

2 Kings 06 - Annals of Israel: The Floating Ax Head; Blinded Syrians Captured; Syria Besieges Samaria in Famine

II. The divided kingdom from the North-South division until the Assyrian invasion (1 Kings 12:1—2 Kings 17:41)

(13) Israel during Elisha's Ministry (2 Kings 2:1—8:15)

(D) Elisha's miracles reveal Yahweh as both provider and life giver (2 Kings 4:1—6:7)

(g) Elisha floats the lost axe head (6:1-7)

(E) Elisha's miracles reveal Yahweh as protector (2 Kings 6:8—8:6)

(a) Through Elisha the Lord protected Israel from the Arameans (6:8-23)

(b) Through Elisha the Lord protected Samaria from the Arameans (6:24—7:20)

(i) After Samaria was besieged by the Syrians food became scarce causing Israel to resort to cannibalism and Jehoram to blame these circumstances on Elisha (6:24-31)

(ii) Elisha was aware that Jehoram wanted to kill him (6:32-33)

2 Kings 6

(g) Elisha floats the lost axe head (6:1-7)

1 Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Behold now, the place before you where we are living is too cramped for us.

1 Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Behold now, the place before you where we are living is too limited for us.

1 One day the Guild of Prophets told Elisha, "Notice how the place where we are living is too small for us.

1 And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.

- Their accommodations had become inadequate because of the growing number of young men (prophets), a tribute to the effectiveness of Elisha's ministry

- This may have been the school at Jericho since the young men went to the nearby Jordan River for their wood

2 Please let us go to the Jordan, and let us each take from there a beam, and let us construct a place there for ourselves, to live there." So he said, "Go."

2 Please let us go to the Jordan and each of us take from there a beam, and let us make a place there for ourselves where we may live." So he said, "Go."

2 Let's go to the Jordan River, fashion some rafters, and build a place for us so we can live there."

So he said, "Go!"

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 Then one of *them* said, "Please agree and go with your servants." And he said, "I will go."

3 Then one said, "Please be willing to go with your servants." And he answered, "I shall go."

3 Someone asked, "Would you be willing to come with your servants?"

"I'm willing," he replied.

3 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them; and when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees.

4 So he went with them; and when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees.

4 So he accompanied them, and when they came to the Jordan River, they cut down some trees.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.

5 But it happened that as one of *them* was cutting down a beam, the axe head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Oh, my master! It was borrowed!"

5 But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, my master! For it was borrowed."

5 It happened that as one of them was felling a beam, his axe head fell into the water. He cried out, "Oh no! Master! The axe was on loan to me!"

5 But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.

- In the process of cutting down trees, an iron ax head flew off its handle and fell into the river

— The man wielding the ax cried out to Elisha in dismay because he had borrowed the tool

6 Then the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And when he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw *it* in there, and made the iron float.

6 Then the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And when he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw *it* in there, and made the iron float.

6 The man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he was shown the place, he cut off a branch, tossed it there, and made the iron axe head float.

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim.

- Ascertaining where the ax head had fallen into the water Elisha threw a stick into the river — Miraculously the iron implement floated to the surface, and the workman was able to retrieve it easily

7 Then he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.

7 He said, "Take it up for yourself." So he put out his hand and took it.

7 Then Elisha said, "Pick it up!" So the young man reached out and picked it up.

7 Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

- Certainly this miracle encouraged the group of faithful followers of the Lord that their God really is alive and that He would supernaturally provide for their needs, even though many Israelites in that day had turned from the true God to Baal

The expensive iron ax head was similar to Israel in that it was an instrument used for constructive and destructive purposes (Cf. Ex 19:5-6). Like the ax, Israel had belonged to another, Egypt, but God used it for a job that He purposed to do since the Exodus. Unfortunately, Israel had gone its own way (flown off the ax handle) and appeared lost to any further usefulness. Perhaps the water symbolized the nations among whom Israel had sunk, since water often represents the Gentile nations elsewhere in the OT. Nevertheless, God was able to restore His people to a place of usefulness again, even as Elisha restored the ax head to its user.

