

What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Eight – 2 Kings 2:1-11

We’re going to talk about physical death because our hero is going to die in this episode.

There have been a lot of things written in the Christian community on physical death. It seems like everybody talks about it but nobody ever thinks it’s going to happen to them.

There are two things that people never get ready for. One is their own physical death and the second is the sure possibility of Christ coming again. There’s just a funny lethargic indifferent opinion. We get shocked when we see our Marines shot up. We get shocked when we see a car accident. Or we really go through the valley when somebody close to us dies.

But we always are thinking that’s really bad. It happened to them but it’ll never happen to us.

One guy was trying to put in poetic fashion when he wrote the following words:

Sometimes when the day is ended, and it’s round of duty’s done,

I watch at the western windows, the gleam of the setting sun,
When my heart has been unquiet and its longings unbeguiled
By the day's vexatious trials and cannot be reconciled.
I look on the slope of the mountains and o'er the restless sea,
And I think of the beautiful city that beeth not far from me.
And my spirit is hushed in a moment as the twilight falls
tender and sweet,
And I cross in fancy the river and kneel at the Master's feet,
And I rest in the shade that there falleth from the trees that
with healing are ripe,
That shadow the banks of the river, the river of water of life.
(source unknown)

Why is it that we have such fear of physical death? Probably because we have no control over it. That's the great leveler. We can live life to ourselves and for ourselves until that point and then we have no alternative. If God is out there, and we know He is—so we can say “since He's out there”—we're going to meet Him face-to-face. The Bible says that.

“It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment.” (ref. Hebrews 9:27)

For the believer it's “absent from the body and immediately present with the Lord.” (ref. 2 Corinthians 5:8)

Ray Stedman talks about Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse when his wife died. He was taking his children home and while they were going down the freeway, he asked them as a big old truck came by and the shadow of the truck cast itself on the car, he

says, “Which would you rather be run over by, the truck or the shadow?” And a kid said, “Well by the shadow, of course dad. The truck would kill us.” He said, “You know the psalmist said, ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I need fear no evil.’ Christ was run over on Calvary. He died that we don’t have to. We’re just simply going to be with the Lord.

(source known)

Elijah’s coming to the end of his life in these verses that come under consideration so it’s going to be fun for us to study these verses together.

Elijah storms into the palace of Ahab and he says, “It isn’t going to rain for three and a half years.” And for Ahab and Jezebel that is really sad news, but they laugh about it and mock him.

For three and a half years it doesn’t rain. Elijah’s taken care of by the Brook Cherith for eighteen months and then with the widow of Zarephath for the next two years.

And remember in the third episode the Lord said to Elijah, “Go reveal yourself to Ahab” and he came out of hiding. He met Obadiah on that occasion and they set up that appointment—the Super Bowl on Mount Carmel.

In episode number 4 we saw God marvelously answer his prayer by sending fire out of heaven to consume the sacrifice that was there to convince the people that it was God.

In the very next episode, it's like going from the sublime to the ridiculous. Jezebel sends a telegram and says, "If I don't make your life like one of my prophets by tomorrow, may the gods do that to me." In other words, he's going to die.

Elijah just sees that signature on there of Jezebel and he takes off. He goes all the way across the land to Beersheba, he goes on into the wilderness and he throws himself under a juniper tree and he says, "I want to die. It's all over." He's totally depressed when he says, "I want to just get it over with. I want to get out of here."

And we saw in the end the Lord says, "That's alright. Go anoint your substitute. Elisha is going to take over for you."

And for these last ten years we have followed the rest of his life. It's been ten years since that experience.

There have been a lot of things that have been happening during those ten years. First of all, because Ahab wanted the vineyard that was next to his place, the Lord said, "Because you killed Naboth you're going to die." And Ahab died.

Ahaziah, his son, took the reins in our last study. We saw him die after just a two year reign.

So as we come to this study, Jezebel is also gone and so there's just one guy really left, out of our episode. It's kind of like we save the best to last. We come down to the last guy.

Elijah's still around, Elisha's working for him. There's nothing more wonderful than these verses we're going to look at. There's no richer, more blessed, more comforting passage of scripture anywhere in the whole of the Bible than these verses. They are just so special.

