

What You Need to Know About ELISHA:

**“Heir of the Spirit:
‘What wish shall I grant you
before I am taken away’ (2 Kings 2:9)”**

Study Number One – 2 Kings 2:12-25

One of God’s great vehicles that’s very seldom studied is a man by the name of Elisha. Before we can put him in context and actually look at this first study, let’s look at a little background and kind of put some flesh on this individual so that we can relate to him.

God promised in Genesis 3 that as a result of sin there was going to be a seed that was going to come. That seed was promised in Genesis. We know that the seed of the woman was going to be Jesus Christ.

God, to bring that seed into the world, needed a nation, a people, through whom He could bring that seed. Abraham was called out of Ur of Chaldees. He was given an unconditional covenant that God was going to be obligated to see to it that his seed would be multiplied and that his name would be great and he was going to be blessed, he was going to be the father of many nations.

Out of Abraham came Isaac and the promise continued. And

out of Isaac came Jacob and Esau. But the promise went through Jacob.

Jacob with the twelve sons forms the twelve tribes of the nation Israel. And out of that nation Israel, when we come to the book of Exodus, we find them in a land that's not theirs for 130 years, just like the covenant had said.

And under the leadership of Joseph, God brought that seed out of the land of Egypt up to the shores of the Jordan River to Kadesh Barnea. Miraculously he delivered them through the Red Sea and from the Egyptians, depositing them and they traveled on to the shores of Jordan of Kadesh Barnea. And then they made the mistake that everybody makes, it seems these days, and that was instead of just believing God and moving ahead they formed a committee.

So they sent twelve guides into the land. There's a little statement that fits here: "God so loved the world that He didn't send a committee." If we want to get a job done, pick somebody out and get after it.

Well, they came back with a majority minority report. The majority said, "No, I say you can't make it." The minority said, "Yeah we can." Joshua and Caleb were the only two.

God said, "Now for 40 years you're going to wander in the wilderness until this generation dies off. And then Joshua and Caleb are the only two who get to go into the land."

So as they came up to the shores of the Jordan after 40 years, Moses wanted to go in too. But the Lord said, “No, you’re not going in. Joshua’s going to lead them in. Caleb’s going to be the other one that’s going to get to go in.”

Now you’d think, after we read all of the story of these people when they come to the land, that it’s going to be out of sight. They’re just going to have the greatest life that a person could ever enjoy as a nation and as a people.

Well that just shows us how mistaken we are. Well once they got into the land, the book of Joshua records all the victories. And the book of Judges is one of the most tragic periods of apostasy, immorality, and idolatry. When we come to the end of the book of Judges the last verse says, “Everybody did that which was right in their own eyes.” (ref. Judges 21:25)

We can justify anything we do. And so it was right as far as they were concerned.

And at the end of the book of Judges they’re clamoring for a king to be like other nations. And God says, “Oh I’ll give you a king.” Saul became their king.

David followed in his footsteps and then Solomon. Flamboyant playboy that he was, the kingdom was finally desecrated under his leadership.

And then at that point the nation is divided. We have Israel in the north and Judah in the south—that’s 982 B.C. In the

south Jerusalem is the center of all religious activity and the responsibility for the city. In the north Samaria is the place.

And so when we begin to read the Kings and the Chronicles, we have the story of a divided nation. We have kings that rule in the north and kings that rule in the south.

The difference between these two kingdoms in the north, is they united one thing, and that is everybody did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. There was not one good king that ruled in the north.

In the south it's a little bit different. We have a few good guys sprinkled in with the bad guys. It got so bad that the northern kingdom went into captivity to the Syrians in 721 B.C.

In the south it lasted a little longer, until 586 B.C. and the Babylonians overtook the southern kingdom. Now that's the tragic story of the history of Israel.

Now let's put the prophets where they belong, and especially the man that we're going to study. He comes in the picture of the northern kingdom. When the kingdom was divided in 982 B.C. we had several kings that come, one right after another, and there's family feuding, fighting and killing.

So that after 56 years in the north, there have already been six kings, and you've got the seventh one coming to the throne and his name is Ahab. Ahab the son of Omri did more to actually cause the Lord to be provoked to anger than any

other king before him.

