

Jezebel is dead and the word of the Lord is not done being fulfilled concerning King Ahab and his household.

1 Kings 21:19-22 ¹⁹ "You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours."'" ²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he answered, "I have found *you*, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD. ²¹ "Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel; ²² and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger, and *because* you have made Israel sin.

And God being true to His word would fulfill this prophecy long after Ahab's death.

2 Kings 10:1-11 ^{NAU} Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters and sent *them* to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, the elders, and to the guardians of *the children of Ahab*, saying, ² "Now, when this letter comes to you, since your master's sons are with you, as well as the chariots and horses and a fortified city and the weapons, ³ select the best and fittest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house." ⁴ But they feared greatly and said, "Behold, the two kings did not stand before him; how then can we stand?" ⁵ And the one who *was* over the household, and he who *was* over the city, the elders, and the guardians of *the children*, sent *word* to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants, all that you say to us we will do, we will not make any man king; do what is good in your sight." ⁶ Then he wrote a letter to them a second time saying, "If you are on my side, and you will listen to my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel tomorrow about this time." Now the king's sons, seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, *who* were rearing them. ⁷ When the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and slaughtered *them*, seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent *them* to him at Jezreel. ⁸ When the messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning." ⁹ Now in the morning he went out and stood and said to all the people, "You are

innocent; behold, I conspired against my master and killed him, but who killed all these? ¹⁰ "Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab, for the LORD has done what He spoke through His servant Elijah." ¹¹ So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his acquaintances and his priests, until he left him without a survivor.

God will not be mocked.

Jehu then went on a mission to destroy the worshippers of Baal in Israel and accomplished it by setting a trap, inviting all worshippers of Baal to have a day of sacrifice. All the worshippers came out and once they were done worshipping he had them killed by the edge of the sword and we read this.

2 Kings 10:25-28 ²⁵ Then it came about, as soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the royal officers, "Go in, kill them; let none come out." And they killed them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the royal officers threw *them* out, and went to the inner room of the house of Baal. ²⁶ They brought out the *sacred* pillars of the house of Baal and burned them. ²⁷ They also broke down the *sacred* pillar of Baal and broke down the house of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day. ²⁸ Thus Jehu eradicated Baal out of Israel.

There were other rulers in Israel but even those who did right in the sight of the Lord were not completely faithful to God and so the Lord would punish Israel throughout the many years of the different kings.

The last two kings, one of Judah and one of Israel, who were ruling during the time of Elisha were these.

2 Kings 13:10-13 ¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years. ¹¹ He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel sin, but he walked in them. ¹² Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did and his might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ¹³ So Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

And now we come to the end of Elisha's ministry and life.

2 Kings 13:14 ¹⁴ When Elisha became sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!"

A couple of things to notice here. Despite the faithfulness of Elisha and being chosen of God to serve Him all his days how will Elisha meet his death?

He gets sick. I find it amazing that even faithful men of God do not escape the curse of sin, which is not only death, but the pain found in death. In this case Elisha gets sick. We're not told what type of sickness, but it was a sickness that would lead to death. No cure for Elisha.

The other thing I find interesting is that it simply says, "Elisha became sick with the illness of which he was to die."

Now, obviously this is a fact which in hind-sight states the obvious. Elisha dies and the writer is simply conveying that it was because of the illness of which he was afflicted.

But the other obvious fact is that this was not some coincidence. If God has been the One who has chosen and directed the life of Elisha all of these years, **then who permitted the type of sickness that would take Elisha's life?**

God. Elisha could have died 101 different ways, but even in death God is still in control of the details of Elisha's life. Job acknowledges this.

Job 12:10 ¹⁰ In whose hand is the life of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind?

And then Job goes on to describe how God is active in the affairs of men, both righteous and wicked.

Job 12:14-25 ¹⁴ "Behold, He tears down, and it cannot be rebuilt; He imprisons a man, and there can be no release. ¹⁵ "Behold, He restrains the waters, and they dry up; And He sends them out, and they inundate the earth. ¹⁶ "With Him are strength and sound wisdom, The misled and the misleader belong to Him. ¹⁷ "He makes counselors walk barefoot And makes fools of judges. ¹⁸ "He loosens the bond of kings And binds their loins with a girdle.

¹⁹ "He makes priests walk barefoot And overthrows the secure ones. ²⁰ "He deprives the trusted ones of speech And takes away the discernment of the elders. ²¹ "He pours contempt on nobles And loosens the belt of the strong. ²² "He reveals mysteries from the darkness And brings the deep darkness into light. ²³ "He makes the nations great, then destroys them; He enlarges the nations, then leads them away. ²⁴ "He deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth's people And makes them wander in a pathless waste. ²⁵ "They grope in darkness with no light, And He makes them stagger like a drunken man.

