

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Two

Elijah and Elisha Foreshadow the Coming of Jesus

Elijah was a great prophet and mightily blessed of God to perform miracles and to faithfully serve the Lord. He withstood the prophets of Baal and of the Grove. He prayed earnestly and it rained not on the face of the earth for a period of three and a half years. When most people think of the Old Testament prophets, they generally think of Elijah.

Elisha, however, was the greater prophet. When Elijah was taken up into glory, Elisha had asked for a double portion of the spirit of Elijah: 2 Kings 2: 9 "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. 10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. 11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. 13 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; 14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over."

The Lord used Elijah to perform seven miracles. The Lord used Elisha to perform fourteen miracles, thus a double portion. When Elisha's time came for him to die, the Lord used Elisha to send deliverance to Israel from the Syrian army.

The relationship between Elijah and Elisha mirrors the relationship between John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ. The book of Malachi prophesied that God would send Elijah the prophet to prepare the people for the coming of Christ: Mal. 4:5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

The Lord testified at the Mount of Transfiguration that it was John the Baptist that came in the spirit and power of Elijah: Matt. 17:10 "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? 11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. 12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

John was a great prophet, yet he came to prepare the way for a far better prophet, king and high priest. Just as Elijah preceded and paved the way for a greater prophet Elisha, so John was followed by a far greater prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ.