

Elisha's Tears

2 Kings 8:7 – 9:29

2 Chronicles 21:4 – 22:9

by Don Falkos

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While serving as king of Israel, Jehoram had, for a few years, been co-regent of Judah with his father Jehoshaphat. Then Jehoram became king proper, and for the next several years Israel and Judah, though still separate kingdoms, were once again under a single ruler.

Ben-Hadad king of Aram was very ill. Elisha was in Damascus, so the king sent his servant Hazael to ask the prophet if he would recover. Elisha said, "Tell the king he will recover, but the fact is he is going to die." Elisha stared at Hazael until the servant became uncomfortable. Then the prophet burst into tears saying, "I know that you will become king of Aram. You will devastate Israel, killing men, women, and children." The next day, Hazael suffocated Ben-Hadad and succeeded him as king.

Hazael attacked Israel. Jehoram made his son Ahaziah king of Judah and went north to defend Israel. He was injured in battle and went to Jezreel to recover. His son Ahaziah joined him there.

Meanwhile, Elisha sent a man to Jehu, another son of Jehoshaphat, with instructions to anoint him king of Israel. Jehu went north with his men. As he approached Jezreel, Jehoram sent out a messenger to ask, "Do you come in peace?" The messenger rode out, spoke with Jehu, and then joined the ranks behind him. Jehoram sent another messenger who also join Jehu's ranks.

Finally Jehoram and Ahaziah rode out to meet the oncoming throng. When Jehu declared his intentions, Jehoram fled.

Jehu drew his bow and shot Jehoram in the back. He died instantly. Ahaziah fled in a different direction. Jehu and his men pursued him. Ahaziah escaped, but not without mortal injuries. Soon he too was dead.