Someone finish this sentence... **Isaiah 40:8** ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, **But the word of our God stands forever.**

But in the context of this statement we read this.

Isaiah 40:3-7 ³ A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; ⁵ Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see *it* together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ A voice says, "Call out." Then he answered, "What shall I call out?" All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.

James is right.

James 4:14-15 ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

We exist at the will of God and should not think that the universe revolves around us. But having said that God in His mercy and love has chosen us to be a people for His own possession to bring Him glory and to allow us to enjoy Him and His kingdom forever.

This is why the last part of our text is so important.

2 Kings 13:14 ¹⁴ When Elisha ¹became sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!"

Where have we heard this statement before, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!", and who said it?

^{NAU} **2 Kings 2:12** Elisha saw *it* and cried out, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" And he saw Elijah no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Joash, the king of Israel, had most certainly sat around the table with Elisha on many occasions and heard Elisha recount one of the most amazing parts of his life as he conveyed to the king that day in his life when God sent His glorious messengers and flaming chariots and horses, to take his master, Elijah, bodily into heaven.

And yet, despite Elisha's frailty and sickness, what was Joash acknowledging about Elisha in that statement, my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen?

That in the same way with Elijah, God would send his messengers to gather to heaven, Elisha who served Him all those years. The only difference being that Elisha's body would remain here and the flaming chariot and messengers could not be seen by anyone else but Elisha.

But his destination was exactly the same as Elijah's. He was going home to be with God and all of his friends who once roamed this planet with him in their service to God.

He would be just as alive as Elijah and just as alive as all of the saints who were simply moved from one location to another via the death of their physical bodies, awaiting the day when they will be reunited to their physical resurrected bodies.

And yet, even with Joash's understanding of where Elisha will soon be, how does he respond to his death?

He wept over him and the Hebrew implies he wept bitterly. Joash knew that Elisha would soon rejoin Elijah in life, but it would be a life that was to be missed dearly by those he left behind temporarily.

Death is nothing to celebrate even when we know what death delivers for the child of God, which is a relocation for that child into the presence of God. Death is vile and death is to be loathed

because death is what results from sin against God and its curse. We fight death and we hate death because death is opposed to everything God made us for and that is life with Him in our physical bodies.

And so, it is a bitter-sweet thing for God's people, because on the one hand it separates us from loved ones, but we know that is only temporary and we know the hope that the child of God has.

1 Corinthians 15:53 - 58 ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; ⁵⁷ but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.

And Joash knew this along with Elisha. But even as Elisha's body was about to die he is still being used by God, as we see him encouraging the king of Israel concerning his enemies.

2 Kings 13:15-20 ¹⁵ Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows. ¹⁶ Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." And he put his hand *on it*, then Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. ¹⁷ He said, "Open the window toward the east," and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!" And he shot. And he said, "The LORD'S arrow of victory, even the arrow of victory over Aram; for you will defeat the Arameans at Aphek until you have destroyed *them*." ¹⁸ Then he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground," and he struck *it* three times and stopped. ¹⁹ So the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed *it*. But now you shall strike Aram *only* three times." ²⁰ Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year.

So, Elisha is dead and buried, but he's not done being used by God.

2 Kings 13:21 ²¹ As they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they cast the man into the grave of Elisha.

And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet.

As if in passing, the death of Elisha is seen to bring life. As momentous as this is, the man mentioned in only one verse of all of Scripture, who is miraculously brought back to life, is not even named. God knows who he was, but it's enough that God decided to use Elisha in this parting way.

Now, my question is, if Elisha is buried, how does someone touch the bones of Elisha?

I suppose it's possible that the hole was dug and Elisha was simply placed in it to await the covering of his body. What could also be likely is that Elisha was not placed in the ground, but was put into a cave like setting burial spot where friends and family could visit to see the body of Elisha.

However he was buried the point of the verse is that the body of this other man was hastily put into the same grave as Elisha's because of this marauding band so that they could get out of there quickly. And so, instead of digging a new grave they put him in the grave of Elisha.

^{NIV} **2 Kings 13:21** Once while some Israelites were burying a man, suddenly they saw a band of raiders; so they threw the man's body into Elisha's tomb. When the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet.

^{ESV} **2 Kings 13:21** And as a man was being buried, behold, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha, and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.

^{NET} **2 Kings 13:21** One day some men⁵³ were burying a man when they spotted⁵⁴ a raiding party. So they threw the dead man⁵⁵ into Elisha's tomb. When the body⁵⁶ touched Elisha's bones, the dead man⁵⁷ came to life and stood on his feet.

By the way, what do you think this revived man did, in light of the passage we just read?

He got out of Dodge with the rest of the others who were fleeing the raiding party.

And so ends the ministry of Elisha.