

Hallelujah! No one else. No one else can touch my heart like you do. I could search for all eternity long, and find there is none like you.

And find there is none. I could search for all eternity long, and find there is none like you. Touch my heart like you do.

I could search for all eternity long, and find there is none. We will worship the Lamb of Glory. We will worship the King of Kings.

We will worship the Lamb of Glory. We will worship the King. We will worship the Lamb of Glory.

We will worship the King of Kings. We will worship the Lamb of Glory. We will worship the King.

And with our heads we'll be high. We will worship and sing. And with our heads we'll be high.

We'll fly to the skies when hope is nigh. And with our heads we'll be high. We will worship and sing.

And with our heads we'll be high. We proudly go to rejoicing. With our heads we'll be high.

We will worship and sing. And with our heads we'll be high. We will worship and sing.

And with our heads we'll be high. We'll worship and sing. Praise this holy name, praise God.

Again, welcome to our visitors, and also, we remind those of this body that this church is in a 24-hour prayer chain all day long, all night long. Hundreds and hundreds of people calling on the name of the Lord. We've been praying for people all over the world, missions, and that God would tear down the walls and open doors.

We're also praying for this modern Sodom and Gomorrah in which we minister, that God will do a fresh work in our hearts and continue to burden us for this city. And we'll not take it lightly, we'll not just stay in this church and worship, but we'll reach out to the 17 million people that live in the greater metroplex here in New York City and all the surrounding areas. Praise the Lord.

My message this morning, the mantle of Elijah. I want you to go to 2 Kings, the second chapter, and if you will just leave your Bibles open, I'll be ministering from that throughout the course of my message today. The mantle of Elijah.

It's good to have Pastor Carter back from Macedonia and Kosovo, and pray for our teams that are still there and the teams that are ministering around the world. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I have a word that you put in my heart for the people, and Lord, I ask you to help me to deliver it in the grace and mercy of God.

I pray, Heavenly Father, that you send your Holy Spirit upon me, and Holy Spirit, as you abide in me, I pray that you speak forth the mind of the Lord, the mind of the Father, your mind, O Holy Ghost. Let no one leave this church without having something, have received something from the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit, not a dead letter, but something that has spoken directly to their heart, I pray, in Jesus' name, amen. Now, this 2 Kings, the second chapter, is the marvelous story of Elijah and Elisha, the story of, one of the most exciting stories in the Bible, about Elijah being carried away in a chariot, translated to glory.

Now, for our new converts and others, just to refresh, I want to give you just a synopsis, a recapping of the story, and then we'll go back and try to dig some nuggets out of it for today. Now, Elijah has been notified by the Father that his time is up and that he's got a day or so left, and he may have warned him sooner than that, but he's told that he's going to be translated, and he has a rendezvous area on the other side of the Jordan. So just before he goes, he takes Elijah on a trip.

He takes him to Bethel, he takes him to Jericho, and then when they get to the Jordan River, he takes off his outer mantle, Elijah does, and smites the Jordan, and it opens, and they go across some dry land, and they're on the other side. Now, Elijah's looking at the mountains, and most people, many scholars believe that he lived there. His abode was in that area, and they thought that he just wanted to be taken near his home.

I don't know the circumstances of that, but I do know that when they get on the other side of Jordan, Elijah turns to Elisha, and he said, you know I'm about to be taken from you. What is the one thing you'd want me to do for you? And without hesitation, Elijah says, I want a double portion of the Spirit of God that rests upon you. I want a double portion of your spirit.

And Elijah said, you're asking a hard thing. And he said, well, that's what I want. And he said, well, I'll tell you what, if you can see me when I depart, it'll happen.

But if you don't see me, it won't happen. And all of a sudden, while they're talking and walking, I mean, a chariot out of heaven comes and separates them. I don't know how that happened, it just came right between them.

And Elijah gets on board, and Elisha said, my father, my father, the chariots of Israel, the chariot of Israel and all the soldiers, or all the accompanying army. And suddenly, Elijah's gone, and his mantle drops. He picks up the mantle, and he goes to the Jordan.

He said, he didn't say, where is Elijah, he said, where's the God of Elijah? And the Jordan opens up, and he goes the other side, and he goes back, recapping, I mean, going back to all of those towns that he'd been taken to by the prophet Elijah. Now, this is miraculous, isn't it? Can you imagine a chariot coming right out of heaven and just taking a man of God away? One of the most incredible, spectacular, miraculous things in the Bible. But what does it mean? We know from the Scripture that none of these stories are told, these miraculous stories are just told to enamor us or cause us to revere the God of ancient Israel.

