

SO, WE BOILED MY SON AND DID EAT HIM

SECOND KINGS CHAPTER SIX

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~ There are a few key sections of Scripture that directly challenge the faith of all believers and force a decision be made concerning whether they honestly believe the Bible is the Word of God – or if they don't. This report brings us to one of those passages. According to the laws of physics, anything denser than water will sink when placed in it; so, when an iron ax head is lost in a muddy stream, only a miracle from the author of those laws could reverse said laws and cause iron to float to the surface. So, prepare to make your decision about the Bible as we examine another episode from the life of Elisha the prophet in this report!

Paul said, *"... whatever things were written before were written for our learning."* That means the Old Testament was written for us to learn from. I'm not sure why so many people consider the Old Testament irrelevant when they profess the teachings of Paul. Makes no sense. Let's pray the Holy Spirit will speak to our hearts in this report as we search for the Lord Jesus Christ on every page of Scripture. The Holy Spirit is the only One Who can lead us into all truth, and He is the Only One Who can build up our faith, friends. Again, I don't know why so many people never bother to pray that God will lead them to a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, sincere, systematic, educated, proper, correct and complete Bible teaching by a man that believes God and believes the truths that have been revealed to him – but what I do know is: they don't.

Many people profess to have been saved; but, when we are genuinely saved, our lives become more God-like. I don't see much of that happening today. If the Bible doesn't change our life – then I have bad news for you – we aren't saved. Most so-called Christians struggle deeply with this basic tenet of truth because Christ in their lives has made no difference at all. Only when one grows weary of living a life of self-will, and experiences defeat, will they cry out to God. We all need to pray that prayer and ask the Lord to change our hearts – and lives. Further, anyone who thinks they are saved but does not have a deep love for the Word of God – well, I don't

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know who is saved and who isn't – but I am suspicious of those people. A reverence for God's Word is about the only means I have by which to judge who is saved and who isn't. Of course, many people tell me "don't judge" - but I don't report to you, friends:

1 Corinthians 2: 15 he that is spiritual judgeth all things ~

So, again, do we believe Paul? Do we believe this is the Word of God we are studying? Most self-professing believers cannot absorb these Scriptural precepts. This will not be an easy report for most people. Only if and when we pray God will make His Word real to us will He; make no mistake, my beloved.

Elisha was outstanding and altogether different from Elijah. Elijah was an extrovert; Elisha an introvert. Elijah's ministry was public, but Elisha's ministry was private; as we saw when he dealt with Naaman, the Captain of the host from Syria, in our previous report. Elijah was spectacular and sensational when he brought fire and rain – both from Heaven. Well, Elisha was the silent type, even as mountains full of spiritual horses and chariots were revealed to him. Elijah ministered to kings, queens and princes; but Elisha ministered to the common man. Elijah didn't die, but Elisha did. I believe this represents the two aspects of the rapture; those living at that time are to be caught up into the air to meet the Lord Jesus, but those who have previously and physically died are to be raised from the dead.

Elisha taught in the seminary of the day – the school of the prophets; and he was popular amongst his pupils because he taught the Word of God properly, correctly and completely. It was a rapidly growing institution and Elijah was the reason for the growth. Most students have no desire to take their teacher with them anywhere – but they want Elisha to be with them, as we read in verse three. The only strength of any school is the character and ability of the faculty. Most people place the emphasis on the buildings and technologies, and name them after men who are usually dead and buried. Then, someone else comes along with a bunch of money and donates heavily; so, they rename the building after that man. It's sad and pathetic how this works out.

The only value of any university is in the quality of staff. We don't need bigger structures – we need bigger men. Endowments are meaningless when there is no imbuelement of spiritual strength. The curriculum is useless if the staff isn't useful; and the money only comes from a malefactor if the moral mentality is morose. A correct college is just a log with John Hopkins on one end, and a student on the other! Modern day universities don't suffer from overcrowding; they suffer from a shortage of proper educators. The faculty members appearing in protests on television is shameful. We have entertainers who try to be so serious until they are cornered – and then they say, "... *this is a comedy show!*" How utterly hypocritical and just plain stupid can they get? God pity the youth of America today is all I have to say....

1 And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.

5 But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.

~ It doesn't seem like such a big deal when one of the students accidentally loses the ax head. That student could have honestly sung, "... *on Jordan's stormy banks I stand and cast a wistful eye!*" Well, I think Elijah would have told the student to forget the ax head because it was too little to waste time with. However, God is concerned with the smallest of events in our lives. We're told to pray about everything, friends; and that means the little things. If you don't pray about the small things in your life, then I would ask you what you imagine is big to God? Our lives are, actually, *ALL* little things

to Him. When Jesus was here on earth, the tumult of the crowd didn't drown out the cries of little Bartimaeus. On another occasion, a small and feeble woman touched the hem of Jesus' garments as thousands pressed upon Him. Jesus asked, "... *who touched Me?*" I think the disciples asked themselves, "*is He kidding?*" Well, He wasn't kidding.

