

## 2 Kings 8

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[ 0 : 00 ] 2nd Kings chapter 8. Now again a reminder that the events we read are not always recorded for us chronologically. So in particular this first account there are a number of stories in the 8th chapter and we'll say stories accounts in the 8th chapter seem to be out of place to us but it is not the intention of the author of 2nd Kings to write a chronological order. Rather it was a collection probably from numerous sources of the events and ministries surrounding Elisha in particular here and these things are put in as the Lord led. Sure it is the word of God being written by the men of God for the glory of God but it is not concerned with chronological order. Side note we don't really know who wrote 1st and 2nd Kings though there seems to be some tendencies that kind of maybe give us an idea who it possibly could be. Anybody remember who that was? It's Jeremiah. Right? Jeremiah. Because the prophet Jeremiah who we do know was a prominent author. 1st and 2nd Kings theme is what? It is the matters which led them into exile. How they got in trouble.

1st and 2nd Kings records for us the fall of the nation of Israel and their fall by way of disobedience and how they ended up going into what we refer to as the Babylonian captivity.

And then 1st and 2nd Chronicles are not written as pre-exilic or right at the beginning of the exile. That's where we see in 1st and 2nd Kings it seems that the exile has just begun. So it is Jerusalem has just fallen. The Babylonians have come in. This is why most people believe it was Jeremiah because you remember Jeremiah was left to remain in Jerusalem with all the other poor folks and he was there. So many believe that's why he wrote the book of Lamentations. He saw the destruction.

He saw everything that was going on during that time of discipline. It seems that 1st and 2nd Kings are the historical record of how they got there. If not he then he probably gave some aid to that.

[ 2 : 22 ] 1st and 2nd Chronicles probably written by Ezra more than likely of Ezra and Nehemiah those books because it is written post-exile. So it is not written so much of how we got in trouble. It's written 1st and 2nd Chronicles on the faithfulness of God even though we got in trouble. Right? It is the restoration of God's people back to the order of priesthood and the order of the kingship of David and all those things. So that's just our context. We want to understand that. So when we come to chapters such as this and we're reading a series of events and we go why is this here?

Keep the overall theme in mind. Right? You got to keep the overall theme in mind. We are reading these matters that show us what led to the Babylonian captivity.

Maybe a very good time to point out. Now Sunday night is more of a teaching night. Right? It's not so much more of a preaching but teaching. The Babylonian captivity is what? God's discipline upon his people for their disobedience.

And it is a discipline in order to restore them. It is not a final judgment. Right? But it is a discipline of a restoration. That is calling them back to himself for his glory.

Because God is a jealous God. For the Lord our God is a jealous God. He is a consuming fire. Deuteronomy 4 24. He will not be mocked. He will not be belittled.

[ 3 : 46 ] And therefore when his people whom he has called to himself and entered into a covenant relationship with him when they disobey he disciplines them to bring them back into that restorative relationship with him.

So that God will be glorified. My interpretation I know this is kind of sidetracked but it bears repeating when we get into the New Testament we see something similar to that happening when we get into the tribulation period.

What is the tribulation? It is not God's refinement of the church because the church is refined through the relationship with Christ. The Bible tells us in the book of Romans Romans 8 9 or actually 9 10 and 11 focus on in particular God's covenant relationship with the nation of Israel.

And Paul tells us there in the book of Romans that when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in then God will begin working on the nation of Israel. That's how I interpret. Now I'm not saying that if you don't interpret it that way that we can't fellowship because when we get into eschatology the study of end times I know there are a lot of different interpretations.

But my interpretation is the eschatology of the end times is that the fullness of the Gentiles has come in now God's going to call the nation of Israel back to himself.

[ 4 : 58 ] How does he do that? Through a second period of refinement which we refer to as the seven years of tribulation because when you go to the book of Revelations there's the covenant with Israel that's broken and all those gods at the end of that there's a revival within the nation of Israel.

So I say all that because we need to know why we're reading what we're reading because if not all we're reading is an account of just some strange things that seem to be happening with individuals. Right? And it doesn't make sense. So here we go. 2 Kings chapter 8. Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life saying Arise and go with your household and sojourn wherever you can sojourn for the Lord has called for a famine and it will even come to the land for seven years.