And on top of that, he married Jezebel. Talk about a woman who was vile and wicked. She was the epitome of evil. She didn't mind killing the prophets of God. In fact, when she came in one of the things she had to agree with was, because she was a foreigner from the Phoenicians, "I'm going to bring my prophets of Baal in with me."

And right there in the capital at the table, the king's table in the cafeteria, 450 of those priests of the prophet Baal had the privilege of eating at the table and being sustained. This brought the new religion. It's the religion of the "now" generation. Sex, silver and Satan—do your own thing. And everybody just looked at that and thought, "Wow! Baal's really it!" And they followed their queen.

Well God was not a bystander in this situation. He picked out Elijah the Tishbite. He sent him into the presence of the palace of Ahab and he said, "Ahab, I've got news for you. Because of what you've done, God is going to bring judgment upon this country. There's going to be an economic collapse. For three and a half years there's not going to be any rain or dew upon the earth." And he left.

And everybody's kind of laughing and saying, "Man, oh man, somebody just got off of the funny farm! For him to come in here and talk like that, how silly!"

But after six months nobody was laughing because it was

serious business. There's our star. He's down by the Brook Cherith and the Lord's sending the ravens over there to feed him and take care of him. And then that brook dried up and he went over to the widow of Zarephath for a couple of years on the other side of the land to be taken care of.

Then he comes back into the presence of Ahab and says, "Ahab, it's all over." And Ahab says, "You're the trouble maker." And then Elijah says, "Yeah, I'm afraid you've got it on the wrong shoulders buddy. You're it. If you hadn't forsaken the promises and the commandments of God and gone after the Baal's we wouldn't ever have had this problem."

And Ahab says, "Well let's just find out who really is God then." So they have what we can call the Super Bowl on Mount Carmel—we have the Carmel Convention. They have all the prophets of Baal on one 30 yard line and Elijah all by himself down on the other 30 yard line. All the stands are filled with a bunch of the silent majority who are watching. And all we have is Elijah and God on the other side of the field.

From nine o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon, nothing significant happens because the prophets of Baal are trying to call fire out of heaven to consume their sacrifice. And when people are sitting around for six hours watching nothing happen, they're usually at the refreshment stands or everywhere else and not paying attention.

Finally Elijah says at three o'clock, "Look fellas, are you

through? Let me show you what's gonna happen." He steps forward and says, "God, the living God, we'd like a little fire down here." And the fire came.

He went up to the mountain and began to pray and ask God to send the rain to refresh the land. And after he had prayed seven times for the rain to come, he went to Ahab and said, "You better get in your chariot and get to Jezreel because it's gonna rain." And on the way while Elijah's running in front of Ahab's chariot singing, "I've seen fire and I've seen rain," the rains came.

And on the way to Jezreel, when he got to the house, Ahab told Jezebel everything that had happened. She sent a caravan to Elijah saying, "I'm going to do to you tomorrow what you did to my prophets, let the gods do it to me." In other words, "I'm going to take your life."

Elijah got scared and runs into the wilderness, casts himself under a juniper tree and said, "Lord, I'm turning in my prophet's badge. I'm through."

Oftentimes we think we're totally indispensable. "I am the only one who's not bowed a knee to Baal! I'm all that's left and everybody else has forsaken you Lord."

The Lord said, "Let's get the stats right. There are at least 7,000 that haven't. And I want to tell you, you've got a few assignments. Go announce Ahaziah king of Syria, go anoint Jehu, and go get your substitute because you've got another

guy's who's going to go into the lineup.

That's serious, isn't it? Who was the other guy? Elisha.

It's been ten years since that little dramatic event took place. And Elisha had the privilege of sitting under the ministry of Elijah the prophet. During these ten years it's been very precious because God has allowed them the privilege of founding three seminaries—one in Gilgal, one in Bethel and one in Jericho—men of God studying the scriptures.

In these apostate and tragic days Ahab and Jezebel have continued to reign in the palace but God's at work in preparing men.

Now as the scene of our story opens, we're at the end of the life of Elijah. It's been ten years now that Elisha's been an understudy—kind of like Timothy to Paul. And he's getting ready to take over the responsibility for the kingdom.