Now let's pick up at verse 1.

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

“And it came about when the Lord was about to take up Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.”

Now we've seen those pictures in Sunday school of Elijah going up in a chariot. Well, he didn't go up in a chariot. Chariots of fire came but he went up in a whirlwind. He was caught in a tornado and was just whirled skyward as the Lord took him home.

Now notice some things about that first verse:

“And it came about when the Lord was about to take up Elijah”

What does that tell us? That tells us that we don't have any choice about when it's over for us. Remember Ahaziah in our

last passage? He said, “I’m not going out to battle. I’m going to stay here in the palace. The rest of those guys can go fight. I’d rather be a live chicken than a dead duck and I’m not going out.”

And the next morning he gets up and looks out the window, falls out and he’s splattered all over the patio.

Our lives are in God’s hands. And He gives us all opportunities to respond. And when we fail to respond, there comes a time when we don’t have any more chances to respond. And we have no control over that, although we think we do.

There are just so many people who think they’re the exception. Like Frank Sinatra—“I did it my way. And God’s going to be obligated to accept me!”

God gave us life and He’s got a right to take it when He’s ready. God prepared heaven too and He’s got a right to tell us how we’re going to get there. And there’s only one way to get there. That’s through a personal relationship with His Son, the Lord Jesus. We can argue with it all we want, fight it, but we’re not going to change it, because the Lord is very compassionate. He’s very loving. He’s very patient and kind. But He’s going to do it His way, not ours. And we’re not going to be an exception to the case.

“when the Lord was about to take up Elijah”

Now Elijah wanted to go ten years ago, didn't he? Right there under the juniper tree he said, "I'm not any better than my fathers, let me die. Let me get out of here."

The Lord said, "No, we've still got some things we're going to do for ten years."

And what's so neat about our study is we get to see what happens during those ten years.

Remember when he was out there in the old cave, he said, "I only am left to serve and I've run away because they'll take my life"? And the Lord said, "Look, there are seven thousand guys that have not bowed their knees to Baal yet. You just relax. Let Me show you what can be done."

"And it came about when the Lord was about to take up Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal."

Alright, let's look at what happened during those ten years. Gilgal is the first city that they hit after Jericho when they came across into the land. And that's the location of the main school of the prophets. They've been working on setting up a school for prophets. Ahab and Jezebel killed all the prophets except for those hundred guys that were hidden in the cave by Obadiah. All the prophets have been gone, so it's been tough to find godly prophets.

The first thing that Elijah and Elisha do is found a school for

prophets in Gilgal. They had so many prophets involved, they opened a branch school down in Jericho. And then they opened another branch school in Bethel.

What we've got right now are two seminary professors saying goodbye to all their students. Elijah has just stood before the class at Gilgal and he's given his farewell address. And as he finishes that farewell address, notice he's going to go down to Bethel and to Jericho. He's basically saying goodbye to all of the guys.

Isn't that neat? Over ten years God has prospered these three schools of the prophet, so he's leaving behind a tremendous heritage.

That's a lot better than dying and depressed under a juniper tree out in the backside of the desert somewhere, isn't it? Look at verse 2.

v. 2 And Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here please, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

"And Elijah said to Elisha, 'Stay here please, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.' But Elisha said, 'As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.'" So they went down to Bethel."

Why do we think Elijah said that? That's kind of a private

thing, isn't it? We kind of feel embarrassed when we're sick and we're really suffering. We'd just rather be by ourselves and we just don't want a lot of public acclamation at the time of our death. We kind of just want to slip into the Lord's presence, by ourselves. It's bad enough to leave everybody anyway and it's as if we're just emotional about saying goodbye. It's just better to do it by ourselves.

Elijah and Elisha have had a neat relationship for over ten years. Elijah knows that and he's giving him some space. He's saying, "Look, I'm going on to Bethel. Don't worry about me. You can just stay here at headquarters. Just let me go."

And Elisha's saying, "Over my dead body. I want to drain out of you everything I can before you leave. And I know you're leaving. I've got a sense of what's getting ready to happen."

And he says, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you."

Then they go down to Bethel.

