

Wearing Elijah's Mantle

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

A. 2Kings 2:9-14

B. Biography of the prophet Elijah

1. Elijah is from Eliyahu, meaning "My God is Yahweh" or Jehovah
2. Elijah the Tishbite of Tishbe in Gilead. Tishbe is sometimes interpreted as "stranger," so that the verse might read "Elijah, a stranger among the strangers in Gilead." No background for the person of Elijah is given in scripture or in history. His parents are unknown.
3. Scholars and historians are divided over whether or not Elijah was an Israelite. His homeland was at the northeastern edge of what could be considered the territory of Naphtali, but he was a Tishbite of Gilead
 - a. 1Kings 17:1; Judges 12:4
 - b. There were other non-Israelite prophets: Balaam
 - c. The lack of tribe or parentage is rare for an Israelite.
 - d. He was a prophet from the north, sent exclusively to the northern ten tribes of Israel; we do not read of him prophesying in Judah
4. Highlights of a prophet ranked with Moses - Matt. 17:3
 - a. Elijah travels for forty days and forty nights to Mount Horeb, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. He is the only person described in the Bible as returning to Horeb, after Moses and Israel left Horeb several centuries before.
 - b. 1Kings 17:22 relates how God "heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." This is the first instance of raising the dead recorded in Scripture. This non-Israelite widow was granted the best covenant blessing in the person of her son, the only hope for a widow in ancient society. Luke 4:25-26
 - c. Ahaziah is seriously injured in a fall. He sends to the priests of Baalzebub in Ekron, outside the kingdom of Israel, to learn if he will recover. Elijah intercepts his messengers and sends them back to Ahaziah with a message. In typical Elijah fashion, the message begins with a blunt, impertinent question: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?" - 2Kings 1:6
 - d. Elijah, in company with Elisha, approaches the Jordan. He rolls up his mantle and strikes the water (2Kings 2:8). The water immediately divides and Elijah and Elisha cross on dry land, The first to do so since the Exodus. Suddenly, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appear and Elijah is lifted up in a whirlwind, the first to do so in the history of the world. As Elijah is lifted up, his mantle falls to the ground and Elisha picks it up. God told Elijah that Elisha would succeed him in 1Kings 19:16 and to anoint him.

- C. The man who would follow what may arguably be the greatest prophet between Moses and Christ; Elisha must follow Elijah
 - 1. Elisha was a farmer in Israel - 1Kings 19:19-21
 - 2. Elisha asked and received a double-portion of Elijah's spirit
 - a. 2Kings 2:9-15

I. ELISHA'S MIRACLES

- A. What did he do with Elijah's mantle? It is a visual metaphor for filling Elijah's shoes. How did he succeed the great prophet?
 - 1. Parted the waters of the Jordan River - 2Kings 2:14
 - 2. Sweetened the waters of Jericho - 2Kings 2:19-22
 - 3. Cursed the irreverent youths from Bethel - 2Kings 2:23-25
 - 4. Foresaw the flood from Edom - 2Kings 3:16-17
 - 5. Foresaw Israel defeating the Moabites - 2Kings 3:18
 - 6. Increase of the widow's oil - 2Kings 4:1-7
 - 7. Conception of the Shunammite woman's son - 2Kings 4:8-17
 - 8. Resurrection of the Shunammite woman's son - 2Kings 4:18-37
 - 9. Deadly stew purified - 2Kings 4:38-41
 - 10. Feeding of the 100 - 2Kings 4:42-44
 - 11. Healing of Naaman, the leper - 2Kings 5:1-19
 - 12. The cursing of Gehazi his servant for covetousness - 2Kings 5:20-27
 - 13. Floating iron ax head - 2Kings 6:1-7
 - 14. Warned Israel of the Syrian Army - 2Kings 6:8-12
 - 15. Vision of the horses and chariots of fire - 2Kings 6:13-17
 - 16. Syrian raiders blinded - 2Kings 6:18-23
 - 17. Prophecy of the end of Syrian siege of Samaria - 2Kings 6:24 - 7:20
 - 18. Prophecy to the Shunammite woman to leave Israel during famine
2Kings 8:1-6
 - 19. Prophecy of the death of Ben-Hadad and anointing of Hazael
2Kings 8:7-15
 - 20. Prophecy of the anointing of Jehu as king of Israel and God's vengeance on Jezebel - 2Kings 9:1-3
 - 21. Prophecy of three defeats of Syria - 2Kings 13:14-19
 - 22. Resurrection at Elisha's tomb - 2Kings 13:20-21

II. LESSONS LEARNED

- A. God cares for His faithful people.
 - 1. Increase of the widow's oil, the Shunammite woman's son born and resurrected, purification of the deadly stew, feeding of the 100, the floating iron ax head, protection of the Shunammite woman in famine
 - 2. While God didn't give everyone everything they needed immediately, He did help them in the most dire of circumstances - 1Peter 5:7
- B. God preserves his people
 - 1. The sweetening of the waters of Jericho, the flood from Edom, the defeat of the Edomites, the defeat of the Syrians.
 - 2. 2Peter 2:9; Psalm 34:17

- C. God rules in the kingdoms of men.
 - 1. The defeat of the Moabites, the warning of the location of the Syrian army, the end of the Syrian siege against Samaria, the anointing of the new kings: Hazael and Jehu, three defeats of Syria.
 - 2. Dan. 4:32; Rom. 13:1
- D. God demands obedience if we expect to receive His blessings.
 - 1. The account of Naaman - Heb. 5:9
- E. God will punish the wicked.
 - 1. The death of the youths that mocked Elisha, the curse of Gehazi for covetousness, Jezebel's death.
 - 2. 1Cor. 6:9; Rev. 21:8
- F. God provides encouragement through spiritual insight.
 - 1. Opening of the eyes of Elisha's servant - Rom. 8:31; Psalm 118:6
- G. God keeps his promises.
 - 1. Every prophecy of Elisha came true: the flood from Edom, defeat of Edomites, the end of the siege of Samaria, the famine in Shunnam, the death of Ben-Hadad and anointing of Hazael, the anointing of Jehu, the three defeats of Syria
 - 2. Psalm 111:7; 2Tim. 2:13; Deut. 7:9
- H. God has the power of life
 - 1. The resurrection of the man who fell on Elisha's bones.
 - 2. John 11:25, 10:10