

Question:

We know from Scripture that the prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. However, years later, we read that he sent a letter to King Jehoram concerning his illness (2 Chronicles 21:12). How is that possible?

Answer:

Let's take a closer look.

2 Chronicles 21:11-15 tells us that King Jehoram led the people of Judah into idolatry and immorality, much like the kings of Israel. Then verse 12 says:

"Jehoram received a letter from Elijah the prophet, which said: 'This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: Because you have not followed the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah, but have instead followed the ways of the kings of Israel... the Lord is going to strike your people, your sons, your wives, and all your possessions with a severe blow. You yourself will suffer a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out.'"

This prophecy clearly took place after Elijah had already been taken up to heaven. So how could Elijah have sent a letter from heaven?

The answer is he didn't. Elijah did not send this letter from heaven. Instead, he wrote it before he was taken up. God revealed to him prophetically that a king named Jehoram would rise and commit terrible sins. Elijah was instructed to write down God's judgment in advance. That letter was likely entrusted to Elisha or another servant to be delivered when the time came.

And indeed, the letter was preserved until Jehoram became king and committed the wickedness that Elijah had foreseen. The prophecy was fulfilled exactly as written: Jehoram contracted a painful intestinal disease, and eventually his bowels came out. He died in misery, and unlike his predecessors, he was not honored at his death.

2 Chronicles 21:18-19 says:

"After all this, the Lord afflicted Jehoram with an incurable disease of the bowels. In the course of time, at the end of two

years, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great pain. His people made no fire in his honor, as they had for his ancestors.”

So, Elijah did not return or send a message from heaven he simply wrote it beforehand, under divine instruction.

We see a similar case with a prophecy about King Josiah. Over a century before Josiah was born, a man of God prophesied in 1 Kings 13:1-2:

“By the word of the Lord, a man of God came from Judah to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make an offering. The man cried out against the altar: ‘Altar, altar! This is what the Lord says: A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. He will sacrifice the priests of the high places here and burn human bones on you.’”

That prophecy was written and preserved for over 100 years until Josiah was born and fulfilled it precisely, as recorded in 2 Kings 23:16-20.

The same pattern is seen again in the prophecies of Isaiah, who foretold the coming of King Cyrus of Persia long before his birth. Isaiah even wrote that Cyrus would help rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. These words were fulfilled generations later. You can read the prophecy in Isaiah 44:28 and Isaiah 45:1, and its fulfillment in Ezra 1:2.

What Can We Learn from This?

God knows the future. His Word never fails. If He could declare the rise of Jehoram and Cyrus long before they were born and everything happened exactly as He said then we must also take His warnings seriously.

The Bible says in Galatians 5:19–21:

“The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

These are not idle threats. God's Word is true and unchanging He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

If you haven't yet surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, now is the time. Don't wait until it's too late. Take a few moments to sincerely repent of your sins. Seek baptism by full immersion in water in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will guide you into all truth.

Maranatha.

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