Remember in Ruth 1 when Naomi's getting ready to go back to the land and Ruth and Orpah, the Moabitish sisters, they've been married to Ruth's sons and they died? And since they're all three widows, Ruth and Orpah want to go back up to the land and to the city of Bethlehem.

Naomi just begs them. She says, "Y'all stay here and find some husbands among your people. I don't have any more

boys.” But Ruth says this—this is so beautiful.

“Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from following you. For where you go, I’ll go. And where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God my God. And where you die, I’ll die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the Lord do to me and worse if anything but death parts you and me.” (ref. Ruth 1:16-17)

So we’re going down to Bethel—the second seminary. And he gives his farewell address to those guys there.

When they get there, look what happens—verse 3.

v. 3 Then 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; be still.”

“Then the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha and they said to him, ‘Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?’ And he said, ‘Yes, I know; be still.’”

“Now man you guys just keep still and listen to him. Don’t worry about that he’s going to die. Just relax.”

They want to hear all that he has to say. And there’s just something about this farewell sermon. If this was our last message, what would we say?

What was the last thing Jesus said to His men in the upper room? How did He talk to them?

Christ talks to them in the upper room, just answering their questions. And finally He says, “Don’t be troubled in your hearts. You believe in God, believe also in Me. I’m leaving you sure, but don’t get troubled about it. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so I would have told you. I’m just going to go get a place ready for you. And when I get ready, I’m going to come again and take you to be with Myself. Take you to be with Me.” (ref. John 14:1-3)

Then he describes a few things, like going to the garden to pray. And then Christ, of course, is apprehended by Judas Iscariot and the henchmen. And then Calvary follows the next day.

Elijah probably stood up before these guys and said, “Now listen, I want to tell you how great God is. And I want to share some things from my own experience. And I’ve got three P’s to my message. I’m going to tell you about God’s POWER. I want to tell you about God’s PROVISION. And I want to tell you about God’s PROTECTION. So you guys will never forget it.”

“I want to tell you about the time on Mount Carmel when I saw God’s power send fire out of heaven. And I want to tell you about the power when God’s fire came out of heaven and wiped out Ahaziah’s men that came to catch me. And I want to tell you about God’s provision. For three and a half years I

lived with God sending the ravens to feed me and multiplying the meal in the jar when everybody else was starving. Now I want to tell you about God's protection because Jezebel wanted my hide for the last fifteen or twenty years! And God's protecting me to this very moment."

"God will always take care of you. He'll watch over you. He'll see to it that everything's fine." When he finally got through with that he probably said, "Guys listen, I haven't lived a perfect life. I made a horrible mistake. When Jezebel sent that telegram I ran, I got to the desert, and I was out of the will of God. And I had to hear the Lord say, 'Why are you here?' Guys I want to tell you, it ain't worth it to be out of the will of God. You're in the will of God, God's going to protect you and take care of you. But I want to tell you, that's a horrible consequence."

"I want you guys to do several things. I want you to be men who pray. I want you to be men who are obedient to the Word. I want you to be men of courage. I want you to be faithful unto death. Teach the scriptures and tear down the idols and exalt Jehovah and speak as men who are sent by Him!"

He probably walked out of there, those guys with their eyes wet as this old, distinguished gentleman in his leather girdle. Elijah the Tishbite, a warrior for God, says goodbye.

v. 4 And Elijah said to him, "Elisha, please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live I will not

leave you.” So they came to Jericho.

“And Elijah said to him, ‘Elisha, please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.’”—third seminary—“But he said, ‘As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live I will not leave you.’ So they came to Jericho.”

v. 5 And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?” And he answered, “Yes, I know; be still.”

“And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, ‘Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?’ And he answered, ‘Yes, I know; be still.’”

So we have the same thing. Now he preaches his last message. The final statements are made. And as he bids farewell to those in Jericho, fifty of those guys are so touched by that. Elijah’s like a piper when he walks out of there.

Ever been somewhere where and been overwhelmed by something that’s been said? We want to immediately go, don’t we? We want to be with those people. We’re just so touched and we have such a warm feeling in our heart and we just want to go and hug them. Those fifty guys must have felt that.

“And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached

Elisha and said this to him,”

v. 6 Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” And he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on.

“But then Elijah said to him, ‘Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.’ And he said, ‘As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.’ So the two of them went on.”

