

30 AMAZING BIBLE STORIES YOU MAY NOT KNOW

#5 – Elisha’s Bones | 2 Kings 13:14-25

ELISHA’S LAST PROPHECY | 2 KINGS 13:14-19, 22-25

- Verse 13 - In [2 Kings 2:12](#) Elisha used the same words to weep over the departure of Elijah. The words of Joash now connect the beginning of Elisha’s ministry with the end.
- Verses 15-17 –
 - Elisha instructs Joash to do some “play acting.” The theatrics involve the shooting of an arrow out the window. The arrow displayed **the Lord’s deliverance** over the **Syrians in Aphek** (v. 17).
 - Theatrical displays were not unusual among prophets. Consider Ezekiel’s bread ([Ezek. 4:9](#)), Isaiah’s nakedness ([Is. 20:3-4](#)) and Hosea’s marriage ([Hos. 1:2](#)).
 - One wonders, *did the physical actions have any effect, or were they only a display of the spiritual reality?* From the story that follows, it looks like God was committed to carrying out *what the actions displayed*. That is, the *outcome* was a reflection of the *action*, and not vice-versa.
- Verses 18-19 –
 - Elisha was **wroth** (v. 19) because Joash only beat the ground three times. Had he kept going, he could have **smitten Syria till thou has consumed it**. (V. 17 promised only that Joash would **smite the Syrians in Aphek**, while verse 19 says that Joash *could have* consumed all of Syria.
 - We don’t really know why Joash was somewhat timid in smiting the arrows. We do know that this affected the final outcome.
- Verse 25 – We see the final outcome: **three times did Joash beat** the King of Syria, the prophecy thus fulfilled.

ELISHA’S LAST MIRACLE | 2 KINGS 13:20-21

- Verse 20 –
 - We had seen Elisha sick (v. 14), and now **Elisha died**. Elisha had served as a prophet for at least 50 years.
 - Then the story takes a strange twist: **bands of the Moabites invaded**. Why the Moabites? They have not been part of the story at all.
- Verse 21 –

- Here is one of the strangest accounts in all the Bible. It is a rushed statement, with no point of chronology, in which an unknown man is brought back to life.
 - Who is the man? And does it matter?
 - What did the man do after this? Does [John 11:26](#) apply to this man?
 - Does the story have prophetic significance, or is it simply an unusual historical account?

RELICS IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

- Both Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox churches hold to the veneration of *relics* from those declared by the church to be saints.
- They consider a three-tier system of relics:
 - First class: The body or part of the body of the saint.
 - Second class: The clothing of the saint.
 - Third class: A piece of cloth or other object that has been in contact with a first or second class relic.
- The Second Council of Nicea and the Council of Trent both systematize the use of relics in bringing healing, holiness and/or grace.
- Passages used to support the doctrine of relics: Exodus 13:19 (Joseph’s Bones), 2 Kings 13:21 (Elisha’s bones), 2 Kings 2:13 (Elijah’s mantle), Acts 19:12 (cloth from Paul).
- Problems with the doctrine: *we do not build a doctrine out of an historical account*.

IS THERE ANY SIGNIFICANCE?

- Israel was a nation that struggled with obedience to the Lord. They wanted the power of God without really trusting God.
- Israel (the Northern Kingdom) was eventually defeated by the Assyrians, and the 10 tribes scattered.
- The fact that *Moabites* are the invading enemy rather than Assyrian’s may be significant. Moabites continue until the last days. Could it be that this account of the man being raised from the dead signifies that in the last days *Israel, the dead man* will be cast into the grave, but the resurrection will save him forevermore?
- It seems significant that the story is “forced” into the account of the struggles of Israel. Life comes to Israel in its darkest moment.