



Permissive Will Allows Hazael to Invade Judah; Joash Pays Tribute; National Reversionism Solicits National Discipline but Omnipotence Protects the Pivot

- 1) This was the second phase of an invasion mounted by the Aramean king against the Israelites. It was Hazael who fought against Jehoram, king of Israel, at the second battle of Ramoth-gilead in 841 B.C.
- 2) It was in this battle that Jehoram was injured and withdrew from the battle to convalesce at the royal palace in Jezreel, leaving Jehu in charge of the Israeli army which was eventually victorious over the Aramean army.
- 3) Following the victory, Jehu went to Jezreel where he assassinated Jehoram and pursued Ahaziah, king of Judah, to Megiddo where he was also assassinated.
- 4) Jehu reigned as king of Israel until 814 B.C. At his death he was succeeded by his son, Jehoahaz \je-h□' a-haz\ who reigned from 814-798 B.C.
- 5) In 798, Hazael led a campaign against Israel in which he defeated Jehoahaz. He then continued his campaign into the south with the intent of working his way to Jerusalem in order to conquer Judah.
- 6) This campaign is described in 2 Chronicles where we learn of divine justice selectively eliminating the heretics of Baal from leadership positions in the nation:

2 Chronicles 24:23 - Now it came about at the turn of the year [circa 796 B.C.] that the army of the Arameans came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, destroyed all the officials of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus.

v. 24 - Indeed the army of the Arameans came with a small number of men; yet the Lord delivered a very great army into their hands, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.

- 7) The sequence of events can be pieced together from these two passages. During the battle divine justice came down on the “officials,” the politicians of Judah, and those who were the heads of tribes that had under the influence of ambassador demons manipulated Joash into allowing Baal worship to regain a stronghold in the land.
- 8) Hazael is said to have taken a small army by comparison to that of Judah’s and defeated them, yet another indicator of divine discipline.
- 9) When the larger army of a client nation is defeated by the smaller army of a heathen nation then it is a clear sign of national discipline. In this case the Jews were invaded and defeated by peoples from Syria, called the Arameans, and who were of either Hamitic or Semitic origin.
- 10) Of more recent history we discover that client nation America with a military force of over two million was attacked by twenty Islamic terrorists. This is not a criticism of our military but simply makes the point that it is not the size of the army that counts but what the Lord permits.
- 11) It is said that politics make strange bedfellows and Joash’s bedmates were worshipers of Baal. No matter how big the client nation’s army happens to be, if the people and its leadership reject the worship of Jesus Christ then the permissive will of God allows it to be insulted by the smaller force of those who are enemies of the cross of Christ.



- 12) Having been defeated by heathens, Joash buys Hazael off by emptying the Temple and the palace of their treasures. Sacred objects placed in the Temple from the time of Solomon down to his father Ahaziah were used as tribute to Hazael and as a bribe for his withdrawal back to Damascus.
- 13) Judah with a superior army had been soundly defeated by a smaller force led by the heathen king of Aram. This is an interesting turn of events when compared to the reign of Asa as king of Judah (911-870 B.C.) and Baasha as king of Israel (909-886 B.C.).
- 14) Baasha became irritated that so many of his citizens were immigrating to the Southern Kingdom and he built a fortress on the border between Israel and Judah at Ramah. The king of Aram was Ben-hadad and he and Baasha signed a mutual defense treaty.

Asa didn't want the Israeli army on his border so he bribed Ben-hadad to enter into a treaty with him and to then break his treaty with Baasha. Ben-hadad agreed and invaded Israel.

Asa's reliance upon a heathen king to protect Judah instead of having faith in God to do so caused the Lord to send a prophet named Hanani \ha-nā' nā\ to rebuke the king. Asa's discipline was the specter of warfare throughout the course of his regime. The divine rationale for protection of a client nation is given by Hanani in:

2 Chronicles 16:9 - "The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

- 15) The principle for deliverance is loyalty up to God. He will "strongly support those whose heart is completely His." The words "strongly support" translate the hithpael infinitive construct of:

חָזַק *chazaq* - "to strengthen oneself"

In the Piel stem it refers to the fortification of cities or kingdoms. The Hithpael stem is reflexive and indicates that God strengthens Himself to protect, defend, and deliver on behalf of those who are said to be "perfect," the adjective:

שָׁלַם *shalam* - "complete; whole; the finishing of a work"

This does not refer to sinless perfection but to experiential sanctification or the advance in the spiritual life of one's dispensation. In context the completed work has to do with one's orientation and adjustment to the covenant contract under which all Israel is bound. Those who streams of consciousness, i.e., "hearts," have maximum doctrine circulating throughout will be protected by the omnipotence of God.

- 16) But why would God's omnipotence need strengthening? It doesn't. The implication here is that God will use His omnipotence to protect, defend, and deliver those who express loyalty up to His Word and His plan. It includes the concepts of the wall of fire, overruling will, and divine intervention.
- 17) On the other hand, if the nation—its people and its leadership—deviate from the covenant, the Law, and the ritual plan of Israel, then they will not be the recipient of God's omnipotent protection.
- 18) God therefore does not "strengthen Himself" in the sense of occasionally aggrandizing His omnipotence. The phrase is a figure of speech indicating that He chooses to utilize His omnipotence for those who are positive and He chooses not to when that volition is negative.



- 19) The principle is that client nations are either protected by the wall of fire or they are not, dependent upon its believer-citizens' disposition, attitude, and opinion about the Word of God and whether or not they positive to its doctrines.
- 20) Salvation is provided by grace through faith alone in Christ alone and is unconditional. Divine protection and preservation of the believer in time and of client nations in history are provided by grace but contingent upon positive adjustment to the justice of God.
- 21) Individuals and client nations that orient and adjust to the plan of God will be protected, blessed, prospered, defended, and delivered. Those who do not orient and adjust will not receive these grace benefits.
- 22) Were it not for the assuredness of divine discipline on those who deviate from the divine plan, then man would degenerate to the point of self-destruction and this prospect is outside the rules of engagement for the appeal trial.
- 23) Therefore, the following principle by an anonymous writer sums up the situation:

Yes, the world is going to hell in a handcart, but that is where it deserves to go. And were people not to get what they have coming, it would be a far, far darker world than the gloomy place we see.