His commitment is, “As the Lord lives, and as you live, I will not leave you.”

v. 7 Now fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.

“Now fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.”

They’re standing there by the river. It would be great if we could hear the conversation going on between these two men, because now Elijah knows that the time has come.

v. 8 And Elijah took his mantle and folded it together and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on

dry ground.

“And Elijah took his mantle”—the mark of the prophet—“and folded it together and he struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.”

Now has that ever happened in the Bible before? Remember when Moses was up against it at the Red Sea, God parted it. When they came up to the land and Joshua got ready to go over, the priests got their feet wet and the river dried.

When they came into the land it was like that. Now they’re getting ready to walk over the Jordan, out of the land. He’s literally leaving the land of Canaan for heaven itself.

And these two guys walk over on dry ground. Why are they doing that?

Remember in that first study Elijah was from the land Gilead. Gilead is on the east side of the Jordan. He’s just going over to his physical, earthly home so he can go on to his heavenly home from there.

v. 9 Now it came about when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”

“Now it came about when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, ‘Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you.’ And Elisha said, ‘Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.’”

Well sometimes when we get ready to leave we want to do something special. And he just wants to be the giver in this way.

Elijah loved Elisha so much. He was this young understudy. He was, as he looked at him, he says, “What can I do for you? I want to do something for you. I’ve done something for all these other guys. I’ve talked to all the prophets, now I want to do something for you.”

And when Elisha asks for a double portion of his spirit, he had in mind the laws of inheritance in the land. The first born always got two portions and the second born got one portion.

Remember when the prodigal son came to his father and he said, “Give me so I can go”? The laws of inheritance meant that the oldest boy got two thirds, the prodigal got one third. And so he’s saying, “You’ve given all the prophets their inheritance, I am your first-born. I’m your closest so I want a double portion of your spirit.”

There’s no place for the dividing up of the Holy Spirit—some Christians getting one portion and some Christians getting two.

There's a teaching going around today that we get the Spirit when we come to know Christ. But we really get zapped later and we get a whole bunch more of Him. And they pray this prayer: "Oh God, give me a double portion of the Holy Spirit!"

The Holy Spirit is a person, not a force. Not an IT. Not a mystical power. He is a person and He comes to reside in us.

And the question is not us getting more of the Spirit, but the Spirit getting more of us that brings about fulfillment in life.

When He comes in, He's a resident. The secret is to make Him president and let Him take over.

A lot of Christians never get that. The Bible says we can grieve the Holy Spirit by sin. And we can quench the Holy Spirit by saying no to Him. And as a person, He can't function. And that's true.

Some people really come to the point where they make the Lord lord of their lives and the Holy Spirit takes over and they have joy. They're like this guy getting up at four in the morning and feeling that he wants to get close to the Lord and really wants to walk with Him and he's got his priorities straight and he's really living for Him. That's right.

But it is not right to take a prayer like this and say, "Give me a double portion," while the rest of them sit around with just one portion.

There are not any men in the world with a monopoly on the Holy Spirit. But there are some men in the world upon whom the Holy Spirit has a monopoly. And that's Ephesians 5:18.

Ephesians 5:18

...be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And that's the part of this message that we need to understand.

Now what does it mean "a double portion of [his] spirit"?

Well, there are several things that we're going to learn when we get to the study of Elisha.

1. His ministry is just twice as long.
2. He does twice as many miracles as that of Elijah.

Those two things in themselves would be a double portion. The miraculous is going to come out even more in his life.

"You've blessed all the guys in school, now bless me with a double portion!"

Now how does Elijah respond to that?

**v. 10 And he said, "You have asked a hard thing.
Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from**

you, it shall be so for your but if not, it shall not be so.”

“And he said, ‘You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for your but if not, it shall not be so.’”

He puts a stipulation on it. He says, “That’s a hard thing to ask because that’s the Lord’s determination, that’s not mine.”

That’s the only reason he says that. He says, “but if you ought to see me when the Lord takes me home, then that’s going to be an indication to you that the Lord’s going to give you what you’ve just requested.”

That’s a nice way to put it, isn’t it? That leaves the ball in the Lord’s court and He can do with it whatever He likes.

