

Elijah

Week 7: 2 Kings 1:1–2:14

Jot down some thoughts and discuss...

1. Think back 15–20 years ago. What are two things in your life that are different? What are two things that are the same?

What’s Going on with Ahab?

1. Ahab once again _____ the LORD.
2. Ahab _____ in battle, so his son, Ahaziah, takes over.

2 Kings 1:1–18 (Elijah Opposes Ahaziah)

¹ After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel. ² Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.” 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 to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?’ ⁴ Now therefore thus says the LORD, ‘You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ” So Elijah went.

⁵ The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, “Why have you returned?” ⁶ And they said to him, “There came a man to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ” ⁷ He said to them, “What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?” ⁸ They answered him, “He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

1. The messengers go to meet “Baal-Zebub,” which means “Lord of the _____.”
2. Instead, they meet “Baal-Shear,” which means “Lord of _____” (“He wore a garment of hair” in the ESV).
3. What do we learn about Ahaziah from this section?

4. How does this situation compare to the beginning of Elijah’s ministry?

⁹Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’ ” ¹⁰But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. ¹¹Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, this is the king’s order, ‘Come down quickly!’ ” ¹²But Elijah answered them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

5. King Ahaziah recognized Elijah’s physical attributes but seemed to forget about the most important detail: Elijah is a _____ of the LORD.

6. The repeated sending of men and repeated fire shows both Ahaziah’s _____ and Elijah’s _____.

¹³Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, “O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. ¹⁴Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight.” ¹⁵Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king ¹⁶and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of

Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ”¹⁷ So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son.¹⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

7. How do we see God’s *judgment* in this interaction between Ahaziah and Elijah?

8. How do we see God’s *mercy* in this interaction between Ahaziah and Elijah?

1 Kings 2:1–14 (Elijah Taken to Heaven)

¹ Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal.

1. The narrator reveals what is about to happen to Elijah which makes the reader wonder: “_____ will this happen?” and “What will happen to _____?”

² And Elijah said to Elisha, “Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. ³ And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?” And he said, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.” ⁴ Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho. ⁵ The sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.” ⁶ Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on. ⁷ Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan.

2. From the repeated requests from Elijah and denials from Elisha, we see that Elisha is as _____ as Elijah.
3. The prophet who was once alone is now _____ by prophets hearing the Word of the LORD.

⁸ Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground. ⁹ When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said,

“Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.”¹⁰ And he said, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.”

4. They are now standing in the same place where _____ died.
5. Elisha’s request is for an _____ as if he were Elijah’s son.
6. The role of prophet isn’t usually passed on like this. The closest example is _____ to _____, which is yet another similarity between these two Old Testament figures.

¹¹ And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹² And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. ¹³ And he took up the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ Then he took the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water, saying, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

7. Chariots and horses are typical signs of _____. Why might this imagery make sense for the prophet Elijah’s departure?

8. What is significant about Elijah being taken to Heaven instead of dying?
9. When Elisha picked up the cloak and performed a miracle, it confirms all that was hinted at before: Elisha will _____ this ministry.

Elijah's Legacy

Immediate:

1. Elisha continues the ministry God _____ with Elijah.
 - a. Especially by anointing Jehu and Hazael to bring _____ on the house of Ahab.

Beyond:

1. John the Baptist

Luke 1:17 – “He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah...”

- a. After studying Elijah's story, how would you describe “the spirit and power of Elijah”?

2. Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1–3 – “And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.”

- a. While there are similarities between Moses and Elijah, they both are mere shadows and precursors to _____.
- b. After studying the story of Elijah, how does he remind us of Jesus?

- c. If all someone knew about God came from the story of Elijah, how might they describe God?

Closing Discussion

When we study the stories of the Bible, we learn more fully the _____ of how our God worked in the past and how he is at work in our lives.

“The grand story of God repeats itself over and over. The scriptures contain brief stories that show this as well. And we see this same encapsulation in each of our everyday lives.” - Robert Kolb, *Luther and the Stories of God*

Once, when Luther reflected on his successes in ministry, he said, “It has—praise God—come to this: that men and women, young and old, know the catechism and how to believe, live, pray, suffer, and die.”