Psalm 34:6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles ~

Alright, the ax head is really a bigger deal than we might imagine. Today, we would just drive down to the local hardware store and buy a new one – but, in the days we are studying, an ax head was a commodity. Most commentators expel this student from seminary. I have read commentaries that said he was careless, and other commentaries that said he never should have borrowed anything to begin with. Actually, there have been quite stern lectures on the fact that the ax should not have been borrowed in the first place. My question is: if these were problems, why didn't Elisha discipline him?

I'd also like to know who loaned this student a dangerous and defective old ax in the first place. Why didn't they provide the workers of the Lord a quality new ax? I'm sure this is the same person who thinks sending their old clothes to the mission and a five-year-old Christmas card to a missionary is doing something valuable for God. People criticize me for borrowing things that I need to continue this ministry, but they never donate to it. See, we have a whole bunch of hypocrites running around – just like they had in Elisha's day. Well, this student couldn't replace the ax, and he probably couldn't swim, so he is absolved of all those charges by his teacher, Elisha....

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim.

~ This is another miracle. It saved the student from what could have meant a lifetime of impoverishment, debt and servitude. Some people say it isn't much compared to the startling and sensational translation of Elijah taking off into outer space in a chariot of fire; but I say it is a *MUCH GREATER*

miracle. John Randolph may have launched the first ships of iron and steel in 1834, and they may have floated the seven seas ever since; but that's no miracle. Whereas an ax head to float up like a cork from the bottom of the murky Jordan River was miraculous.

You'll have to decide if you believe the Bible is the Word of God now, friends. The ax head was resurrected, restored and made functional again. This is a marvelous spiritual lesson. Man is much like the old ax head. At the fall of Adam, we became totally depraved and sunk under the waters of death and defeat. Man was totally lost to God. We no longer had any usefulness or purpose to Him in our existence in His world. We were completely separated from God at that time.

The lost man attempts to occupy his deadness today by traveling, painting pictures, competing, drinking, eating, making war, doing drugs, music, culture – all in an attempt to drown out the future and fill the futility of a vacuum in a meaningless life. However, nothing satisfies, and life ultimately and invariably becomes like a million rats gnawing at their souls.

Man can only rise from the waters of death and judgment through the death, burial and resurrection of the Son of God, my beloved. That's the only way we can ever be placed back into the plan and purpose of God's program; and that's the only way we can ever say we can do all things in Christ Who strengthens us. Christ is the only way we will ever have any direction in this world, and He is the only way we can ever be brought close to God the Father. Going to the moon – or even Mars – is no miracle; being lifted out of the mire of sin and given a meaning to our existence in life is a *HUGE* miracle. This account is a tremendous spiritual lesson – *much* more so than the translation of Elijah in his fiery chariot....

7 Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.

10 And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?

12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan.

~ Dothan has an interesting history. You may recall it was the place where Joseph got into big trouble. It is also the place where God delivers Elisha. Benhadad concluded there must be a spy in his camp. Well, there was no spy in the camp, there was a genuine prophet of God in Israel. Sending the entire army to get Elisha was a compliment. We know all Elisha would have had as a weapon to defend himself with was an old broken ax!

You and I live in a day when we, as Christians, are definitely the minority. We hear about minority groups, but the *TRUE* minorities are born again believers, friends. I'm not talking about church members – I mean real Bible believers. I've explained the "*Elijah complex*" in previous reports and, honestly, I have an acute case of it! What we really need is an *ELISHA* complex and we would discover the truth in what Martin Luther said when he said, "*one with God is a majority!*" ~

14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

~ At Dothan in Genesis, Joseph had chariots of fire around him, too; because he would have been murdered if it weren't for the troubled conscience of just one brother. He was sold into slavery, which was seen as a death sentence. It was the easy way for the brothers to kill without having to do the dirty work. Either way, the trouble in our lives can never get through unless it passes by God's chariots of fire! Satan said to God, regarding Job, "... You placed a hedge around him!" Today, my beloved, God is on our side – even when the man of God gets into terrifying trouble. Don't ask me why this is because I don't know. What I do know is that God has permitted your troubles – and mine – for a very definite reason....

18 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

19 And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?

22 And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

23 And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

24 And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

25 And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king.

27 And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?

28 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow.

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.

30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.

31 Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

32 But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?

33 And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?

~ This gesture of humanitarianism in verse twenty-three should have quieted the Syrians down; but I see the Syrians of the days in which we are studying are just like the Syrians are today: they only want to fight! Apparently, the Israelites weren't quite prepared for that, and we have the account of more very bad times in the land. Of course, God permitted all of this to happen, and it leads to Elisha delivering one of the strangest messages we have in the entire Word of God! It is also another thrilling chapter in the life of this prophet; one which we will continue to consider in the next leg of our Spiritual Safari. After that, there are even *more* spectacular events to come in his life. I hope you'll be able to continue to travel with us in our expedition through the entire Word of God ~