

Who is That and Who Cares?

Elisha: Before the Chariot of Fire

2 Kings 2

Read these stories with 'the end' in mind.

Understand the Context.

Look for patterns.

Be aware of flashbacks.

Expect foreshadowing.

Theme of 1 and 2 Kings: **Get rid of idol worship.**

1 When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2 Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

3 The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied, "so be quiet."

4 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the Lord has sent me to Jericho."

And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho.

5 The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he replied, "so be quiet."

6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to the Jordan."

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

So the two of them walked on.

7 Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. 8 Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

9 When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"

"Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied.

10 "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not."

11 As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. 12 Elisha saw this and cried out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two.

13 Elisha then picked up Elijah's cloak that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. 14 He took the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and

struck the water with it. "Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" he asked. When he struck the water, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over.

15 The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, "The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha." And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

Chariot of Fire

Horse: power and speed.

Chariot: protection and triumph.

Fire: God's glory and presence..

A double portion of Elijah's spirit in 2 Kings 2

- A common description of a firstborn's birthright or an 'extra'; blessing from God.
- Perhaps coincidentally - there were exactly twice as many miracles through Elisha (28 miracles) as took place through Elijah (14 miracles).

Elijah's cloak

Symbolic of the Holy Spirit resting UPON Elijah.

Transferred from Elijah to Elisha

Elijah's final day

Gilgal: The place of beginning.

*When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind,
Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. (vs. 1)*

Whirlwind: Same word as the whirlwind that God used to speak to Job. (Job 38:1, 40:6)

****Gilgal was the first stop after Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan.**

****The twelve stone monument was set up in Gilgal.**

****Gilgal was a place of commitment.** The Israelites were circumcised and celebrated their first Passover in the Promised Land there (Joshua 5:7–8, 10).

(Published in the journal *Tel Aviv*, archaeologist Nadav Naaman argues that Gilgal was in fact a single site located just a few miles from Jericho.)

What does Gilgal mean to me? begin and begin again.

Bethel: The place of the prayer.

*Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to Bethel."
But Elisha said, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So
they went down to Bethel. (vs. 2)*

**located about 11 miles north of Jerusalem

**Bethel means House of God or House of Prayer.

**Bethel was also known for being a Baal worship headquarters.

**Abraham built an altar to God and worshipped in Bethel (Genesis 12:8 and 13:3-4)
Jacob had a dream - Jacob's Ladder - Stairway to Heaven (Genesis 28:10-13)

What does Bethel mean to me? worship and prayer.

Music

Sermon Part 2

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Jericho: The place of battle.

*4 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the Lord has sent me to Jericho."
And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they
went to Jericho. (vs. 4)*

Battle of Jericho (Joshua 6)

- God's ways are very different than ours.
- God's is powerful (supernatural)
- God keeps his promises
- God provided the victory but the people had to obey.

What does Jericho mean to me? Fight God's Way

Jordan River: The place of death.

*6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to the Jordan."
And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you."
So the two of them walked on. (vs. 6)*

Jordan River

- Joshua crossed into the promised land.
- Elijah crossed into the Next life.
- Elisha crossed into a life of obedience.
- John the Baptist baptized (old life to new)

What does the Jordan River mean to me? Live faith = Die to self

Elijah and Elisha

- Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and the Jordan.

****Elijah was preparing Elisha a life of faith.**

Are you ready?