

Eliyahu ~ Part 19

In my last post, we saw **Eliyahu** riding a fiery chariot into heaven as **God's Reward for Service**. In this post, we explore other references to **Eliyahu** in the **Tanakh** and **Brit Hadasah**.

There are a few more references to **Eliyahu** about **Elisha's** ministry in 2 Kings 2:13-15 and 3:11. (I'm still not sure whether I will dig into **Elisha** after the conclusion of this series.) There are also a few references in conjunction with **King Ach'av** that we previously examined in 2 Kings 9:35; 10:10 and 10:17.

In 2 Chronicles 21:12, we come across another word of God through **Eliyahu** before he ascended in the fiery chariot.

"¹² A letter came to him [King Y'horam] from Eliyahu the prophet which said, "Here is what Adonai, the God of David your ancestor, says: 'You have not lived by the examples of Y'hoshafat your father or Asa king of Y'hudah. ¹³ Instead you have lived by the example of the kings of Isra'el and have caused Y'hudah and the people living in Yerushalayim to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ach'av caused [Isra'el] to prostitute themselves. Moreover, you killed your brothers from your father's house, men better than you. ¹⁴ Because of all this, Adonai is going to strike your people with a terrible disease, also your children, your wives and everything you have. ¹⁵ You will be very ill from a disease in your intestines, until your intestines protrude, because of the effects of this disease, day after day.'" 2 Chronicles 21:12-15 (CJB)

Eliyahu was alive and ministering during the early part of **Y'horam's** reign. We don't know how much time elapsed between the accession of **Y'horam, King of Israel**, and the to the ascension of **Eliyahu**. Writing this letter to the king of **Y'hudah** may have been one of **Eliyahu's** last ministries.

The prophet reminded **Y'horam** of three great kings of Judah: David, who founded the royal dynasty; Asa, a godly king who purged the land of evil; and **Y'horam's** father, **Y'hoshafat**. Instead of following in the ways of these kings, **Y'horam** patterned himself after **Ach'av**. As a consequence, the people followed his bad example, and it wasn't difficult for him to make **Ba'al** worship famous in **Y'hudah**, the one place where **Adonai** should have been worshiped without compromise.

Not only was **Y'horam** an idolater, but he was also a murderer and killed his brothers; so the Lord would now cause him to reap what he had sown. The enemy would invade and loot the kingdom of **Y'hudah** and take **Y'horam's** treasures as well as his wives and sons. Then, the king would be afflicted with an incurable bowel disease that would give him great pain and ultimately take his life. Both of these predictions came true.

The Philistines and the Arabs invaded **Y'hudah**, robbed the palace of its treasures, and took **Y'horam's** wives and sons, except for young **Achazyah**. The king contracted a painful, lingering bowel disease and died after two years. But the people didn't mourn his death, nor did they stage the traditional *"royal bonfire"* in his honor. But perhaps the most humiliating thing was that his body wasn't placed in a royal tomb, although he was buried in the city of David.

Was **Y'horam's** compromise worth it? Of course not! *"There can be a way which seems right to a person, but at its end are the ways of death."* ~ Proverbs 16:25 (CJB)

We may be more familiar with the last reference to **Eliyahu** in the **Tanakh**:

"Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai." ~ Malachi 4:5 (CJB)

The promise in Malachi 4:5 was often discussed and debated by the Jewish rabbis who asked, *"Who is the Y'hoshafat whom the Lord will send?"* The Jewish leaders interrogated **Yochanan the Immerser** about it (**Yochanan** 1:19-21), and **Kefa, Ya'akov**, and Yochanan asked **Yeshua** about it (Matthew 17:10).

The prophet **Eliyahu** is mentioned at least thirty times in the **Brit Hadashah**, and ten of those references relate him to **Yochanan the Immerser**. But **Yochanan the Immerser** said that he was no **Eliyahu** (**Yochanan** 1:21, 25). He did come in the *"spirit and power"* of **Eliyahu** and turn the hearts of fathers and children (Luke 1:16-17). Like **Eliyahu**, **Yochanan** was a courageous man, a man of prayer empowered by the Spirit, a man who lived alone in the wilderness, and a servant who turned many people back to the Lord, but he was not **Eliyahu** returned to earth.

However, for those who believed in **Yeshua** during His earthly ministry, **Yochanan the Immerser** performed the work of **Eliyahu** in their lives: he prepared them to meet the Lord. **Yeshua** declared: *"Indeed if you are willing to accept it, he is Eliyahu, whose coming was predicted."* ~ Matthew 11:14 (CJB) **Yeshua** also said: *"On the one hand, Eliyahu is coming and will restore all things; ¹² on the other hand, I tell you that Eliyahu has come already, and people did not recognize him but did whatever they pleased to him. In the same way, the Son of Man too is about to suffer at their hands."* ~ Matthew 17:11-12 (CJB)

But Malachi 4:5 promises that **Eliyahu** himself will come, and that his coming is related to *the great and terrible Day of the Lord* that will burn the wicked like stubble (v. 1). That's why **Yeshua** made the declaration in did in Matthew 17 above. Since *the great and terrible Day of the Adonai* has yet to occur, we have to believe that **Yochanan the Immerser** was not the promised **Eliyahu**, even though he ministered like **Eliyahu**. Therefore, this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled.

In my next post, we will explore additional passages in the **Brit Hadashah** that relate to **Eliyahu**.