



Lesson 124

Elisha Begins His Prophetic Ministry

Story Elements

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: 2 Kings 2:19-25 • Setting: circa 847 B.C., between Jericho and Beth-el. • Main Characters: God, Elisha, and certain townspeople • Plot: Elisha begins his prophetic career by alleviating the suffering in one city but bring judgment in another. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key word(s): “ _____!” • Climax: <i>2 Kings 2:23 And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.</i> |
|---|--|

Water Spring Cured

1. (vv 19-22) After Elijah's ascension, Elisha tarried at Jericho.
 - (a) The men of the city complained of the bad waters that harmed the crops and the cattle. Elijah instructed the men to do two things:
 - i. To bring a new _____ (or shallow metal dish)
 - ii. To put _____ in the cruse.
 - (b) Elisha then went to the water's fountain, tossed the salt into it, and proclaimed, *“Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more _____ or barren land.”* The waters were immediately healed.
2. It's not hard to find a Gospel lesson in this story.
 - (a) Jericho was a cursed city, as _____ are a cursed people.
 - (b) The waters of the city were foul and brought forth corruption and death, just as the hearts of sinners are corrupt, and the wages of sin is _____.

Matthew 15:18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

3. The cure for the corrupt waters was a new dish and salt. These are symbols of purification:
 - (a) The new cruse is like the Savior, who was the _____ Lamb of God, who lived purely and sinlessly.
 - (b) The salt's purifying action is like the Savior's own perfect _____.
 - (c) As the cruse carried the salt to the corrupt fount, so the Savior came and lived _____, bringing his purifying righteousness to all who believe in Him.

Infidels Cursed

- 4.(vv 23-24) As Elisha journeyed to Beth-el, he was met by a band of youth who mockingly said, “Go up, thou bald head! Go up, thou bald head!” Elisha turned and declared God's judgment on them, and two she-bears burst from the woods and attacked the mob, wounding forty-two of them. Notice:
- (a) Beth-el was the calf-worshiping capital of Israel since the days of _____, and the evidence suggests that the youth were products of the pagan society in which they lived.
 - (b) The Hebrew word for “little children” can refer to males as old as 30. This band of mockers were probably young _____, and their actions are contrasted by the sons of the prophets who were zealous for Elijah and Elisha.
 - (c) The term “bald head” was a derisive term and could be said to bald men or thickly haired men. By their usage of the phrase “go up” they were saying “Thy master has gone up; why dost not thou go up after him? Where is the fiery chariot? When shall we be _____ of thee too?”¹
 - (d) The mention of the large number of youth that were attacked by the bears indicates that it was actually a large _____ that met Elisha, possibly intending to do the prophet harm.
 - (e) The Bible uses the word “tare” to describe the bear attack. We would say “_____,” which does not necessarily mean that they were killed.
5. The behavior of the young men in Beth-el was a sad commentary on the spiritual condition of the people, and Elisha's experience provides insight into the general spiritual climate in which he ministered.

2 Chronicles 36:16 But they _____ the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): “Go up” • 1. a) i. cruse; ii. salt; b) death • 2. a) sinners; b) death • 3. a) spotless; b) righteousness; c) sinlessly • 4. a) Jeroboam; b) adults; c) rid; d) mob; e) mauled • 2 Chron. 36:16 - mocked

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

¹ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.