So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God. And she went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. At the end of seven years the woman returned from the land of the Philistines and she went out to appeal to the king for her house and for her field.

Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God saying Please relate to me all the great things that Elisha has done. As he was relating to the king how he had restored to life the one who was dead behold the woman whose son he had restored to life appealed to the king for her house and for her field.

[ 6 : 16 ] And Gehazi said My lord O king this is the woman and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life. When the king asked the woman she related it to him so the king appointed for her a certain officer saying Restore all that was hers and all the produce of the field from the day that she left the land even until now.

Side note this is how we know this isn't chronological because after Naaman's visit to Elisha Gehazi is a leper from that point on he has the leprosy of Naaman upon him as a curse the king would not have been talking with a leprous individual so this is before Naaman's visit at least that account is. Now what follows is more than likely after Elisha's visit from Naaman because of what happens here. Then Elisha came to Damascus now Ben-Hadad king of Aram was sick and it was told him saying the man of God has come here and the king said to Hazel take a gift in your hand and go to meet the man of God and acquire of the Lord by him saying will I recover from this sickness so Hazel went to meet him and took a gift in his hand even every kind of good thing of Damascus forty camels loads and he came and stood before him and said your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you saying will I recover from this sickness then Elisha said to him go say to him you will surely recover but the Lord has shown me that he will certainly die he fixed his gaze at his Elisha fixed his gaze steadily on him until he was ashamed and the man of God wept Hazel said why does my Lord weep then he answered because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel their strongholds you will set on fire and their young men you will kill with the sword and their little ones you will dash in pieces and their women with child you will rip up then Hazel said but what is your servant who is but a dog that he should do this great thing and Elisha answered the Lord has shown me that you will be king over Aram so he departed from Elisha and returned to his master who said to him what did Elisha say to you and he answered he told me that you would surely recover on the following day he took the cover and dipped it in water and spread it on his face so that he died and Hazel became king in his place now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel Jehoshaphat being then the king of Judah Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah became king he was 32 years old when he became king and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem he walked in the way of the kings of Israel just as the house of Ahab had done for the daughter of Ahab became his wife and he did evil in the sight of the Lord however the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah for the sake of David his servant since he had promised him to give a lamp to him through his son always in his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah and made a king over themselves then Joram crossed over to Zer and all his chariots with him and he arose by night and struck down the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots but his army

fled to their tents so Edom revolted against Judah to this day then Libna revolted at the same time 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 so Joram slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David and Ahaziah his son became king in his place in the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel

Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king and he reigned one year in Jerusalem and his mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri king of Israel he walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the Lord like the house of Ahab had done because he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab then he went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead and the Arameans wounded Joram so king Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against Hazael king of Aram then Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab at Jezreel because he was sick clear as mud 2nd Kings chapter 8 going back and forth between the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom for the first time in a while we go back from the the people of Israel in the north to the people of Judah in the south and all of a sudden the kings are the same name and they have a lot closer ties than that than anything else

[10:52] I want you to see this evening a consistent word a consistent word I know there's a lot that's going on here we're spanning a lot of time very clearly the account of the lady whose son was raised and her departure during a time of famine and return is not in chronological order in the reality that as we said Gehazi was a leper after the visit of Naaman and the king would not have been speaking with him but we do know that the account that follows that is evidently after the visit of Naaman because the king of Aram refers to him as the man of God and brings him gifts which should bring to mind when Naaman went to him for healing so he saw Elisha as being one who could declare to him if he would get well or not so we understand these realities we're looking at a lot of time here we're looking at a lot of events and it is admittedly so very difficult to look at these events and go okay what application does that have to me because how can I apply the reality that this lady whose son was raised in her household had to flee and then they came back and then this man did that but we want to look beyond the circumstances again when we open up scripture we're not looking at the complete history of mankind we're looking at the history of God's interactions with man so quite often even in the historical writings we need to look beyond what's going on and we don't want to over spiritualize the text there are times