And what has happened is that, as they've moved from Gilgal they talked at the first seminary, they went down to the next place in Bethel and talked there, and then went down to Jericho and he finished his last address to the students.

They crossed over the Jordan River and as the scene of the story opens, in 2 Kings 2, we read:

2 Kings 2:11

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 into heaven.

Now the scene opens—verse 12.

v. 12 And Elisha saw it and cried out, “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

“And Elisha saw it and cried out, ‘My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!’ And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in pieces.”

Now Elisha’s a lot different than Elijah. Elijah is a very explosive, dominant type of person. He is an extrovert and they’d always hear his rumblings wherever he went.

Elisha was more quiet. To put flesh and blood on him, we have to say he was a melancholy choleric. It means he was a perfectionist. That means he was a person who is a leader. He leads and rules with a great deal of efficiency, but there’s not a great deal of noise and clamor about this kind of a person.

He’s a person that’s difficult to please. He’s a person who can at times be a real nit-picker for details. Luke and Moses were of this same temperament.

He's sensitive. He's a person who's analytical but he's a faithful friend. He's idealistic but he can get pessimistic and moody and critical too. He's a person who has strong willpower. He's a good team player but he can get sarcastic at times. He can be proud, crafty and impatient.

Now in the northern kingdom Ahab has finally died in battle. His son Ahaziah took the throne and was on the throne for about two years. He didn't want to go into battle, didn't want to lead the people in battle, because he saw what happened to his father. So he decided to stay home in the palace where it was safe.

One morning he got up, looked out on a beautiful spring day from his upper bedroom and reached over and touched the screen and lost his balance and fell through the screen and landed on the patio below and never got up from that. He died shortly thereafter.

Now Jehoram, the other brother, is the king in Samaria. And momma Jezebel, she's still wearing the pants in the family. She's calling all the shots in the palace just like she did for Ahab, just like she did for Ahaziah, now Jehoram.

So that's the picture we have in mind as this beautiful servant steps forward to be God's vehicle and God's prophet—verse 13.

v. 13 He also took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan.

“He also took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan.”

v. 14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the waters and said, “Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” And when he also had struck the waters, they were divided here and there; and Elisha crossed over.

“And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the waters and said, ‘Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?’ And when he also had struck the waters, they were divided here and there; and Elisha crossed over.”

Now when they went over the water the first time, Elijah did that. He took off the mantle, struck the waters and they parted and they walked across over to the eastern side. And that’s where this dramatic event of Elijah being caught home in a whirlwind took place.

Now he comes back and he raises the question:

“Where is ... the God of Elijah”?

The servant can go but God stays. God’s servant has been called home, but he’s not indispensable. The servant’s God is still here and still available and ready to work.

So many times when we serve the Lord we kind of get the big

head and we get a little bit self-righteous on occasion.

One guy said, “If you want to know how much you’ll be missed when it’s all over just take yourself a bucket of water, put your hand in it, stir it up all you want. But when you pull your hand out the hole that’s left is how much you’ll be missed.”

“Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?”

He’s gone. Elijah’s gone but the God of Elijah is still here to inspire and bless Elisha.

There’s a dramatic change that’s taken place. So many times we serve under somebody else’s leadership and we’re just kind of quiet and docile because it’s somebody else’s responsibility. Then we get the leadership. It just sort of brings iron into our character.

We see that in the disciples. They are a very quiet group as long as Christ is the leader. Christ went home and the Spirit of God came to dwell in them. And they’re a different group of men in the book of Acts.

It’s different because now the leadership and responsibility is theirs, inspired by God. And Elisha has that same dramatic change in character and personality.

v. 15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho opposite him saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to

meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

“Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho opposite him saw him,”

Fifty of these guys were so touched by Elijah’s last message that they went out there and watched this. And they’re standing there seeing him come back across. And it said as they saw him:

“they said, ‘The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.’ And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.”

That’s out of deep and awesome respect. Now hang onto that because there’s a contrast in the passage that we’re going to see in just a minute.

v. 16 And they said to him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men, please let them go and search for your master; perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley.” And he said, “You shall not send.”

“And they said to him, ‘Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men, please let them go and search for your master; perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley.’ And he said, ‘You shall not send.’”

