

Spirit has caused to be selected of what happened that which is ~~that~~ vital for us to know and there is a great deal else ~~for~~ that happened and within the limits which he has chosen to restrict the book he has given us he has made a selection. We have to infer from that regarding ~~the~~ other things and regarding attitudes that would be perfectly clear to us if we were there. We should always be very careful to distinguish between our influences and what is explicitly true. It is here explicitly stated that he said to the king, "Smite on the ground, and the king smote ~~there~~ three times and ~~then~~ stopped and Elisha was angry and said, you should have smitten five or six times until you had smitten Syria, then you would have smitten Syria until you had consumed it. Now you will smite Syria but thrice." To my mind as from the material we have here we have two possible interpretations. Of those interpretations, ^{as to} which of the two you take, is a matter for your own judgment. There may be a third but I don't know what it is. All you need is to remember these two. One is the one I have given which seems to me to be a reasonable interpretation rendering from the other elements of background that aren't here given. Now there is, of course, another possibility. Here are facts here. What is the interpretation? There are two possible ones I believe. The one I have given. The other one is this. Elisha ~~was~~ ^{with} out telling the king what the rules of the game are, simply gave him a direction--smite on the ground. And the king smites three times. Now if the king had smitten ten times he would have won ten battles; if he has smitten twice, he would only have won two battles. Every time he smites ~~the~~ the ground means that he wins a battle. Naturally when he does it three times instead of ten, Elisha is angry. Why he ought to do it enough times to destroy the Syrians. Well, now, of course, if that were the case and Elisha didn't tell the king that, Elisha was a pretty petty sort of a fellow to be angry because the king didn't carry out the thing. He didn't