I believe that we can over spiritualize the text and we can make it seem to say things that it really does not sometimes it just says what it says and it means that we don't want to take it any further than we ought to we don't want to over spiritualize the text but we also want to kind of see what's going on in the text in this context and see what application we can find and the thing we can find this evening is a consistent word that consistency of the word of the Lord in the midst of all the inconsistencies of mankind and all the turmoil that man's sin brings upon it the reality that the word of God is consistent in season out of season in the midst of everything that is going on because if we look at these accounts there is one common theme and it is something that God is saying or that God's representative is saying and what people are doing based on what he has said so we'll see these things and we won't look at each one of them individually though some of them individually have these applications we will look at them kind of as we do in some of these

Old Testament writings kind of above it looking at the complete text and wanting to see how these matters are true within this text so we see here that the word of the Lord is consistent in a number of ways four ways in particular first we see the power of the word we are reminded that the word of the Lord is a word of power it says and now Elijah spoke to the woman whose son had restored to life saying arise and go and flee to a land that you may sojourn we are moved by the reality that the word of the Lord is concerned for individuals there is nothing in this lady's life that other than the hospitality which she has shown to Elisha how she has cared for him and provided for him her and her husband and then they were blessed with a child and the child dies and Elisha raises this child to life but we understand that other than that we've seen some faithfulness in her practicing what we would refer to as biblical hospitality during a time of turmoil in the northern kingdom because she was not of Judah she was of the region of Israel the northern kingdom there how Elisha was one who extended that gracious favor back to her and shows God's concern for this individual and the preservation of this lady and her family is based completely upon the word of God

Elisha says to her now you need to go now we're not reading too much into the text that we see that all it takes is that simple admonition from the word of God that causes her to leave everything behind and move her family into what we would refer to as enemy territory she goes into the land of the Philistines and she goes into the land of the Philistines for one because it is modern day fertile crescent area there it is a very fertile region it is not the higher elevation of the land of Israel in those days so the famine would be the least likely in that area and if famine was to hit that land they could bring it in from the sea because they were also a seacoast area so we see that they go to this place to sojourn and it is simply based upon the authority of the word of God it seems to imply that she was commanded to do this before the famine began and she took action upon it and she left her land to go into the land of the Philistines simply based upon this and we notice this one phrase in here for the Lord has called for a famine now that is a very clear phrase that is full of power and impact for the Lord has called for a famine in scripture whatever the Lord

God calls for is a certain reality that is going to come about right he has called for a famine that does not mean he's created it that just means he is called for it and it is a discipline tool again this is one of the tools of discipline that God uses for his people we don't know in particular when this famine came but we do know that God said that if they walked in disobedience that a famine would come and God has called for it so now we see that the word of the Lord is powerful enough to command and uproot a family for seven years but it's also powerful enough to dictate natural events it is a powerful word in that it declares what nature is going to do this shouldn't surprise us because it is by the word of the Lord that all things are created they were spoke into existence we love what the book of John says right in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God all things were created by him and through him and for him we understand that right he is the word of the Lord now that is

[17:14] Emmanuel that is Jesus Christ we understand that but we also see here that the word of God is a word of power he is calling for a famine and certainly the famine will come and it is a word that bears to be respected it is a word that bears to be obeyed and so the lady faithfully obeys uproots her whole household and flees from that area why because the word of the Lord is a powerful word it is astounding when we see that and we see it in particular we can see it over and over and over again but we see here that she believed the power of the word of God enough to leave home based upon what God had commanded or called to come into existence she really was stepping out on faith in the word and that step in faith on the power of the word leads us to the second thing it is also a word of promise not only is it a word of power it is a word of promise now she was relying upon the reality that when she left the land of Israel to go into the land of the

Philistines that she would be well taken care of there why because God said to go sojourn wherever you may sojourn but she leaves for seven years and upon the end of the seven years when the famine has subsided she decides that it's time to go back and it says that she came back after seven years and she wants to get her property back now let's just put ourselves in this context for just a moment here is a lady that has led her whole family based upon what God has told her and left in a society that's really if we're just going to be bone level honest really not so concerned about what God has to say because they're raising up golden calves they're worshipping however they want to worship and they're really not obeying it too much that's why famine's coming upon the land and she goes and sojourns in the land of the Philistines which by the way are the Philistines that are sending raiding raiding parties back and forth into the land of Israel and after living amongst the enemy for seven years she decides to come back and get her land back it's not something that you would think would be very becoming but yet she understands that God had commanded her to leave and therefore she is assured of the reality that upon her return she would also get back the land which she had left behind because we understand