That's like a bunch of seminary students, isn't it? They're going to figure out where Elijah's gone. They're going to see if they can't theologically find the answer to where he went!

Elisha said, "No! You're not going to see him. He's gone!"

"Oh, but I'm sure we can find him."

Well if the rapture took place today, would we go? Do we know that we'd go? Because we know Christ as Savior and Lord? Or would we be here trying to explain the reason for so many missing Christians?

There are going to be a lot of theological students, a lot of preachers around to explain the dramatic case of so many missing Christians. Because after all, they don't believe the Word of God anyway. They don't pay attention to what He's got to say and they're not preaching it. So they're going to have the privilege of standing around here explaining what happened to everybody who has gone to be with the Lord.

These fifty guys are really up in arms and they're going to find out. He says, "Don't send them." But look what they did—verse 17.

v. 17 But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, "Send." They sent therefore fifty men; and they searched three days, but did not find him.

“But when they urged him until he was ashamed,”

They just said, “come on now. We’ve got to find out the answer to this.”

“he said, ‘Send.’”

That’s just like him. He becomes a real favorite of these students. They just love him.

“They sent therefore fifty men; and they searched three days, but did not find him.”

v. 18 And they returned to him while he was staying at Jericho; and he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not go’?”

“And they returned to him while he was staying at Jericho; and he said to them, ‘Did I not say to you, “Do not go”?’”

That was an “I told you so.”

“You’ve just wasted three days of your life out there looking for nothing. He’s gone.”

v. 19 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Behold now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the land is unfruitful.

“Then the men of the city said to Elisha, ‘Behold now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the land is unfruitful.’”

Now what had happened in the city of Jericho was that when Joshua came into that city he pronounced a curse upon it. And this beautiful, fruitful city in the valley, close to the Jordan, was a city that was very fruitful but the water was bad.

And what happened was that the members of the water clarity board had been getting a lot of complaints and they came to Elisha and they said, “We’ve got a problem. We’ve got a beautiful city but we’ve got bad water.”

There are a lot of things like that today. From the eye-gate it looks awfully good but it’s really bad. The evil one will always get us by getting us looking in the wrong place. And that which looks good can end up to be the basis for our destruction.

The evil one always goes through the eye, to the mind, to the will. And here the city looked good on the outside, but the water was dirty.

Now that reminds us of John 7 where Jesus said, “Out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.” (see John 7:38)

What kind of water’s flowing out of our lives? Is the Spirit of God producing a beautiful, refreshing fragrance from our life

that everybody likes?

There are 3 Ms have just about gotten us all:

1. MUSIC,
2. MAGAZINES, and
3. MOVIES.

It's polluting the stream. And we're not caring about it. We're going along with it. And as a result, there isn't very much pretty that's coming out of our lives. The moral springs have been poisoned. It looks pretty on the outside but there isn't much good coming out from the inside.

Elisha is approached by these boys and verse 20 says:

v. 20 And he said, "Bring me a new jar, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him.

"And he said, 'Bring me a new jar, and put salt in it.' So they brought it to him."

v. 21 And he went out to the spring of water, and threw salt in it and said, "Thus says the Lord, 'I have purified these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer.'"

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and said, “Thus says the Lord, “I have purified these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer.””

What’s interesting is the fact that those first two miracles have to do with water.

In verse 1 he comes back and he parts the river of Jordan and walks across that. These prophets, in great respect, bow and say, “You are God’s man.” Then he comes into the city and he purifies the waters that were made bitter under Joshua’s leadership earlier.

Now this passage, if there’s any passage that the natural man really makes fun of, it’s these next three verses.

And they say, “The God of the Old Testament can’t be the God of the New Testament because they just don’t fit together. Because the God of the Old Testament killed little children.”

Now let’s look at these next verses in the context of what we’ve got. He’s making the trip in reverse. With Elijah, he came to speak at the seminary at Gilgal. Then he came down to the seminary at Bethel. They came down to the seminary at Jericho, went across the River Jordan, and went home to be with the Lord.

Now he’s making the trip back by reverse. He’s going up to Mount Carmel to get ready for his ministry in Samaria. He’s going to be back in Samaria. We’re going to have our first

major encounter, as he takes on international significance.

