

ABOUT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN

1 KINGS 22:30 – 2 KINGS 2:22

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~ As we continue the account of Ahab and Jezebel from our previous report, King Ahab played Jehoshaphat for a fool; and it nearly cost Jehoshaphat his life. I think Jehoshaphat rode day and night until he was safely back in Jerusalem. The only reason Jehoshaphat survived was because the king of Syria was only interested in killing Ahab. Interestingly, this war wasn't even Jehoshaphat's concern to begin with; as Gilead wasn't in the southern kingdom. The evil genius Ahab was disturbingly calculating when he set Jehoshaphat as his decoy. It taught Jehoshaphat a very embarrassing and harsh lesson. Even so, Ahab is the one who was dead by the end of our previous report. This report reaches back to that account and overlaps with our previous report, as we drop back to pick up several additional key truths.

Ahab was never recognized in the battle because he was wearing a regular soldier's uniform. The man who shot Ahab wasn't even aiming at anything – but his arrow sure found Ahab. Remember, it was a “*bow at a venture*” that killed Ahab. This soldier obviously had one arrow left in his quiver after the battle was over, and he let it fly. He had no idea where his arrow was going. Officially, Ahab's death would be classified as “*accidental*” by the Bethel Police Department – but I like to call it the first guided missile; because God landed that arrow providentially right between the “*joints of the harness.*” It couldn't have been more accurate, friends! Micaiah, the prophet of God Almighty, said Ahab wasn't coming back; and God still uses this method of spiritual warfare and weaponry today, make no mistake.

Psalm 64: 7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

Feel free to apply that Psalm spiritually to your life. Many unbelievers erroneously and tragically believe they will escape the hand of God. Well, God has an arrow for them when the day comes. It's providentially inescapable. Elijah said Ahab's blood would be licked up in the same place