God has said that the land could not be sold permanently to anyone while this is not flowing through her husband we don't know but we understand that these realities are coming from her evidently the possession of the land was her possession her father must not have had any sons if we read our scripture and we see these realities that it could be the land could be passed down to the ladies if he did not have any sons and so therefore the promise of scripture was that the land would remain her land and she comes back after seven years and she's going to petition the king now can you imagine she's going to petition a king who is not so concerned about the lord god after living in the land of the enemy to give me my land and all of its produce back but god is such a god of sovereign authoritative power that it just so happens at that time that gehazi now we don't have to

think too highly of gehazi we know that he is a servant of elisha we know that elisha is a man who is at least well known by the throne rooms and the kings of the land of israel he seems to have a better relationship with him than his predecessor elijah not many kings are trying to kill elisha save the time that he wanted to cut his head off the last chapter but not many other than when the famine is so severe inside samaria but this is probably before that time so we understand that gehazi the man who really was out for self gain and self interest or in the time of naaman he was also familiar with the king so it so happens that gehazi is talking to the king about some of the wondrous deeds of elisha and he at that moment is speaking about a woman whose son elisha brought back to life and at that moment that very woman walks in to petition the king for her lands see god always has a way of putting the right people in the right place at the right time and so the king was hearing the story of god's miraculous work in an individual's life and all of a sudden that individual was sitting right in front of him and he asked her and she says yes this is exactly what happened and the king commissions a certain man to go and restore all that belongs to her she trusted the word of god was powerful enough to sustain her but she also trusted that the promises of the word of god would remain to renew her but that's not only the portion of scripture we see that refer to the promises of scripture are the promises of the word of god when we go down into the 16th chapter and we start our not 16th chapter 16th verse and we begin to see now the re-mentioning of judah that is the southern kingdom and of joram and johoram we read the reality that unfortunately during these days the wickedness of the northern kingdom has crept into the southern kingdom that is in spite of the reality that they had the temple and the priest the southern kingdom were still doing what was wicked in the sight of the lord god why well not only did they take on the practices of the northern kingdom they also took on the family members of the northern kingdom right he had as his wife the daughter of ahab and you know ahab's that king who did more wicked than anyone else and so he brought her in and became that family that family ties go back into the first pages of second kings and last pages of first kings and you see how the king of israel the king of judah began to make a covenantal agreement with one another and they began to get along all of a sudden and fellowship with light and darkness started to take place and all of a sudden you have this intermarrying and then all of a sudden you have this infiltration and now all of a sudden you have those who are reigning in judah who is not doing what is right yet god is patient look at what the word of god says in verse 19 however the lord was not willing to destroy judah for the sake of david his servant not just for the sake of david not

because david was a man after god's own heart but because god had made a promise to david look at what it says since he had promised him to give a lamp to him through his sons always in the northern kingdom when a king did what was wicked judgment was declared upon the household of that king you had multiple dynasties multiple families that were ruling in the northern kingdom not so in the southern kingdom throughout the whole entire reign of judah which extended 200 years beyond the fall of the northern kingdom some nearly 200 years beyond the fall of the northern kingdom the dynasty remains the same there is but one and it's the davidic family and as we've said before it is not because every man that ruled in the throne of david was right it's because god would not declare judgment upon that because he had already made a promise because of the promise of the word of the lord so here we see that the actions of god we've said this before were dictated by his former promises of his word and it is not saying that it was confining god god is omniscient and omnipotent he is not confined to oh well i made a promise back then so i can't do something now when god made the promise he already saw the failure and that's what's so astounding right god is not confined to time and space he does not see things as past tense present tense and future tense he sees them as they are so he sees tomorrow's failures in a present reality when you fail tomorrow and every one of us will probably stumble and fall at some point or when you fail sometime this week when god redeemed you and saved you he didn't make a promise and covenantal relationship that he would love you and secure you for all of eternity hoping you would never fail god entered into a covenantal promise with you in christ knowing that he already saw you fall it takes you by surprise but does not take him by surprise this is why the promises of the word of god are so astounding when god made the promise to david he knew that they would intermarry with the family of ahab but yet he would not bring judgment because of the promise he made it is a word of promise this is why we need to know the consistent nature of the word of god it is a word of power it is a word of promise third we notice it's a word of purpose that is it's doing something it seems to be this odd account here in verse seven it's odd if we do not go back and do our cross-reference study but it's in verse seven then elisha came to damascus now it's odd because we fast forward this is