But heading back up now, he's coming back to the second city—the city of Bethel—which is a very strategic city in God's program.

v. 22 So the waters have been purified to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

“So the waters have been purified to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.”

v. 23 Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”

“Then he went up from there”—Jericho—“to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, ‘Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!’”

Now how did the two prophets of God treat him? When he came across the river they bowed in humble respect because here was God's man with God's message.

Now these boys are just the opposite. They say, “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”

Now let's paint the picture so we can get the total perspective.

The city of Bethel—Bethel means “house of God.”

It was at the city of Bethel that Jacob saw the ladder ascending into heaven. He went on his little trip down to Laban’s house and some years later came back to Bethel—the place, the house of God.

This city is a city of meeting with God. It was a city where one of the key seminaries was founded. But it was also true that under the leadership of some of these pagan kings, Jeroboam being one of them, put a golden calf in this city.

He also put another one in the city of Dan. And in those two cities they also founded the school of the false prophets to counteract the school of the true prophets.

These young men have not been disciplined. They’re satanic emissaries from the school of the false prophets. And what they’re saying is exactly the same thing that those apostate men who stood at the foot of the cross who cried out and said, “You see brothers himself he cannot save! If he really is God, let him come down from that cross!”

These guys are saying the same thing. “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”

Now two things:

1. “baldhead” is a term of great disrespect.

2. it's interesting that Elijah is a very hairy man and evidently Elisha is baldheaded.

Now isn't that great, men? Bald is beautiful. And God uses both—the ones with lots of hair and the ones without very much.

But what he's saying to him is "Go up, you baldhead."

What he means by that is, "You know we heard about your prophet Elijah going to heaven and they couldn't find him. Now you go up! Go up! Get out of here! You baldhead."

The TV networks had to move in on that. They were editorializing the Bethel Bugle. Everybody was talking about what happened to Elijah. After all, he had to be a prominent citizen. He had just visited Bethel a few hours before that dramatic event took place. And so everybody was talking about it.

And so they "mocked him" in disrespect and said, "Go up, you baldhead; go up..." Just like Elijah did.

Now let's talk about these men, these young children as it's translated in the text. This Hebrew word for children is used in a number of other passages.

First, it's used of the young men that Abraham took with him when he went to sacrifice Isaac. It's used of Isaac in that same chapter—and he's somewhere between 22 and 33 years of age.

It's the word used for Ishmael at 16. It's the word used of Joseph when he's 28 and also at another time, when he is nearly 40.

It's used of soldiers in routing the Syrians. It's used for the Sodomites who attach Lot in Genesis 19. It's used by Samuel of the sons of Jesse. And the youngest David isn't even there on that occasion.

So we can say truly from the use of this word in the Hebrew text, it has to be somewhere between 16 and 40 years of age. We can guess these young men were about 25. They were characters who were already in school, but they were denying that God exists and divine absolutes.

And they were making fun of the Spirit of God. And in disrespect they are laughing at the prophet of God. And remember, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (ref. Galatians 6:7)

Don't sit in the seat of the scornful, but have delight in the law of the Lord because it's dangerous to be over there.

v. 24 When he looked behind him and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore up forty-two lads of their number.

“When he looked behind him and saw them, he cursed them in

the name of the Lord. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore up forty-two lads of their number.”

He turned around and he looked at these young men mocking and cursing. Young men who had already lost the right to live as far as God was concerned, because they were following the false prophets. And Elisha pronounces his first curse.

Isn't it interesting in our passage that a curse is lifted off of Jericho, which had been under the curse for a long time, and the curse is placed on the city of Bethel, which had known great blessing for years?

The United States of America—don't think that God's grace and God's blessing automatically clings to a country forever! For a time will come when that blessing will be exchanged for a curse! Unless we respond to divine truth.

“My people which are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways. Then will I hear from heaven, I will forgive their sin and I'll heal their land! But not till then.” (ref. 2 Chronicles 7:14)

The curse comes off Jericho and it is placed on Bethel.

Now how is that curse manifested?

“two female bears”—there are lots of momma bears, even in the mountains of Lebanon to this day.

These “two female bears,” response to this curse, came out and there was instantaneous judgment. Forty-two of those guys got mauled.

