

2 Kings 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Analysis

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

This verse contributes to the overall theme of chapter 2: Prophetic succession and confirmation of divine calling. The prophetic ministry served as God's primary means of covenant enforcement, calling both kings and people to faithfulness. During this period, Israel and Judah struggled with persistent idolatry, particularly Baal worship introduced under Ahab and Jezebel.

The narrative demonstrates God's justice in judging covenant unfaithfulness while maintaining His ultimate purposes for redemption.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: 2 Kings 2 takes place during the mid-9th century BCE, around 850 BCE, during the transition from Elijah to Elisha. The chapter's theme (Elijah's Translation and Elisha's Beginning) reflects the historical reality of prophetic succession and divine affirmation of Elisha's ministry following Elijah's remarkable translation. Archaeological evidence from this period includes royal inscriptions,

administrative documents, and material culture that corroborate the biblical account while providing additional context for understanding the political and social dynamics at work.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to understanding the theological message of 2 Kings 2 regarding prophetic succession and confirmation of divine calling?
2. What does this passage reveal about God's character, particularly His justice, mercy, and faithfulness to covenant promises?
3. In what practical ways should this text shape contemporary Christian thinking about faithfulness, worship, and obedience to God?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּהִי י'	הַמָּה	הַלּוֹךְ	הַלּוֹךְ
H1961	H1992		
		And it came to pass as they still	And it came to pass as they still
		H1980	H1980
וַיְדַבֵּר	וַיֵּהָיֶה	רָכַב	אֵשׁ
H1696	H2009		
and talked		that behold there appeared a chariot	of fire
		H7393	H784
			אֵשׁ וְסוּסִים
			H5483
			אֵשׁ
			H784
וַיִּפָּרֶדּוּ	בֵּין	שְׁנֵיהֶם	וַיַּעֲלֶה
H6504	H996	H8147	H5927
and parted	asunder	them both	went up
			H452
			אֶל־הוּא
			H5591
			בְּסַעַר הַ
			H8064
			הַשָּׁמַיִם:

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 6:17 (Parallel theme): And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

Hebrews 1:14 (Parallel theme): Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Psalms 68:17 (Parallel theme): The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

Mark 16:19 (Parallel theme): So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Zechariah 3:8 (Parallel theme): Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

Genesis 5:24 (Parallel theme): And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Habakkuk 3:8 (Parallel theme): Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation?

2 Kings 2:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.