

2 Kings Chapter 08 Verses 7-15 Bible Study

2Ki 8:7 ¶ "And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. 8 And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? 9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?"

This is most interesting to see that Elisha would go to Damascus, which was outside the boundaries of the land of promise. According to historical maps, at this time, Syria ruled and inhabited most of the land commissioned to the tribe of Manasseh.

This would be the same Benhadad, which Elisha had returned to him his armies, when Benhadad sent them to capture Elisha. Apparently, the actions of Elisha, in his total defeat of every strategy of Benhadad, had found a place in the heart of Benhadad.

It is also interesting that in his time of sickness, and hearing that Elisha was come to Damascus, suddenly Benhadad is brought to remembrance of the power of the God of Israel, and that he has faith in the man of God. Is that not an emblem of our very nature? When all is well, we can easily lay God aside, but when afflictions come, suddenly we remember God and our need of him. Suddenly, we have the will to inquire of God and ask for his help.

If you remember: we read of Hazael in **1Ki 19:15; 13 "And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? 14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. 15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: 16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. 17 And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay."** Thus, we see that Elijah anointed this Hazael to be king over Syria long ago, and now under the tenure of Elisha, we shall see the hand of God move in the life of Hazael.

10 "And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die. 11 And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. 12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. 13 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

Elisha tells him to tell Benhadad that he may recover from the sickness. However, Elisha tells Hazael, God has showed me that Benhadad shall surely die. So, what is so interesting? It seems that Elisha is telling a lie about Benhadad recovering when he tells Hazael that the king shall surely die. However, this is not a lie. God has said that Benhadad may recover from his sickness, and he would have recovered, but he shall die at the hand of Hazael instead, as we are fixing to see.

Elisha, upon looking upon Hazael, begins to weep. Hazael inquires for the cause, and Elisha tells him that he knows the evil that Hazael will do as king. After hearing Elisha's prophesy, Hazael says that even a dog would not do such things. Elisha reminds Hazael that he shall king over Israel, which we pointed out earlier that Elijah had anointed Hazael to be king over Syria.

14 "So, he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover. 15 And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took

a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead."

Hazael came to the king and gave him Elisha's message that he would recover from the sickness. Hazael did not tell Benhadad the rest of what Elisha told him. The next day Hazael took a thick cloth, wet it, and smothered Benhadad to death. Then Hazael reigned in his stead. Now we see clearly that Elisha's message of recovery was not a lie, it was circumvented by Hazael's smothering him.