(E) Elisha's miracles reveal Yahweh as protector (2 Kings 6:8—8:6)

(a) Through Elisha the Lord protected Israel from the Arameans (6:8-23)

8 Now the **king of Aram** was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp."

8 Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel; and he counseled with his servants saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp."

8 Eventually the king of Aram went to war against Israel, taking counsel with his advisors and concluding, "In such and such a place I'll build my encampment."

8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

- The Arameans were sometimes at war and sometimes at peace with Israel during the years of Elisha's ministry. At the time of this particular incident the Arameans were making profitable surprise raids into Israel.
- "...king of Aram" - probably Ben Hadad II (Cf. 5:1)
- Of the major persons in this narrative, only Elisha is mentioned by name. This may suggest that readers should focus on the Lord and His prophet.
- In preparation for another raid, Ben Hadad planned to pitch his camp on the border of Israel from which he could strike unexpectedly

9 But the man of God sent *word* to the king of Israel, saying, "Be careful that you do not pass this place, because the Arameans are coming down there."

9 The man of God sent *word* to the king of Israel saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there."

9 So the man of God sent a message to the king of Israel, warning him, "Keep an eye on that area, because the Arameans are going to be there!"

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.

- God informed Elisha of the place of the Aramean camp, and the prophet passed this information on to the king of Israel (Jehoram) with a warning to beware

10 And the king of Israel sent *scouts* to the place about which the man of God had told him; so he warned him, so that he was on his guard there, more than once or twice.

10 The king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him; thus he warned him, so that he guarded himself there, more than once or twice.

10 The king of Israel confirmed the matter about which the man of God had warned him. Having been forewarned, he was able to protect himself there on more than one or two occasions.

10 And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

- Jehoram checked Elisha's information, found it to be correct, prepared for the encounter, and frustrated Ben Hadad's secret attack. This happened several times.

11 Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this matter; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

11 Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

11 The king of Aram flew into a rage over this, so he called in his advisors and asked them, "Will you please tell me which of us has joined the king of Israel?"

11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?
- Enraged by his continual failure to surprise the Israelites, Ben Hadad concluded that one of his men was tipping off the enemy

12 One of his servants said, "No, my lord, the king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."

12 One of his servants said, "No, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."

12 "No, your majesty," one of his servants said. "Elisha the prophet, who lives in Israel, tells the king of Israel what you talk about in your bedroom!"

12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

- An officer assured the king that there were no traitors in his camp, but that it was Elisha who had supernatural knowledge of all his plans

— The "words you speak in your bedroom" means even his most private conversations were known to the prophet

— Obviously this officer had somehow learned of Elisha and his powers

13 So he said, "Go and see where he is, so that I may send *men* and take him." And it was told to him, saying, "Behold, *he is* in **Dothan**."

13 So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and take him." And it was told him, saying, "Behold, he is in Dothan."

13 So the king ordered, "Go and discover where he is, so I may send men⁸ to take him into custody."

Later somebody told him, "Look! He's in Dothan!"

13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan.

- "...Dothan" - 12 miles north of Samaria

— In Gen 37:17-28, another hostile foreign enemy, the Ishmaelites, surrounded another prophet (Joseph) at Dothan

14 So he sent horses and chariots and a substantial army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

14 He sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

14 So the king of Aram sent out horses, chariots, and an elite force, and they arrived during the night and surrounded the city.

14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

- As long as Elisha remained free, the army of Aram would be unsuccessful, so Ben Hadad ordered that he be located and captured

— He secretly sent a strong contingent of soldiers with horses and chariots by night and completely surrounded Dothan, where Elisha was staying.

— The fact that Ben Hadad would try to take Elisha by surprise, even after the prophet had repeatedly anticipated the Arameans' moves, indicated the king's lack of faith in the supernatural origin of Elisha's ability. Thus, he needed to be convinced that *Yahweh* is the living and true God.

