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October memory verse Matthew 1:21

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

Commentary on Second Kings chapters 1 and 2, by Chuck Smith 10.19.22

CHAPTER 1

Now as we finish First Kings, we were dealing with basically the northern kingdom under Ahab with his wicked wife Jezebel who had brought the northern kingdom of Israel into its lowest state morally and spiritually, as they led the people into idolatry and more specifically, the worship of Baal, which was introduced by Jezebel who was from the area of Zidon, and that was one of the major gods of Zidon. And so, she introduced that to the children of Israel in their worship. And thus the... Israel was sinking into a state of great spiritual apostasy.

Now at the end of First Kings, we came to the death of Ahab, and his son Ahaziah ascending to the throne who reigned for only two years over Israel. And during the time of Ahaziah, Moab, which of course is across the Jordan River, the present area known as Jordan, who were vassals and tributaries to the king of Israel, rebelled against Israel.

And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria ([2Ki 1:2](#)),

So he had an accident and fell down through this latticework from the upper chamber and was injured. And he ordered his servants to go to Ekron to inquire of the god of Ekron, which was Baalzebub.

Now the word Baal is a word that means lord. And so the people were worshipping the lord, but the lord wasn't God. It was their lord, and Baalzebub is actually lord of the flies. So these people in Ekron were evidently worshipping flies.

Now, to me it is always strange how otherwise normally intelligent people who, when they reject the worship of God, will believe and do such stupid things. I'm always amazed at the almost lunacy of people in their ideas, in their concepts when they have forsaken the true and the living God. David said, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" ([Psalm 53:1](#)). And certainly when a person tries to rule God out of their lives, they become guilty of extremely foolish things. Can you possibly imagine worshipping a fly? Calling it your lord? Now in Romans chapter one, Paul gives us a little insight into man "who when he knew God, failed to glorify Him as God, neither was he thankful; therefore his foolish heart was darkened." And Paul tells us how he "worshipped and

served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore" ([Romans 1:21,25](#)).

And yet man, poor man, so ignorant in his worship once he has ruled God out. Worships things that to look at them with just a rational mind is absolute idiocy. People have created their own concepts of God which they worship. Their own ideas.

And he sent these servants down to Ekron to inquire of the god of Ekron, Baalzebub, to find out if he was going to recover from the injuries he sustained in this accident.

And Elijah the prophet came out to meet the messengers and he said,

Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron [that the king is sending to Ekron to find out concerning his condition]? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. [You go back and tell him that the Lord says he is not going to recover from his illness, but he's going to die] ([2Ki 1:3-4](#)).

This is only after two years of reigning. The message from the Lord.

And when the messengers [servants] turned back unto him, he [the king] said unto them, Why are ye now turned back? [How come you came back] ([2Ki 1:5](#))?

I ordered you to go to Ekron.

And they said unto him, [Well,] there came a man up to meet us [on our way], and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him ([2Ki 1:6](#)),

He told us to return to you with the message from Jehovah that you are going to die.

And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? [What did the man look like?] And they answered him, He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite ([2Ki 1:7-8](#)).

Now, John the Baptist was a rugged kind of character, and no doubt Elijah was a very rugged character, wearing just sort of a leather skirt around his waist and a very hairy guy. Showing up here and there, and yet, a man who was in touch with God in such a mighty way.

Then the king sent unto him [ordered] a captain of fifty men to go with his fifty men down and take Elijah and bring him back to the king. And he went up to him [so the captain with his fifty men regiment came to Elijah]: and, behold, he sat on the top of a hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down [the king sent me to take you to him]. And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty [men]. And

there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him [the captain] and his fifty. Again also he [the king] sent unto him another [a second] captain of fifty with his fifty [down to take Elijah and to bring him back] ([2Ki 1:9-11](#)).

And Elijah still sitting there on the hill, the second captain said, O man of God, the king has sent for you to come to him.

And Elijah answered and said, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty [men]. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up [with fifty men], and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, [have mercy on me] let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight ([2Ki 1:12-13](#)).

I'm only doing my duty. I'm a family man and all of my men here are family men. But the king has requested that you would come down to him, if you don't mind. We sure wish you'd go.

And the LORD spoke unto Elijah and said, Go with him unto the king. So Elijah came unto this king [who was the son of Ahab]. And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as you have sent messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but you're surely going to die. And so he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah; because he had no son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of chronicles of the kings of Israel ([2Ki 1:15-18](#))?

Now watch it here. You've got a Jehoram ruling in the north, and a Jehoram ruling in the south. So things are going to get confusing here for a little bit. Ahaziah was young when he started to reign. He did not have any sons. He reigned only for two years and he died. And so his brother Jehoram began to reign over Israel. Because there was no eldest son to pass it on to, then the next oldest son of Ahab took over the throne in Israel. Now he took it over. His name was the same as the name of the king of Judah. So for a little bit here, it's going to be a little difficult to follow the kingdom of the north in contrast with the kingdom of the south because they are both ruled over at this point by men whose name is Jehoram.