Jeremiah 33:3

Call unto Me and I’ll answer thee and show you great and mighty things which you know not.

Jeremiah 32:27

Behold I am the Lord God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?

No, not at all. He can handle it!

v. 11 Then it came about as they were going along and talking, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

“Then it came about”—I wish I could have heard them in this last little conversation. Wouldn’t this have been the neatest thing to sit in on?

One of the things that’s going to be fun about heaven is we get to fill in all the places where there are spaces. We’re going to be able to talk to these guys and ask them what they talked about.

What are we talking about at this particular point?

“they were going along and talking, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.”

There’ve been a lot of guys caught up. And there’s going to be a whole bunch caught up too, very quickly, and it could be today.

When we go back in the Bible, Enoch walked with God and the Lord took him up. One day the Lord said, “You know this is so cool. Let’s just keep on walking.” He just took him to the house is all—took him home.

When we come to a guy like Elijah, the Lord just took him home.

We read in Acts, “you shall receive fire after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto Me, both Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the uttermost part of the earth”—the last words He said.

Acts 1:9

After he had said these things, he was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received him out of their sight.

How about Acts 8:39?

Remember Philip was walking along and an Ethiopian eunuch was reading in Isaiah in his chariot and Philip—the guy stops—Philip says, “What are you reading?” He says, “I’m reading Isaiah the prophet and I don’t understand it.” Philip says, “Well, fancy meeting you here!”

He jumps in the chariot, leads him to the Lord, and the guy says, “What’s hindering me from becoming a Christian?” He says, “Nothing.” So they pull the chariot over to the side of the road, the guy invites Christ into his life, they go down to the river and have a little baptismal service, and this is what it says:

Acts 8:39

...the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but he went on his way rejoicing.

Paul says:

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

“I know a man who was caught up to the third heaven. I don’t know whether he was in the body or out of the body...

This was most likely when he was stoned in Lystra, when he was totally unconscious. He was snatched up and he says:

“The things that I see I can’t even put into words!” Then he was snatched away.

John, numerous times on the Isle of Patmos, says, “I was carried away by the Spirit and I saw this and I was carried away by the Spirit there and I saw God.”

Isn’t that interesting? This whole thing is so different than we would have planned for the end of this.

When we look in 2 Kings 6, we’re going to see Elijah. He’s going to remember these chariots of fire. Because when he is in a tough situation, he tells his servant, “Don’t worry there’s more with us than is with them.”

2 Kings 6:17

And Elijah prayed: “Oh Lord I pray, open his eyes that he can see.”

How different are the Lord’s ways than our ways. He wanted it ten years earlier, didn’t he?

Isaiah 55:8-9

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” saith the Lord. “For as the heaven are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

“I can really work it out and I can really handle it! You just let me do it!

Let God do it His way! It’s going to be neat when it all turns out! And it’s all going to fit together.

The thief on the cross was hanging there next to Christ. Christ said, “Since you recognize who I am and you asked me to remember you. Today you’re going to be with me in the paradise.” He was caught away from that cross when e died and went to be with the Lord.

The Bible calls physical death being absent from the body, present with the Lord. (see 2 Corinthians 5:8). We know where the Lord is and we know where we are. We’re just dumping a worn-out garment and heading to the house! We’re free from this thing.

Somebody said, “Death is the anesthesia that God uses while He’s changing bodies.”

But the biggest thing of all, this is a picture of the next prophetic event. This is exactly what’s going to happen next.

And if it happened today, we shouldn’t be surprised. First Thessalonians 4 has the very same thought in these words. Listen to it:

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17

The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be snatched away, caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And 1 Corinthians 15 says:

1 Corinthians 15:51

...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...

Blink one eye here and blink the next one there. That’s how fast that event is going to be when He snatches him home.

Here they are talking together and all of a sudden, whirlwind!

Woosh! And he's gone to the Lord.

Stephen, as he was being stoned in Acts 7, says:

Acts 7:56

I looked up and I saw heavens open and I see the Son of God standing at the right hand.

The Lord's there—Stephen's here. The last rock falls—Stephen's there and the Lord's standing so He can walk him into the house. Because He usually sits at the right hand of the Father, but now He's standing because one of His sons—one of His children—is coming home.