- This was another vain attempt to silence prophecy (Cf. 1 Kings 17:1-24; 18:1-15; 19:1-18; 2 Kings 1:1-15)

15 Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "This is hopeless, my master! What are we to do?"

15 Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

15 Meanwhile, the attendant to the man of God got up early in the morning and went outside, and there were the elite forces, surrounding the city, accompanied by horses and chariots! So Elisha's attendant cried out to him, "Oh no! Master! What will we do!?"

15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

- Early the next morning the servant was terrified to see that the whole city was under the Arameans' control, or so he thought

— He returned in a frenzy to Elisha and nervously asked, What shall we do? The servant's anxiety reflected his lack of understanding and trust in the Lord, which one would think, Elisha's previous revelations would have changed.

16 And he said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are greater than those who are with them."

16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

16 Elisha replied, "Stop being afraid, because there are more with us than with them!"

16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

- Elisha was not at all disturbed by the present situation. He encouraged his aide to stop fearing, and assured him that they had behind them a force superior to that of the enemy.

When we are magnifying the causes of our fear we ought to possess ourselves with clear, and great, and high thoughts of God and the invisible world. If God be for us, we know what follows (Rom 8:31). The opening of our eyes will be the silencing of our fears. In the dark we are most apt to be frightened. The clearer sight we have of the sovereignty and power of heaven the less we shall fear the calamities of this earth.

17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "LORD, please, open his eyes so that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

17 Then Elisha prayed, asking the LORD, "Please make him able to really see!" And so when the LORD enabled the young man to see, he looked, and there was the mountain, filled with horses and fiery chariots surrounding Elisha!

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

- Elisha then, probably with some frustration or impatience, asked the LORD to enable his servant to see this host, and the Lord did so

— God gave the servant the ability to see the normally unseen world of invisible spirits (angels) that are constantly ready to do God's bidding (Cf. Gen 28:12)

— The hills around Dothan were filled with superior horses and chariots. These appeared as fiery agents of God, suggesting to the servant their extra-terrestrial origin (Cf. 2 Kings 2:11).

— The LORD had surrounded the armies of Aram and was in complete control

18 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Please strike this people with blindness." So He struck them with blindness in accordance with the word of Elisha.

18 When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Strike this people with blindness, I pray." So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

18 When the army approached him, Elisha spoke to the LORD, asking him, "LORD, I'm asking you please to afflict this group of people with blindness!" So he afflicted them with blindness, just as Elisha had asked.

18 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

19 Then Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he brought them to Samaria.

19 Then Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he brought them to Samaria.

19 Then Elisha told the army, "This isn't the way, and this isn't the city! Follow me, and I'll bring you to the man you're seeking." Then he led them to Samaria.

19 And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

- Elisha led the blinded Aramean army into Samaria because Dothan was not the city where God wanted them

20 When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, so that they may see." So the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and behold, *they were* in the midst of Samaria.

20 When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see." So the LORD opened their eyes and they saw; and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

20 When they arrived in Samaria, Elisha asked the LORD, "Enable them to see again." So the LORD did so, and there they were—right in the middle of Samaria!

20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

- What the Israelite army might not have been able to do except with much fighting and loss of life, God did peacefully through one man

— In response to Elisha's prayer, God opened the eyes of the Arameans and they discovered that they were surrounded and helpless captives at the mercy of the king of Israel

21 Then the king of Israel when he saw them, said to Elisha, "**My father**, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

21 Then the king of Israel when he saw them, said to Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

21 When the king of Israel saw Elisha, he asked him, "Shall I execute them, my father?"

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?

- "...My father" - King Jehoram referred to Elisha respectfully as his father because he realized that this great victory had come from Elisha

22 But he answered, "You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set bread and water before them, so that they may eat and drink, and go to their master."

22 He answered, "You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master."

22 But he replied, "No! You're not to kill them! Would you execute those whom you've taken captive at the point of a sword or with your bow? Give them food and water so they can eat and drink. Then send them back to their master!"