That's not at all. The Bible says very clearly, Paul the Apostle said, all these things are written for examples unto us. They were written for us or for our learning upon whom the ends of the world have come.

It's not just a miraculous story. There are truths here that God, the Holy Ghost, wants to reveal to us that have to do with our life. The whole story is about us.

The whole thing, God didn't have to record it. He recorded in detail that we could study it and get our spiritual lessons for our day. Let me begin by telling you what I believe the focus of this story is and what God is trying to teach us, the focus teaching or the main teaching of this whole episode that we're discussing this morning, and it's simply this.

God is always wanting to do greater things for every succeeding generation. He's always wanted to do more miraculous. He wants to give more of His Spirit.

He wants to do greater and newer things for every succeeding generation beyond anything in the past. Now, it's a wonderful thing for me to read about God's miracle opening of the Red Sea. It's wonderful to read about Joshua and the Jordan open, but it's another thing for God to open my Red Sea and give me the same kind of miracles.

And that's what this is all about, to increase and enlarge our faith that we can believe God for miraculous things in our day. His desire for our generation that we would want that double portion, that we could go through the Old Testament, read of all of His mighty works and say, Lord, I want more than that. You said, because I see Elijah, here's a type of Christ in his ascension.

And Jesus said, most certainly, you'll do greater works than I have done because I go to my Father. In other words, you're going to be here, sin is going to be on the increase. You're going to face things I have never seen Jesus is saying.

You're going to need more power. You're going to need authority than any other past generation, anything in the Old Testament. You're going to need an anointing of the Holy Spirit.

You're going to have to have a walk with me, stronger than Elijah, stronger than all of these men of God, because I'm going to endue you with the Holy Ghost and He will enable you to live a pure, holy, righteous life. Now, having stated what I believe is the main teaching of this episode, my first question in rereading this story was, why did Elijah take Elisha on this trip? It's certainly not a sentimental journey. It's not Elijah going down memory lane one last time.

Now, we do know that he had started schools of prophets in both Bethel and Jericho, but that's not it at all. He knows he's gone, and he's been training somebody to take his place. Elijah has been his servant, but he's been watching this young man, and he's going to test him before he goes.

If you follow this story, first of all, Elijah is continually testing Elisha this whole trip. This was meant exclusively for Elisha and what Elijah hopes he's going to learn. I want to take you through this trip and see if you and I are learning the lessons that God is trying to teach us in this.

He goes to Bethel, and he takes Elisha, and he says, Elisha, stay here, Terry, right here. What he's trying to say is, you've been well-trained, you have a spiritual discernment, now I want you to stay right here. He said that after being there and visiting.

The Bible doesn't give us the whole dialogue, the Bible only gives us certain highlights, but I'm sure this dialogue went on a good portion of the hours that they spent in Bethel. Elijah says, look, I'm going on, I'm going further, I'm going to be going to Jericho, I'm going to go to the Jordan, and I'm going home. I want you to stay here.

You know what is needed. Now, the prophet Elijah was hoping that his younger student would learn exactly what he wanted him to see, and I'll tell you what he saw when he went to Bethel. Just to dare say, after Bethel, remember that he's going to come back, and there are going to be 42 children that are going to be torn apart by she-bears, because they're coming out to mock him.

And I want you to know those mockers were there when Elijah and Elisha first came into Bethel. Now, you know that Bethel means house of God. You know that this is where Jacob sacrificed.

There's so many things about Bethel that have to do with faith and with hope and with honesty and purity. It had a great heritage, but something had happened in Bethel. Remember Jeroboam had set up a golden calf there.

They were given to idolatry, and they had lost, the parents had lost the whole young generation. The young generation was given over to skepticism. They became scoffers and mockers.

And it's an amazing thing that this happens with 50 prophets there in the middle, having their headquarters, studying the Word of God, unable to affect that society whatsoever. Now Bethel to me represents, and I believe that's what the Scripture is trying to bring to us, represents our evil society and what it's become. Our society has become a society of mockery, of everything that's holy and pure and righteous.

We live among scoffers today. They were given over to homosexuality. They were given over to lust, sensuality, and idolatry.

And so Elijah is saying, why don't you settle here? You see the need. You see a society that's gone mad. You see people that are mocking and scoffing.

They need a revival here, Elijah. Why don't you stay here and pastor right here? I think certainly this is something he has to consider because it comes from his leader. He knows he's a great man.

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