One thing for sure, in Bethel there wasn’t any more derisive statements made with regard to the prophet Elisha when he returned to that city.

But that’s different from the New Testament! No it isn’t. In Acts 5 Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Spirit of God and said they gave all of their land and their money. Ananias came in and told Peter that and Peter said, “I’m sorry Ananias you’ve said that!” Boom! And he’s gone. Sapphira comes in and tells the same story and Boom! She’s gone—instantaneous judgment.

When a man or a woman fails to respond to the gift of life that God has given, they can plan on forfeiting the right to that life. And God is just in taking it.

And these young men, emissaries of Satan, had their lives taken. It’s tragic, sure! But God is just in doing so. Don’t question that.

“forty-two lads of their number.”

Jesus said in:

Matthew 11:23

“And thou Capernaum, which is exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell.”

There is swift and complete judgment that is executed.

v. 25 And he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

“And he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.”

Mount Carmel happens to be the place where oftentimes we can find the prophet residing to rest and refresh himself. After these tragic events he moves up there to spend time with the Lord before his ministry begins.

It was at Mount Carmel that Elijah faced the prophets of Baal. And there in that secret retreat he's getting ready for his ministry and then he moves on to the city of Samaria to take up his responsibility.

Now there are a number of lessons that come out of this study

Lesson #1: God faithfully prepared Elisha for ten years before He gave him the full responsibility of the ministry.

Now some of us might be very impatient with God's process in our life. God is preparing us for fruitfulness.

For young Christians, please recognize these are years of training and preparation for fruitfulness.

God faithfully prepares Elisha for ten years before He gives him the full responsibility of the ministry.

Lesson #2: When the Spirit of God takes over in our lives, He provides the boldness to be a good witness for Him.

Just like the disciples when they prayed, the place was shaken. They were filled with the Spirit and they worked the word of God with boldness.

Through Elisha, as the Spirit of God takes over in the mantle and the responsibility is now his, he says, “Where’s the Lord God of Elijah?” And in confidence he moves out in his ministry. There’s a new boldness that’s there.

Lesson #3: What kind of water is coming forth from your spring? When the Lord Jesus comes to live in the life, the Spirit of God produces the living water.

In the seventh letter to the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3 the Lord says this, speaking of water: “I wish you were cold or hot, but because you’re lukewarm I’m about to vomit you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:15)

Christ is nauseated with that kind of a situation.

Is the water cold and refreshing to those who drink at our

cistern? Is it hot and has the purifying qualities to encourage to walking in holiness? Or is it lukewarm? Does it make the Lord sick?

These waters in Jericho were bitter and poisonous, making the land unfruitful. And through Elisha's ministry that problem was taken care of.

Lesson #4: There are going to be those who mock and ridicule the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are going to be those who mock and ridicule the gospel. These young men immediately mock him and ridicule his message!

Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount said:

Matthew 5:11, 12

Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Lesson #5: You never have to take into your hands your own defense. The Lord will always vindicate and protect His own.

You never have to indulge in your own defense when you're God's man or God's woman. The Lord has snapping female bears in the woods to take care of those situations.

Romans 12:19

Never take your own revenge my brothers, stand back and let God do it.

Let Him be the one who's responsible for it. He sees it all and He'll take care of it and His wheels grind exceedingly small. We don't have to take that vengeance into our own hands.

Lesson #6: God is a God of grace but He is also a God of justice and judgment.

The sooner we understand that, the happier we're going to be. He's a God of grace, but He's a God of justice.

What a glorious picture of Christ in Revelation 1. Ever wonder why John fell on his face before the Lord as a dead man when he saw Christ?

He leaned on His breast in that intimate scene in the upper room at that Last Supper. It's very, very necessary for Revelation 1 to be in the Bible because it's a picture of Christ the judge. In John he's the Christ, the God of love and grace. They both are in the same person.

Christ is the priest who sacrificed Himself upon the cross for our sin. But make no mistake about it, our rejection of that we'll be judged on the basis of His word. He's also the judge.

And the moment we die we step into His presence, He becomes the judge. And if the rapture took place today, we also step into His presence and He'd be the judge. Because everyone is going to receive the things done in his body according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Count on it!

Lesson #7: God's grace does not automatically cling to a place or race.

