

caused that through no activity of Elisha at all the man whom Elisha was to see came to see Elisha. There was no excuse in the Bible for laziness because the ravens fed Elijah gives none of us the excuse to lie back and expect the ravens to come and feed us. There is no excuse for laziness on anyone's part but neither is there any excuse for discouragement or over anxiety about any. We must work with our hands and also with our mind but the end is in God's hand. God will work it out in accordance with His will. So here we find that the king of Syria is sick right at this time. Elisha had no way of knowing this fact. He did not go because he knew that the king of Syria was sick. They didn't have bulletins distributed in Israel at this time telling of the sickness of the king of Syria. Probably it would take a long time ~~tax~~ for the news to travel across there to Israel. But Elisha was there when Benhadad is sick and the way has been prepared by the healing of Naaman. This man of God had been used of the Lord to heal the captain of the king of Syria. If he can do that, can he not heal the king himself? Benhadad knows about it. He knows what he did for his captain. Now he wants to know how about himself? Will he recover? Will he recover of his disease? Will the prophet perhaps come and give him healing from his disease? He hopes that some such thing may happen. So he sends Hazael and says, "Take a present and inquire of the Lord saying, 'Shall I recover of this disease? Is this a mortal disease? Is this a disease which I am simply going to die of--I might as well close up my affairs, there is nothing I can do, ~~xxx~~ I am sure to die? Or is it a disease which is merely a passing thing and from which I may recover?' Hazael comes to the prophet with a very elaborate present. He says, "The king of Syria has sent me to ask, shall I recover of this disease? Is this a mortal disease?" And Elisha answers (the Authorized Version translates it), "Thou mayest certainly recover. Go say unto him, thou mayest certainly recover." Of course, the Hebrew simply is the imperfect. The imperfect is not the English declaration of certainty of a future event. That is