

## From Elijah to Elisha

Second Kings 2

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • December 25, In the year of our Lord, 2016

### I. Second Kings 2.1 | **Elijah Prepares for Heaven**

**1 And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.**

- A. Elijah's unusual entrance was known beforehand.
- B. Does the original say heaven or heavens?
  1. [Scripture4All.org](http://Scripture4All.org) shows that it is the heavens.
  2. Thus, it could still be said that Elijah entered into Paradise in Hades.

### II. Second Kings 2.2 | **Elisha's Dedication to Elijah**

**2 Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel.**

- A. Why did Elijah say that to Elisha?
  1. Was this a test of Elisha's tenacity?
  2. Elisha proved to be reliable.
- B. Evidently Elisha knew of Elijah,
  1. at least as much as we know, and
  2. undoubtedly much more.

### III. Second Kings 2.3 | **Other Prophets Knew of Elijah's Upcoming Departure**

**3 Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"**

- A. How this news spread, we do not know.
- B. Why did the sons of the prophets tell Elisha what would happen?

1. Could you keep news of a well-known prophet, or of anyone, quiet,
2. if you knew that he would soon depart the Earth without dying?
3. Could this have also been a way of just looking to talk to Elisha about it?

#### **IV. Second Kings 2.4 | Elisha's Dedication to Elijah**

**4 Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho.**

- A. Again Elijah asked Elisha to stay put.
- B. Again Elisha confessed his determination to follow Elijah.

#### **V. Second Kings 2.5 | Other Prophets Knew of Elijah's Upcoming Departure**

**5 Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?" So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"**

- A. Still another group of sons of the prophets announces to Elisha what will happen later that day.
- B. Does Elisha sound irritated or impatient, or even excited?

#### **VI. Second Kings 2.6–7 | Elisha's Dedication to Elijah**

**6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. 7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.**

- A. After Elijah's third request for Elisha to stay in a place, it becomes obvious that Elisha will continue until the Lord takes Elijah.
- B. This was an exciting event and the fifty wanted to see what would transpire.
  1. How does this compare with the fifty in chapter one?
  2. What did they expect to see?

## **VII. Second Kings 2.8 | Elijah Divides the Jordan**

**8 Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.**

- A. Traveling from one city to the next, asking Elisha to stay put, sons of the prophets telling Elisha what would happen, certainly created a high expectation.
- B. Then this happens.
  - 1. For whom had the Jordan dried before?

## **VIII. Second Kings 2.9–13 | Elijah Goes Up**

**9 And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.” 10 So he said, “You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.” 11 Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. 13 He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan.**

- A. What do you think of Elijah’s question?
- B. What do you think of Elisha’s answer?
  - 1. Why was it a hard thing that Elisha had asked?
  - 2. This time rather than Elijah telling Elisha to remain in a location, he said something that would make Elisha want to stay with Elijah.
- C. How would you have liked to see a chariot and horses of fire?
- D. Why do you think that God took Elijah and Enoch in this fashion?
  - 1. See Genesis 5.24 and surrounding context.
  - 2. See also Hebrews 11.5.

- E. What do you think of Elisha's reaction?
1. What did he mean by what he cried out?
  2. Why did he tear his clothing in two?
  3. Why did he take Elijah's mantle?

**IX. Second Kings 2.14 | Where Is the God of Elijah?**

**14 Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.**

- A. What do you think of what Elisha did here?
1. Did he question where Elijah was?
  2. Why did he question where the God of Elijah was?
  3. Does this provide a clue that Elisha was not merely a follower of Elijah, but a follower of Elijah's God?
  4. God worked through Elijah, so Elisha wanted to be with Elijah.
- B. Did the dividing of the water answer his question?

**X. Second Kings 2.15–18 | The Prophets Wanted to Find the Body of Elijah**

**15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. 16 Then they said to him, "Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, lest perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley." And he said, "You shall not send anyone." 17 But when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, "Send them!" Therefore they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. 18 And when they came back to him, for he had stayed in Jericho, he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"**

- A. Chapter One showed fifty men seeking to get Elijah for the king.
- B. Here fifty men seek the body of Elijah.
1. Why?

2. Did they want to bury his body?
  3. Yet, these men had told Elisha that Elijah would be taken up.
- C. Sometimes you have to let someone do what they insist on doing that they might see you knew the truth.

### **XI. Second Kings 2.19–22 | Pleasant City, But Bad Water and Land**

**19 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren.” 20 And he said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him. 21 Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, “Thus says the LORD: I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.” 22 So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.**

- A. What did they expect Elisha to do?
1. They knew that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha.
  2. They believed he could fix the water and the land.
- B. Do you think the same source of water is still cured today?

### **XII. Second Kings 2.23–24 | Forty-Two Young Men Lose Their Lives**

**23 Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!” 24 So he turned around and looked at them, and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths.**

- A. What do you think about this incident?
- B. Remember that at Bethel, Jeroboam had set up calf worship, and it remained as such during the reigns of the successive kings of Israel.
1. What kind of treatment then would a prophet of Jehovah receive there?
- C. What is meant by the age of the males who mocked Elisha?
1. Consider the different versions:
    - a) NKJV – Youths

- b) NASB – Young lads
  - c) NIV – Youths
  - d) ESV – Small boys
  - e) ASV – Young lads
  - f) KJV – Little children
2. Robert Jamieson says that the same Hebrew word is used in the following to refer to full-grown men:
- a) Gen 41.12
  - b) 2Ch 13.7
3. Therefore, do not picture them as the ESV and KJV label them.
- D. What did they mean by saying, “Go up, you baldhead!”
- 1. They wanted him to depart even as Elijah had departed.
- E. Fulfilling the curse showed that Elisha had indeed replaced Elijah.

### **XIII. Second Kings 2.25 | Elisha Travels**

**25 Then he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.**

- A. The evil kings and people of Samaria and Israel may have been without the rebuking of Elijah, but the Lord provided a replacement.
- B. See Isaiah 48.22; 57.21.