

Lecture #18B – Exposition of II Kings

Chapter 1 – Elijah and Ahaziah – 897 B.C.

vs. 1-8 – Elijah Foretells Ahaziah’s Death

The growing weakness of the Northern kingdom is seen in their defeat to the Syrians and the revolt of Moab.

Ahaziah had a terrible fall that severely injured him. He sent to the Philistine city of Ekron to enquire of the false god Baalzebub (“fly-lord”)¹ regarding his recovery. God sends Elijah to intercept these messengers and tells them about the message from the Lord that Ahaziah will die. When the messengers return too soon, Ahaziah questions them and find out it was Elijah the prophet that had sent them back.

Note the description of Elijah in vs. 8.

vs. 9-18 – Elijah Delivered from Ahaziah

Three times Ahaziah sends to bring Elijah to the king. The first two times Elijah calls down fire from heaven that killed the men. The third time a group came their leader begged for mercy from the prophet. God told Elijah to go with this group. Elijah tells the king the message that he will die.

So died Ahaziah, but he left no son. His brother Jehoram² (yes, we have two kings ruling with the same name) took the throne next.

¹ Easton’s Bible Dictionary. “This name was given to the god because he was supposed to be able to avert the plague of flies which in that region was to be feared.”

² a.k.a. Joram.

Chapter 2 – Elijah and Elisha

vs. 1-14 – Elijah and the Chariot of Fire

Elisha follows Elijah from Gilgal³ to Bethel to Jericho to Jordan. Elisha requests a double portion of Elijah's spirit, likely referring to the law of inheritance for the firstborn (Deuteronomy 21:17). This would mark him as Elijah's successor.

Elijah is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire that was borne on a whirlwind. Elisha tears his own clothes in sorrow before picking up the fallen mantle of his master. He performs his first miracle when he returns to the Jordan and it parts when he hits it with Elijah's mantle.

“My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.” This is Elisha describing how important Elijah had been to Israel. It was not the nation's military might, but the power of the prophet that had helped strengthen the nation.

vs. 15-25 – Elisha Takes the Lead

The sons of the prophets appear and wish to seek for Elijah, but he is gone.

At Jericho he heals a bitter spring by casting a cruse of salt into it.

On his way to Bethel, he is mocked by some children and two she-bears attack them. These were not necessarily infants or tiny children because the word can be used for people 20-30 years old. Likely they were teenage boys.

³ “Not the Gilgal of Joshua/Samuel; this Gilgal was about four miles northwest of Bethel.” - Reese