probably after the account with naaman this is probably after the siege of samaria in which we just read about in the last chapter where the lepers go out and the arameans have fled the camp left the camp empty and everybody yet left and it was ben hadad who brought this siege of the city of samaria in which elisha was there and so this is after this so now we know that the land of aram is definitely not really friendly towards the people of israel but yet we said that elisha came to damascus he literally went into their land and that seems odd to us why would he do that well we need to understand that the people of god don't just do things they're doing things intentionally and to really understand this we have to go back to first kings we have to go back to first kings chapter 19 i'm not going to ask you to do it right now but if you go back to first kings chapter 19 you'll know this there that that's when elisha is at his pity party elijah not elisha elijah is at his lowest moment elijah has fled from the presence of jezebel he is hid under the tree he has went all the way to mount horeb or mount sinai same location when he is on mount sinai he has declared to the lord i alone am left no one else is left besides me and god says i have seven thousand who have never bent a knee nor kissed the prophet bell and so god says i have people but then god gives elijah in first kings 19 three commissions three commissions and they're very clear commissions and those three commissions he said when you leave here go to damascus and anoint hazel king of aram then go and anoint elisha as prophet in your place and after you anoint elisha as prophet of your place you will go and you will anoint the next king of judah which we have not got to him yet so i'm not going to say his name we'll see that in just a chapter or two later so he said these are your three commissions of those three commissions when elijah leaves he does one he goes and finds elisha and throws his mantle across elisha and anoints him to fill the prophetic office now that is not saying that elijah was walking in disobedience the commissions given to elijah carry over in the prophetic ministry of elisha okay even the third commission of anointing the one that would be king of the people of god is not done by elisha as a matter of fact elisha sends his servant to anoint that individual again we'll get to that in the next chapter or so so i don't want to get into get too far ahead of ourselves but when elijah called elisha to fill his place that commissioning remained those two were still outstanding these are commands of god so therefore when elisha goes to damascus he is obeying the word of god because god had said in that commission to elijah go to damascus and anoint hazel king of aram so when we open it up here in second kings chapter 8 we find that elisha all of a sudden one day goes to damascus it happens to be a day again we see the sovereignty of god when ben hadad is sick and has a question for elisha so he sends his servant hazel now at any other time to go into the foreign land and anoint an individual to be the next king would have been seen as well beyond treason right you're trying to dictate to a foreign power who's going to be their king but at this point in the sovereignty of god by the time elisha gets there ben hadad is sending the very man that elisha is to anoint as king to him with gifts that's pretty convenient right he comes to him bearing 40 camel loads of gifts and asking a question as it regards ben hadad you talk about god providing for his messengers right there's a purpose for elisha being there and it's not just to tell hazel that ben hadad is going to live yet he's going to die that's not what he's there for he is there to anoint him as the next king now we have this wrestling in our mind because it seems in our english text i know i'm throwing a lot of information at you i'm so thankful that you're you're wide awake and you've had maybe something to keep you awake today and and you're ready to hear this information but it seems when we read our text that hazel had never considered this matter and therefore if elisha had never said it maybe he would have never went and killed his master but we don't need to say that because as one bible commentator said his anointing of hazel's king gave him no more right to kill ben hadad as the anointing of samuel upon david gave david the right to go kill saul right david didn't kill saul because he didn't have that right he was anointed to be the king elisha