CHAPTER 2

And so it came to pass, when the LORD would take Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal ([2Ki 2:1](#)).

So the time is come when Elijah is going to depart the earth. And we gave you sort of a thumbnail sketch of Elijah last Sunday night, this interesting character who will be coming back again. For he will be one of the two witnesses who will witness to Israel

during this time in which God is going to deal with the nation Israel again for seven years. And Elijah will be one of those two witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven.

But the time has now come historically where he is going to be caught up into heaven in a whirlwind. And so Elisha is following him, and they came to Gilgal, which is north of Jerusalem. It's in the Jerusalem mountains there, and it is probably fifteen miles from Jerusalem.

And Elijah said to Elisha, You stay here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me on to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I'm not going to leave you. So they went to Bethel ([2Ki 2:2](#)).

Now they are actually moving from Gilgal to Bethel. They are going in a easterly direction and they are moving down towards Jericho. Now when they came to Bethel,

Certain sons of the prophets came out and they said to Elisha, Do you know that your master is going to be taken away from you today? And he said, Yes, I know it; hold your peace. So Elijah said to Elisha, you wait here; for I'm going on down to Jericho ([2Ki 2:3-4](#)).

Now, from Bethel to Jericho there's a winding valley, and it's a distance about eighteen miles on down to Jericho downhill all the way from Bethel.

And as they came to Jericho, certain sons of the prophets came out and said to Elisha, Do you know that your master's going to be taken away from you today? And he said, I know it; hold your peace. And Elijah said unto him, You wait here; for the LORD hath sent me to the Jordan River. And he said, As the LORD lives, I'm not going to leave you. So the two went on. And fifty men of the prophets went, and they stood to view from a distance: and they stood by the Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and he smote the waters, and they were divided, so that the two went over on dry ground ([2Ki 2:4-8](#)).

Now, this must have been quite an experience as these fifty guys were watching to see this prophet take his mantle, hits the water, and watched the river divide so the two guys walked across on dry ground.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said to Elisha, Ask what I shall do for you, before I'm taken from you. And Elisha said, I pray, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, You've asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so unto you; but if not, it shall not be so. So it came to pass, as they still went on, and they were talking, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and the horses of fire, and they parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and tore them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him as he was going up, and he went back to

the bank of the Jordan River; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and he smote the waters, and he said, Where is Jehovah God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were there by Jericho watching saw what happened, they said, The spirit of Elijah does rest upon Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him ([2Ki 2:9-15](#)).

So here we see sort of the passing of a mantle and anointing from one man to another. As Elijah has finished his ministry and he's caught away by the Spirit into heaven, and Elisha, asking for that double portion, that he might receive that sort of inheritance, the anointing of God's Spirit upon his life that he might continue the ministry of Elijah. And as he came back, taking the mantle of Elijah, striking the water and the question, "Where is Jehovah God of Elijah?"

I often wonder today concerning miracles. Where is the God of Elijah? I am not at all satisfied with the hyped-up programs of so many evangelists and the atmosphere in which the miracles supposedly takes place. I really do not believe that God needs to work in a circus tent environment. But I believe that He can work in very easy, natural ways. And that when you have this super emotional environment that many times God doesn't always receive the full credit and the glory for that which is accomplished, but many times the instruments so manipulate and sometimes they're just so weird that they draw your attention and it's hard to really think of the Lord. There are men who deliberately seek to draw attention to themselves.

I have wondered why it is that we do not see more dramatic kind of miracles which I know that God is able to perform. So in the idea, "Where is the God of Elijah?" He's saying a God that works visible, obvious miracles where there can be no questioning, no doubts. I cannot agree that God relegated miracles only to the apostolic period and before. That there came this point of history after the last apostle where God said, "Okay, that's the last miracle and from now on, we'll let them educate themselves and let the church expand itself through the world, through the genius of man."

I cannot believe that the lack of miracles actually indicates any lack in God's power or even God's willingness to perform miracles. And yet, the last time I asked the Lord if I may not have the gift of the working of miracles, He answered me that He has led me in a more excellent way, even than the working of marvelous miracles. And since that time, I've never asked Him again for the gift of the working of miracles. But I've just rejoiced for the fact that He has brought our fellowship into a true fellowship, into a oneness where the love of Jesus Christ dominates our fellowship. And I'm satisfied with that.

I'm sort of like Paul. Thrice sought I of the Lord that I might have the gift of miracles or the working of miracles in my life, and God more or less answered me as He did Paul. Sort of, "Don't ask me any more about this, just be satisfied with what you've got." I can see where this gift would be an extremely difficult gift for a person to handle. And I doubt if I could handle it if I had it. Because if a person had the capacity of working true

miracles by the power of the Spirit, everybody and his brother will be coming along trying to capitalize on that particular gift and taking you like a side show freak around the country. So that you might work the miracles in the eyes of people and astound people and draw them, and then having drawn them, use it as a super hype to press them for an offering or something. It would be extremely difficult to deal with all of the pressures that men would put on you if you had this particular gift.