We've seen that in the nation Israel. They've been set aside in judgment.

The curse is replaced by blessing on Jericho. But the blessing is replaced by a curse on Bethel.

Lesson #8: The mocking of Elisha is a picture of the mocking of Christ. Enemies both receive divine judgment.

By those satanic emissaries who are really making fun of him when he was there dying for the sins of the whole world.

Do we feel like our assignments are always fulfilled when we're in church on Sunday but it's tough to be here on Monday?

Deep down in our heart, are we a Christian? Do we know Jesus Christ?

Now not if we're a church member. We often can make the

mistake of assuming that everybody who is in church is a Christian.

Have we come to know Christ as our Savior? And are we ready to meet Him face to face?

Secondly, how about our fellowship with the Lord. Are we walking with Him? Are our priorities straight? Have we been in the Word today? Have we prayed and fellowshiped with the Lord? Do we know right now that we are at peace with Him? If we should die, we'd go be with Him?

Our heaven Father, we thank You for Your word. So much of the Old Testament is clothed in mystery and we fail to study it and read it like we should. We would ask that this message which has serious implications in it, from the beginning of Elisha's ministry, would prove to speak to us in no uncertain terms about our own relationship with You. Father may the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Elijah and Elisha speak to us about the seriousness of delay and putting off the relationship with You. And the serious ramifications of living life for selfish pursuits and contemporary goals. And we have been given the gift of life by Your hand, may we honor that commitment by giving our lives back to You because You have said so clearly in Your Word that he who loses his life will gain it. And he who would try to keep it for himself will eventually lose it. Father we pray with the apostle Paul we can say to live as Christ and to die is gain. You know it will be gain because we'll come at the end and say we fought a good fight, we finished the course, we kept the faith. Henceforth is

laid up for us a crown of righteousness and we would rejoice in that. We could go in peace into the very presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords. For it's in the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

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What You Need to Know About ELISHA:

**“Heir of the Spirit:
‘What wish shall I grant you
before I am taken away’ (2 Kings 2:9)”**

Study Number One – 2 Kings 2:12-25

Notes

v. 12 And Elisha saw it and cried out, “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

v. 13 He also took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan.

v. 14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the waters and said, “Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” And when he also had struck the waters, they were divided here and there; and Elisha crossed over.

v. 15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho opposite him saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

v. 16 And they said to him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men, please let them go and search for your master; perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley.” And he said, “You shall not send.”

v. 17 But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, “Send.” They sent therefore fifty men; and they searched three days, but did not find him.

v. 18 And they returned to him while he was staying at Jericho; and he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not go?’”

v. 19 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Behold now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the land is unfruitful.

v. 20 And he said, “Bring me a new jar, and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him.

Notes

v. 21 And he went out to the spring of water, and threw salt in it and said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘I have purified these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer.’”

v. 22 So the waters have been purified to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

v. 23 Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”

v. 24 When he looked behind him and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore up forty-two lads of their number.

v. 25 And he went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Kings 2:12-25 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Describe Elisha’s response to Elijah’s departure, according to verse 12.

3. What is Elisha's question in verse 14?

4. How do the sons of the prophets feel about Elisha, according to verse 15?

5. What is the problem in verse 19, and how does Elisha solve that problem in verses 20-22?

6. Describe what happens in verse 23.

7. What happens in response to their accusations, according to verse 24?

8. Where does he go from this point, according to verse 25?

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

10. What lesson 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: God faithfully prepared Elisha for ten years before He gave him the full responsibility of the ministry.

LESSON #2: When the Spirit of God takes over in our lives, He provides the boldness to be a good witness for Him.

LESSON #3: What kind of water is coming forth from your spring? When the Lord Jesus comes to live in the life, the Spirit of God produces the living water.

LESSON #4: There are going to be those who mock and ridicule the gospel of Jesus Christ.

LESSON #5: You never have to take into your hands your own defense. The Lord will always vindicate and protect His own.

LESSON #6: God is a God of grace but He is also a God of justice and judgment.

LESSON #7: God's grace does not automatically cling to a place or race.

LESSON #8: The mocking of Elisha is a picture of the mocking of Christ. Enemies both receive divine judgment.