22 And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

- It was not God's purpose to kill the Arameans, but to deliver the Israelites and teach them a spiritual lesson

— It was customary to kill captives taken in battle, but these soldiers had virtually surrendered and were therefore not to be executed

— Eating together often constituted making a covenant of peace (Cf. Prov 25:21-22; Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27; Rom 12:20). By setting a great feast before the soldiers he was expressing confidence in God's ability to control the enemy.

— Israel had absolutely nothing to fear and could even treat these soldiers as friends because God had them in His sovereign power

— Social custom now bound the Arameans to not attack the friends who spared their lives and extended the honor of hospitality to them

— Consequently, the Arameans did not invade Israel with "marauding bands" for some time (v23), but they did invade Israel again with armies (v24)

23 So he provided a large feast for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel.

23 So he prepared a great feast for them; and when they had eaten and drunk he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel.

23 So he prepared a large festival for them, and when they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them back to their master, and marauding gangs of Arameans never came into the territory of Israel again.

23 And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

- Israel's victory by means of God's prophet rather than by warriors undoubtedly should have encouraged many in Israel and Aram to fear the Almighty God

— However, Jehoram and the nation of Israel failed to turn back to the Lord as a result of this incident. Consequently God sent a more severe situation to draw them back to Himself.

(b) Through Elisha the Lord protected Samaria from the Arameans (6:24—7:20)

(i) After Samaria was besieged by the Syrians food became scarce causing Israel to resort to cannibalism and Jehoram to blame these circumstances on Elisha (6:24-31)

24 Now it came about after this, that Ben-hadad the king of Aram gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria.

24 Now it came about after this, that Ben-hadad king of Aram gathered all his army and went up and besieged Samaria.

24 Some time later, King Ben-hadad from Aram mustered his army, invaded the land, and attacked Samaria

24 And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

- This event occurred sometime between 845-841 BC

25 So there was a severe famine in Samaria; and behold, they kept besieging it until a **donkey's head** was sold for eighty *shekels* of silver, and a fourth of a kab of **dove's dung** for five *shekels* of silver.

25 There was a great famine in Samaria; and behold, they besieged it, until a donkey's head was sold for eighty *shekels* of silver, and a fourth of a kab of dove's dung for five *shekels* of silver.

25 until there was a great famine throughout Samaria. The siege lasted until a donkey's head cost 80 silver coins and one quarter of a unit of dove's dung cost five silver coins.

25 And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.

- The famine in Samaria, and the siege that caused it, were punishments from the Lord for Israel's apostasy (Cf. Lev 26:27-29; Deut 28:52-53,57; Ezek 5:10)
- "...a donkey's head" - one of the least nourishing and most repulsive parts of this animal, unclean to the Israelites, became a highly valued commodity selling for 80 shekels (ca. two pounds) of silver
- "...dove's dung" - normally considered animal fodder, cost 5 shekels (ca. two ounces) of silver

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord the king!"

26 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!"

26 While the king of Israel was walking along the city wall, a woman cried out to him. "Help me, your majesty!" she said.

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king.

27 But he said, "If the LORD does not help you, from where am I to help you? From the threshing floor, or from the wine press?"

27 He said, "If the LORD does not help you, from where shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the wine press?"

27 He replied, "No! Since the LORD won't give you victory, how will I be able to deliver you? From the threshing floor? From the wine press?"

27 And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?

- Jehoram's reply to the woman who called to him revealed his frustration. The Lord forced Jehoram to acknowledge His superiority over him.

— He was angry with the LORD for permitting this situation (Cf. v33)

— God had promised that such conditions would discipline His people if they turned from Him (Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53,57)

— Jehoram sarcastically told the woman that he could not provide bread from the grain on the threshing floor or wine from the grapes in the winepress; he was not greater than God

28 Then the king said to her, "What is on your mind?" And she said, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son so that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'

28 And the king said to her, "What is the matter with you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'

28 Then the king asked her, "What's bothering you?"

She said, "This woman told me, 'Give up your son, and we'll eat him today, and we'll eat your son tomorrow.'"

