

of the last hour we noticed the trip of Elisha to Syria.

Elisha has gone up to Syria to anoint a man to be king of Syria. I don't think that it was ^{of} a particular importance in the economy of the progress of the kingdom of God who was king of Syria. God could use the man whoever he was for His purposes. Syria at this time was outside of the witness of God. It is only incidentally that there is a small amount of influence on ~~Syria~~ Syria, such as when ~~the~~ Naaman, the captain, was reached or when the little maid who was ~~taken~~ prisoner there speaks a word for the Lord, and doubtless there were other such incidents, but the ~~the~~ center of attention was in Israel. Nevertheless we have at this point the direct interest in the kingship of Syria by the prophet. Since we do not have this at other times in Syria and we do not have it in Mesopotamia at any time, I think that we must say that in this particular case it is more to give lessons to the people of Israel than to us that this is done than directly for its effect on Syria. You remember that the original reason for this lesson was that when Elijah was utterly downcast, God wished to restore his confidence in the power of God, and so down there at Sinai God assured Elijah that it was absurd for him to fear the queen of Israel when ~~he~~ he was serving the King of kings. That God was able not only to control the queen of Israel but to control the king of Israel and would replace the king of Israel in His own time. Not only would He do that but He would even control Baalim's stronger kingdom. God was going to make a change in the dynasty of Syria, a far stronger kingdom than Israel, a kingdom way ~~over~~ overland from Israel. God was going to show his prophet that there was no reason for Elijah to fear a mere king of Israel by demonstrating to him that God was superior even over the king of Syria. Also he declared to Elijah that there would be a new dynasty in Syria and in the form in which it was given he told him to anoint Hazael king of Syria. There is of course no evidence that an act of anointing was performed. It would seem rather merely ~~that~~ that it was a figurative way in this case of conveying to Elijah the understanding that it was God's act which would determine who would be the king of Syria. Actually, of course, an anointing wouldn't make any man a king;