)

- iv. **2 Chronicles 21:12–20** – *"Jehoram received a letter from Elijah the prophet, which said: 'This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: "You have not followed the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have followed the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your own family, men who were better than you. So now the LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out."' The LORD aroused against Jehoram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabs who lived near the Cushites. They attacked Judah, invaded it and carried off all the goods found in the king's palace, together with his sons and wives. Not a son was left to him except Ahaziah, the youngest. After all this, the LORD afflicted Jehoram with an incurable disease of the bowels. In the course of time, at the end of the second year, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great pain. His people made no funeral fire in his honor, as they had for his predecessors. . . . He passed away, to no one's regret, and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings."* (NIV)

1. Jehoram died without honors because he had lived wickedly.

6. **2 Kings 8:25–29** – *"In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. 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. 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 went with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram; so King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramoth in his battle with Hazael king of Aram. Then Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of Ahab, because he had been wounded."* (NIV)

a. Ahaziah fell into the same sins as Jehoram, his father, following in the evil of Ahab's house.

- i. **DISCUSS:** Are you willing to learn from others' mistakes? When has God used the consequences of others' actions to guide you?

7. **2 Kings 9:1–10** – *"And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, 'Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his associates, and take him to an inner room. Then take the flask of oil, and pour*

it on his head, and say, "Thus says the LORD: "I have anointed you king over Israel." Then open the door and flee, and do not delay.'" So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. And when he arrived, there were the captains of the army sitting; and he said, 'I have a message for you, Commander.' Jehu said, 'For which one of us?' And he said, 'For you, Commander.' Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.'" And he opened the door and fled."

a. God is faithful to His word.

i. God had given Elijah three tasks at Mount Oreb (**1 Kings 19:15–16**).

1. Elijah only performed the last task: anointing his successor, Elisha.
2. Elisha performed the first task of anointing the next king of Aram (or Syria) in **2 Kings 8:10–15**.
3. Elisha handed the second task of anointing Jehu as the next king of Israel in **2 Kings 9:1–3** to a student at the school of the prophets, and the student obeyed.
4. Despite Elijah's disobedience, God performed His word, even if the prophecy occurred past his lifetime.
5. **DISCUSS**: When God gives us something to do, are we faithful to obey?
6. **DISCUSS**: Do you ask God how you can be part of fulfilling His will, or do you ask Him to bless your plans?

8. **2 Kings 9:11–13** – *"Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, 'Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?' And he said to them, 'You know the man and his babble.' And they said, 'A lie! Tell us now.' So he said, 'Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'I have anointed you king over Israel.''" Then each man hastened to take his garment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, 'Jehu is king!'"*

a. Jehu, the new king

- i. Jehu initially did not want to share God's message with the other servants of the king.
- ii. Jehu would go from the commander of Israel's armies to Israel's king.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James (NKJV)