28 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow.

- Having vented his frustration with these words, the king then invited the woman to explain her problem

— She said that a friend had persuaded her to cook her son, but the next day, when the friend was to cook her son, she had hidden him

29 So we cooked my son and ate him; and I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, so that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son."

29 So we boiled my son and ate him; and I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son."

29 So we boiled my son and ate him. The next day, I told her, 'Give me your son so we can eat him!' But she has hidden her son!"

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.

30 When the king heard the woman's words, he tore his clothes—and he was passing by on the wall—and the people looked, and behold, *he had* sackcloth underneath on his body.

30 When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes—now he was passing by on the wall—and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth beneath on his body.

30 When the king heard what the woman said, he ripped his garments as he continued walking along the city wall. As the people watched, all of a sudden they noticed he was wearing sackcloth underneath his clothes, inside next to his flesh!

30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.

- Learning the desperate extent to which the siege had driven his people, the king angrily tore his robes, an expression of deep distress and sorrow (Cf. 2:12; 5:7; 11:14)

- Sackcloth, a coarse material made from black goat's hair, was worn as a symbol of repentance and self-affliction

31 Then he said, "May God do so to me and more so, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today."

31 Then he said, "May God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today."

31 He said, "May God do to me—and more also!—if the head of Shaphat's son Elisha remains on his shoulders today!"

31 Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

- As Jezebel had threatened to kill Elijah, Jehoram now threatened Elisha (Cf. 1 Kings 18:17; 19:2)

— Jehoram planned to murder Elisha as his father had murdered Naboth (1 Kings 21:1-16); he also grew impatient with the Lord as Saul had grown impatient with Samuel (v33; Cf. 1 Sam 15:11)

- Jehoram's repentance seems to have been rather shallow in view of his attitude toward God's servant Elisha; we see the king's real wickedness in his behavior

— Rather than dealing with the real cause of God's discipline, his own apostasy, Jehoram blamed Elisha who had perhaps only explained the reason for Israel's condition

(ii) Elisha was aware that Jehoram wanted to kill him (6:32-33)

32 Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And *the king* sent a man from his presence; but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent a *man* to cut off my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and hold the door shut against him. Is the sound of his master's feet not behind him?"

32 Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And *the king* sent a man from his presence; but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and hold the door shut against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?"

32 Meanwhile, Elisha was sitting in his house, along with the elders, when the king sent a man to kill him, but before the messenger arrived, Elisha told the elders, "Are you watching how this descendant of murderers has ordered my head be cut off? Look, when the messenger arrives, shut the door and hold it to shut them out! Don't you hear the sound of his master's feet right behind him?"

32 But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?

- The elders who were sitting with Elisha in his house (Cf. 5:9) were the officials of the land. Perhaps they were meeting with the prophet to discuss what should be done.

— Warned by God, Elisha announced that the king was sending someone to have him beheaded

- The prophet's instruction to the elders to bar the door against the executioner was evidently intended to postpone any violence until Jehoram himself would arrive
- The instruction would also give Elisha opportunity to announce God's message of imminent deliverance

33 While he was still talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him and he said, "Behold, this evil is from the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

33 While he was still talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him and he said, "Behold, this evil is from the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

33 While he was still talking with them, the messenger arrived to see him and delivered the king's message to Elisha, "Look! This evil has come from the LORD! Why should I wait for the LORD anymore?"

33 And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?

- When Jehoram arrived, he asked Elisha why he should wait any longer for God to act

— Apparently Elisha had told Jehoram that God had said he should not surrender to Ben Hadad, but should wait for divine deliverance

— Since that help was not forthcoming, Jehoram had decided to take matters into his own hands. As he had done many times before, he was disobeying the orders of the Lord through Elisha, acting as an unfaithful administrator (Cf. 1 Sam 15:11).

— Since, as Jehoram stated, the disaster (the siege and the famine) was from the LORD, the king should have obeyed Him