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Naboth's blood had been shed – and that's exactly what happened. I feel as if Ahab, who was insanely superstitious, never enjoyed the vineyard; and likely never even went there after Naboth's murder. Here, Ahab was wounded and died in his chariot, and his driver took him right to that place, having no idea of Elijah's prophecy....

~~~~~ **1 KINGS ~**

**XXII**

***30 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.***

***31 But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.***

***32 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out.***

***33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.***

***34 And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.***

***35 And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot.***

***36 And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.***

***37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.***

***38 And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.***

***39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?***

***40 So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.***

***41 And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.***

***42 Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.***

***43 And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.***

~ This is more compromise by the king of Judah. God doesn't accept it and He does not bless it. Even though Jehoshaphat was a good king, he compromised with the people concerning incense in the high places. It's important for us to recognize what this means and how it works out in the lives of believers today. If you are serving God but turning a blind eye to sin around you, then the example of compromise we see in Jehoshaphat is **YOU!** Are you wondering where the blessing of God is in your life? This might be your answer. As long as we look the other way while our family, friends and loved ones continue to live in sin, we have a compromise problem! That problem will never allow us to experience the blessing of God until we act on putting it out....

***44 And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.***

~ Another mistake Jehoshaphat made was accepting peace with the *new* king of Israel after Ahab was killed. Let's run ahead and quickly confirm that in a passage from Chronicles regarding Jehoshaphat returning from the debacle with Ahab. At this time, Jehu went out to meet Jehoshaphat, and this is what happened:

*2 Chronicles 19: 2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to King Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. 3 Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God ~*

The "groves" speak of gathering in gross immorality in the commonplaces of the community. Those were removed from the land, but the high places were not; and that was where sacrifices were made to Baal. The "high places" speak of the not-so-common places in the community. The places only the rich and powerful have access to. Let's pray for wisdom here. At least Jehoshaphat has finally learned his lesson about dealing with the northern kingdom....

***45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?***

***46 And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.***

***47 There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king.***

***48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber.***

***49 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.***

***50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.***

***51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel.***

***52 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin:***

***53 For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.***

***~~~~~ 2 KINGS ~***

***I***

***1 Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.***

***2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.***

***3 But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?***

***4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.***

***5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?***

**6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.**

**7 And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words?**

**8 And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.**

**9 Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.**

**10 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. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.**

**11 Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.**

**12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.**

~ Elijah is on one of his final missions in this passage; and he isn't compromising. Ahaziah likely fell down through the lattice in a drunken stupor; at least, that would be my guess at gossip. The record doesn't make much sense. It seems sarcastic. He fell through the lattice and was sick. We are told we should communicate and work things out with others and get along with everyone. Well, friends, I hate to tell you this, but compromise isn't God's method. The compromise in the church by its leaders hasn't led

to a lost and dying world clamoring to hear what we have to say. In fact, right now, as I type this report and you read it – the world isn't listening to the church *AT ALL*. This world has saturated the church because the church compromises with sin – and one cannot tell the difference between a church and a social club anymore.

*NO ONE* is going to listen to the church until the church learns to declare the entire Word of God properly, correctly and completely. The way the Bible is picked apart and certain pieces are taught over and over again ad nausea in a contextually broken theology, just doesn't happen to be winning souls for Christ, friends. If the church were actually capable and competent to declare the Word of God in its entirety, then I believe there would be communication with the lost world. There isn't that today. When fire came down from Heaven, people listened to Elijah. The problem today is, fire could come down from Heaven, but if the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ isn't the centerpiece of the fiery message, the people will simply think a natural disaster has occurred. They'll actually blame God – and maybe *YOU*. Be careful with that. It just happens to be pretty important to get this right....

***13 And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.***

***14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.***

***15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.***

***16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast 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 shalt surely die.***

**17 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 king of Judah; because he had no son.**

**18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?**

~ So, with that, the rule of the line of Ahab is officially snuffed out. The family dynasty ends as the Word of The Lord said it would. We're going to have plenty more to say about Ahab when we reach Chronicles. His story isn't totally finished yet. As we said, the Book of Kings is *MAN'S* viewpoint, and the Book of Chronicles is the same historical period from *GOD'S* point of view. Well, from man's point of view, this family wasn't spectacular but, from God's viewpoint, it's downright hellish; and God is going to be plain ugly when we consider His perspective of Ahab and Jezebel in Chronicles.

This also brings us to the end of the life of Elijah. This chapter tells us about his translation as he is taken up in a chariot of fire. Elisha, my personal favorite prophet – with the exception of possibly Micaiah – becomes prominent now. Most people perceive Elijah as having overshadowed Elisha, but Elisha performed *MANY* more miracles than Elijah; and Elisha has *MANY* more accounts from his ministry recorded. My personal favorite is in the fifth chapter when Elisha won't even get out of bed to talk to Naaman. That's my kind of prophet, friends.

Elisha was altogether different than Elijah, but he is hardly ever mentioned in Christian circles – which is suspicious to me. Elisha and Elijah seem exactly the opposite in character. Elijah was a man to stand before the public, but Elisha ministered personally and individually. Elisha wasn't quite as exciting and dramatic as Elijah, and that's the explanation for Elijah's popularity. Well, our Spiritual Safari spent relatively little time with Elijah. He walked on and off of Scripture erratically. We're going to spend quite a bit of time with Elisha, as he had the double portion of the Spirit of God. We need that....

## **II**

**1 And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.**

**2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.**

**3 And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.**

**4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.**

**5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.**

**6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.**

**7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.**

**8 And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.**

**9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.**

**10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.**

~ Nothing could have held Elisha back on the day Elijah was to be taken up. Interestingly, the entire nation seemed to know what day it would happen on. People today turn to all manner of outside information, such as the fortune teller, tarot card reader or palm fraud crowd. People seem to turn to everything under the sun *except* God Himself. Well, you won't get truthful information from Satanic groups as you will from God. See, even the false prophets eventually discovered Elijah was to be taken up, but Elijah knew *WAY* beforehand. Satan doesn't provide new information and he doesn't bring good tidings. Well, Elisha had twice the spiritual discernment Elijah had. That means Elisha was the greater of the two prophets, in my estimation. The power isn't in either of these two men, though; the power is in God, and both prophets understood that – and both knew the True and Living God personally....

**11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.**

**12 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 rent them in two pieces.**

**13 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;**

**14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.**

**15 And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.**

**16 And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.**

**17 And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.**

**18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?**

**19 And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.**

**20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him.**

**21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.**

**22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.**

~ Instead of looking to men – or women, or methods, or the myriad ridiculous nostrum’s that are offered on every street corner today – why not look to the Living and True God – the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ? I cannot understand why people refuse to look to the Savior of the world today. Elisha was trying to tell Israel they were wasting their time looking for Elijah. The simple fact was: Elijah was gone.

So, our safari ends this report with the second miracle of Elisha making the water sweet for the city. I’m not going into this at all – read it for yourself after praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment from the Holy Spirit. Read the text and see what He tells you. We’re going to examine the third miracle of Elisha in our next report; and it will not be popular. I challenge

you to look to the True and Living God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I know many of you readers have already placed your faith in Christ; but some who read these reports only do so to see what I might say next. They haven't trusted Christ. I urge them to receive God's amazing gift of grace. Don't delay any longer; we make our decision while we are in this life. When we are placed in the casket, we don't get another chance ~