

# Expectancy and Promise

*2 Kings 2:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup> Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel.

<sup>3</sup> Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

<sup>4</sup> Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho.

<sup>5</sup> Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

<sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. <sup>7</sup> And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

<sup>9</sup> And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

<sup>10</sup> So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." <sup>11</sup> Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup> And Elisha

*saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces.*

—2 Kings 2:1–12

### **Read 2 Kings 2:1–12**

In a small village in Israel, Jesus stood with a woman deeply grieving over the death of her brother. To this woman, Jesus declared, *I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die* (John 11:25–26). Jesus then verified this reality by bodily raising the grieving woman's brother from the dead!

In 2 Kings 2:1–12, we see a foreshadowing of what God would do through Christ. Rather than dying, Elijah is transported by a chariot to heaven. In the same way, through the work and accomplishment of Jesus, death has been reduced to a vehicle of transportation from earth to heaven. Like us, Elijah had a human nature that was prone to doubt, fear, panic, and discouragement. Yet this fallible prophet was divinely escorted to heaven because of his faith, receptivity, and obedience to God's Word. We, with our fallen and fallible natures, also share the hope of a divine escort to heaven because of our faith in the One who conquered death on a cross and promised us eternal life in His name!

At one point Elijah thought he was completely abandoned and that the work of God had ceased forever in Israel. However, God proved to the prophet that he was not alone and that his work would continue powerfully through Elisha and the sons of the prophets.

This same God, who has conquered death, will continue to work on earth until the time when the resurrected Christ comes with all the saints and sets up His kingdom on earth. Capture the sense of Elijah's galvanized expectancy as you read 2 Kings 2:1–12.

1. According to 2 Kings 2:1, what was the LORD *about* to do?
  
2. Use 2 Kings 2:2–3 to share your thoughts concerning the interaction between the prophets:
  - a. Elijah
  
  - b. Elisha
  
  - c. The sons of the prophets
  
3. Note what happened in the following places:
  - a. Bethel (verses 3–4)
  
  - b. Jericho (verses 5–6)
  
4. Record what took place at the Jordan River. 2 Kings 2:7–8
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Use 2 Kings 2:9 to comment on:
  - a. Elijah's offer
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Elisha's request



**FOOD  
FOR THOUGHT**

*A firstborn son, as the primary heir, inherited a double share of his father's estate (Deut. 21:17); Elisha asked that Elijah's God-given spiritual abilities and privileges might continue to live through him.<sup>15</sup>*

—NLT Study Bible

The two shares were a sign of a legitimate heir.

**FOOD  
FOR THOUGHT**

The Sons of the Prophets were not the descendants of the prophets, but rather the disciples and followers of a prominent prophet.

6. According to 2 Kings 2:10, what assurance would Elisha receive that God would grant his request?
  
7. From 2 Kings 2:11-12, record and share your thoughts about the momentous event that took place.
  
8. What is your greatest takeaway concerning:
  - a. Elijah
  
  - b. Elisha
  
  - c. The sons of the prophets
  
  - d. The Lord
  
  - e. Death

9. What is your greatest takeaway from 2 Kings 2:1–12?