And looking at it from that angle, I am really glad that God did not answer my prayer and give me the gift of the working of miracles. And yet I'm sure that there is a place for it within the body of Christ, else the Spirit would never have given that gift to begin with. And in this skeptical world in which we live, I can see the value. And yet, I wonder what kind of a man would it take to really be able to handle all of the notoriety that would center around this kind of a gift. It would be hard, because no doubt, you know, the United Press, Associated Press, the major networks would be there trying to get your interviews and everything else, and puffing you up, and you know and exalting you, and it would be extremely difficult. In fact, I don't think I know a man that could really handle it properly.

Where is the God of Elijah? He has not changed. He is still the same. He is still there. But our very manner of living has removed us, I think, a step away. We talk about, our glorious society and highly developed society and culture. And yet, within the society and culture there are so many distractions, things that take your mind off of the Lord and on to the material things around us. Now, when Elijah and Elisha were journeying together, they were walking from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to Jordan, Trans-Jordan. And walking around in nature, and as you get out and walk in the unspoiled nature, there comes to you a consciousness and awareness of God like you can't get driving down the freeway. There is the capacity to meditate and really have close communion with God walking from Bethel to Jericho. But you try to drive down that narrow, twisting road and have real meditation and communion, and you're going to end up over the cliff.

So the modern society and all of its conveniences and all really have a negative effect upon real spiritual development; that kind of spiritual development that is necessary to be able to handle a gift like Elijah or Elisha had. Where is the God of Elijah? Smiting the waters, they parted. And so, the same miracle that Elijah had performed is now done by Elisha. And here is the indication that the prayer or the request of Elisha was answered. For he asked that he might receive the inheritance, that he might take over and receive that same spirit of Elijah, the double portion of it, which signifies that inheritance of this gift. And now that this same miracle is performed, it's a confirmation of the affirmation of his call. "And they came to meet Elisha and bowed themselves on the ground."

Now you see, immediately you're going to be faced with a problem. Here are these guys bowing down to him. How you going to handle it? It seems that whenever a person has the power of God or the gifts of the Spirit in operation in his life, people want to bow down to them, and they look at the instrument and magnify the instrument. And very few instruments can take that kind of stuff.

Now they said, [Hey,] there are fifty of us fellows, we're strong men. And we want to go and we want to see if maybe the body of Elijah fell somewhere in the desert. ([2Ki 2:16](#))

No true enough, he was caught up in the whirlwind, but it may be the whirlwind just carried him off in the Land of Oz. He might be lying injured somewhere in the desert. He might have been dumped somewhere on a mountain or in some valley.

Elisha says, No sense going. But they urged him until he was embarrassed about the whole thing and he said, [Well alright, if you want to go, then] go. And so they sent fifty men and they sought for three days, but they didn't find him. And when they came again to him, (for he stayed there at Jericho,) he said to them, Didn't I tell you not to go ([2Ki 2:16-18](#))?

You know, there's a lot of wasted effort just because people insist on doing something. And they press and they push and then you just get embarrassed about the whole thing. You say, "Okay, go ahead." But you know it's not going to accomplish anything.

And the men of the city said to Elisha, [you know,] this is a nice city and all: but the water supply is bad, and beautiful place but with the water being bad, things are dying. And so he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt in it. And so he went to the spring that fed the city of Jericho, and he poured the salt in the spring, and the waters of the spring were healed and it said, So they are to this day ([2Ki 2:19-22](#)).

Now, of course, this was written almost a thousand years before Christ, so at that time, the springs that fed Jericho were still, you know, good. Actually this was written a little bit later than that. And so at the time of the writing it had been sometime, they were still good. Hey, they are still good. I was there just not long ago and drank from the spring. And the water is still good. So God did a good job in healing the springs that feed Jericho. The water is still good and of course, it's a very, very fruitful area.

Now as he was going up from Jericho to Bethel, there came forth ([2Ki 2:23](#))

And it's translated "little children" and this gives you the wrong concept. You see a bunch of little kids, you know, six, seven years old crying, "Hey, you old baldhead, where you going, baldhead?" But the Hebrew language actually indicates more of a teenage and late teenage than just a child. A little child, these were rotten little boys, and they're teenagers mocking the prophet of God.

And he looked back on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD ([2Ki 2:24](#)).

Now, it's hard to understand why he would do that except that there was a great irreverence for a man of God.

And there came forth two she bears out of the wood ([2Ki 2:24](#)),

And it is interesting there was woods in that area in those times. Today it's extremely barren, that valley going up. Man, there's nothing but rocks.

and it tore forty-two of them ([2Ki 2:24](#)).

It doesn't say that they killed them and all, but just really scratched them up.

And so he went up from there to mount Carmel ([2Ki 2:25](#)),

Now that's clear on over to the area of Haifa over in the coast.

and from there he returned back to Samaria ([2Ki 2:25](#)).

Which is about nine miles from the Mediterranean, but about twenty-five miles from mount Carmel, the area of Haifa. It's closer to part of mount Carmel. And they said unto him, Behold now. I beg your pardon.