The first person we're going to meet is the Lord. He's not going to say, "Come on and sit down a little while! I'll get to you later!" He's going to be just like the son of the prodigal. He's going to run down the road and He's going to get His arms around us and say, "Welcome home. You played a good game. We love having you at the house. Come on in. There's a bunch of your friends here. You're really going to love this place. I've taken care of everything."

Show us our room, get us moved in, take a shower and settle down. Show us around the place for the rest of eternity. It's going to be incredible.

Well, the one thing that happens is that the servant is removed but the Lord's still faithful.

Men are dispensable elements. God is the only indispensable one. And the work goes on. Elijah's gone.

We cannot measure the joy that's going to be ours when we go into the presence of the Lord. That is if we can say with the apostle Paul, "I fought a good fight, I finished the course, I kept the faith. I did my homework and I'm ready. I've prepared to meet my God."

And if we sit around and not buy up our opportunities, it's not going to be all that glorious. We'll shrink away in shame. But we still have some time.

There are some lessons that come out of this and they are so neat. Isn't that a precious way to wrap this thing up?

Lesson #1: Our lives are in His hands. And when the time to depart comes it's chosen by Him, not us.

Elijah has lived a good life. He's been a faithful prophet. The Lord is the one who chose for him to come home this way at this time. He wanted to do it ten years earlier.

Lesson #2: Death for the believer is a triumphant entry into heaven.

Moral cease from fear and sorrow,
God prepares for the morrow.
Compose yourselves,

Yield to the will of Jehovah
and do not sadden my heart.
He leads in triumph.
(source unknown)

Lesson #3: This passage is a picture of the rapture of the church.

Lesson #4: The Lord's way of doing things is always better than our way.

Lesson #5: An effective ministry reproduces itself in the lives of others.

He has effectively reproduced himself in the lives of these prophets in Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho.

2 Timothy 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Our responsibility in light of this passage is to pick up the mantle that's been dropped and carry it on for the glory of God.

Elijah's home. Elisha remains to carry on the work of the Lord.

Father, we love You and we thank You for this very special passage of scripture. Lord, we realize again that in our hearts we don't really understand how all this works. It says we are chosen in You before the foundation of the world, but while we're here we've got a right to choose or to reject You. And it's so hard to put all that together and understand it. Lord, we just pray that even though we don't know exactly when these events are going to happen, we'd be a prepared people for the inevitable, knowing that since You have spoken it it's going to happen and Your reputation would be at stake if it didn't. And there's never a promise which You have given that's never been fulfilled. So help us to live and act that way. Thank You for refreshing us with a life like Elijah. For the joy of studying him, he'll always be a very special person to us and we're going to really look forward to meeting him when we get there. We love You and pray now that You'd really watch between us. In Jesus' name, amen.

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What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Eight – 2 Kings 2:1-11

NOTES

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

v. 2 And Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here please, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.

v. 3 Then 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; be still.”

v. 4 And Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho.

v. 5 And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?” And he answered, “Yes, I know; be still.”

v. 6 Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” And he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on.

v. 7 Now fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.

v. 8 And Elijah took his mantle and folded it together and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

v. 9 Now it came about when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”

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v. 10 And he said, “You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for your but if not, it shall not be so.”

v. 11 Then it came about as they were going along and talking, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Kings 2:1-11 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Who has the Lord prepared to take the place of Elijah?

3. What is Elisha’s response to Elijah when he says to stay in Gilgal in verse 2?

4. What message do the sons of the prophets have for Elisha in verse 3?

5. Where does Elijah want to go next, according to verse 4?

6. What message do the prophets in Jericho have for Elisha, according to verse 5?

7. What request does Elisha make of Elijah before they depart, according to verse 9?

8. How was Elijah taken home to glory, according to verse 11?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lessons have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We learn that our lives are in His hands. When it is time for us to depart, this is the time chosen by Him and not by us.

LESSON #2: Death for the believer is a triumphal entry into his heavenly inheritance.

LESSON #3: This passage is a picture of the rapture of the church.

LESSON #4: The Lord's way of doing things is better than our way.

LESSON #5: An effective ministry reproduces itself in the lives of others.