

2 Kings 2:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

Analysis

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

וְיָמִים אֵלֶיךָ כִּי עָבֹר מִלְּפָנֶיךָ
H1961 And it came to pass when they were gone over
H5674 H452 H559 H413

אֵלֶיךָ מָה שָׁאַלְתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר אָשָׁר
from thee And Elisha Ask what I shall do
H477 H7592 H6213 H0 H2962

אֵלֶיךָ מָעֵת כִּי אָמַרְתָּךְ אֵלֶיךָ
for thee before I be taken away said from thee And Elisha
H3947 H5973 H559 H477 H1961

בְּרוּתָךְ אֵלֶיךָ שְׁנָה יְמִינָךְ
portion I pray thee let a double of thy spirit
H4994 H6310 H8147 H7307 H413

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 11:17 (Spirit): And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

Deuteronomy 21:17 (Parallel theme): But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.

Zechariah 12:8 (Parallel theme): In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

John 16:7 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Numbers 11:25 (Spirit): And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.