[ 31 : 42 ] never declares to him now go kill that man he doesn't do it what elisha does when he is looking at him and to the point that hazel is ashamed that's what the text says i mean you know that awkward silence where elisha is just staring at him he is literally looking into the depth of his soul and to the point that hazel is ashamed of the reality of what he is already intending on doing and he knows that elisha recognizes it because he's the man of god this was probably already entered into the heart of hazel and we see this because he refers to these things when elisha begins to weep he says why are you weeping he said well i see all these tragic things you're going to do the nation of israel he says what am i i can't do that but when he refers to the things being done the slaying and the burning and all this he said who am i to do such great things in his eyes these were not bad things these were things that the king of aram would do he said oh i'm not yet that person who

could do such good things but yet we notice here that the word of god is a word of purpose and we understand the further we read that god is sovereignly in control of the circumstances not just of his people but of all nations right the word of the lord has an impact even beyond the borders of those of his own people it affects all that's why elisha went to damascus to meet that individual to anoint him as the next king of which the very next day he was not through a series and before you feel too bad about ben hadad okay understand ben hadad died for his own sins we have this tendency to go well that's not right we also understand that god is righteous in his judgments and the sins of every individual he dies for his own sins so we understand this the word of the lord is a word of power it's a word of promise it's a word of purpose fourth and finally it's a word of perseverance that is it endures through it all by the time we get to the end of the chapter again we are going back and forth between the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom and we see the sad realities of the northern kingdom are beginning to have an impact on the southern kingdom we meet the next two successive kings one for eight years one for one year of judah and we are told that they both do that which is wicked in the sight of the lord god because of their influence of the house of ahab and omri they are accepting the practices of the non-believers more than they are believers and this is in spite of the reality when we look at the northern kingdom we can say they have no temple they have no priests but they do have prophets so they're really without excuse but the southern kingdom they had both temple priests and prophets and they had all the practices and the worship and they had all the sacrifices everything was there as a matter of fact it's right in jerusalem where the kings were reigning and yet in spite of this we see them failing but what we notice and again we don't want to lose heart we say this and i know i said it by way of introduction but it but it bears repeating in the midst of all this we can get caught up in what is going on but what we need to understand is that through all of this the word of the lord perseveres it remains true everything god had declared what happened does happen and it happens exactly the way he had said it would what seems to be coincidental affairs of man or bad choices of man do not catch god by surprise rather we see these matters coming about and fulfilling the word of god and even declaring it was moses himself when he led them out of the

nation of egypt and he was leading them to the edge of the promised land he told them there at the end of the book of deuteronomy that there would be a day when they would fail to walk in disobedience and god would discipline them and chastise them and send them into exile but that god would call them back these matters now are coming about right before our eyes even when we're reading it and we're we're kind of scratching our heads and we're getting confused but what we see is we see a bunch of messed up people right messed up people do not mess up the word of god they validate the word of god because it declares to us that the one consistency through it all is the word of the lord it is not the faithfulness of man it is that god is faithful as a matter of fact and we're getting way ahead of ourselves in scripture study because we'd have to get to the book of daniel and even the book of ezra and even into nehemiah before we'd really see this but it is the word of god and the perseverance of the word of god that at the end of the babylonian captivity which was 70 plus years that caused the nation back to himself them it is the facts that god had said think daniel when he's opening up and he reads in the word of the lord that the captivity would last for 70 years so he begins to pray and say god this is what you said this is what we've done so god i'm going to take you at your word it is ezra who starts the scrabble tradition of people writing and copying the word of god and starts what we would call the people who who wrote the septuagint or the greek translation of the old testament and it was ezra who was such a faithful scribe who made it his practice to study the word of god so that he may teach others who was so faithful in leading the remnant back after the issue of king cyrus and he read somewhere all the way back in the prophetic writings of isaiah that that would happen and the word of god is coming true it is these prophets who look and see the reality even when we get to nehemiah and nehemiah looks and says god this is what you said this is who we are so god would you use me to rebuild the walls it is always a return back to the word of the lord because in the midst of all of the mess the word of the lord perseveres so much so that by the time we get to the end of the book of the end of our old testaments in malachi we're given a word of the lord that a forerunner would come we have a blank page which is 400 years of silence called the intertestamental period it's over 400 years of silence think about that it's a long time and when you flip the page into the new testament in your bibles on the other side of that 400 years of silence the very first thing god says is the same thing he said last right he announces the coming of the forerunner does zachariah when he's in the temple offering

