

## **Kings and Prophets 13-08-09b**

We pick up our study now, returning to 1 Kings, looking at the initiation, the inception of the ministry of Elijah. We've tried to put him in a context to observe the pattern of which he is a part, in particular, anticipating the arrival of Elisha on the scene. But we want to take a look now at some of the specific details of the ministry of Elijah himself.

We noted that he comes in the time of the 7th king, Ahab, and he is himself something of the 7th sign to the Northern Kingdom. If you look at the public miraculous demonstrations to the Northern Kingdom, God is trying to get their attention because they need to turn. There isn't a lot of miraculous, as we've seen, there's not a lot of miraculous happening going on down in the Southern Kingdom.

Why? They get it, largely. They're not perfect, but there are wonderful growing believers down there. And Jehoshaphat, in particular, sends teachers out so that they can learn.

So they're on the road. They don't need a bunch of miraculous attention-getting devices. Miracles are for the people at a very rudimentary, basic level.

Miracles are what God uses when he can't get people's attention any other way because they're at such a primitive level. You should be glad that God doesn't work miracles for you because you don't need them. You don't need them.

Miracles don't build your faith. Remember what Abraham says to the rich man in torment? When the rich man says, Oh, Father Abraham, send Lazarus to my brothers so that they won't come to this awful place. What does Abraham reply in Jesus' parable over in Luke? They have Moses and the prophets.

Let them hear them. If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, even if they are visited by someone risen from the dead. Because, of course, Lazarus would have to come back.

And it's kind of interesting because you get a little back story on the scenario of the rich man and Lazarus. Remember Lazarus by the gate, dogs of the king of swords, rich man going in and out all the time and really not giving him the time of day, much less provision or sustenance or any sort of care. He's rich.

He's got plenty of surplus. But what is his condemnation? Is there any issue of faith? We've looked at this before. Is there any issue of faith for the rich man? Is he in torments because he doesn't have faith? He's more of a James guy.

He's in torments because he doesn't have works, because he does not express love toward his brother, brother, fellow, covenant, Israelite, servant of God. They are both considered to be related to God. Here is one not caring for another, not using the excess and the abundance and

the superfluity that God has given him to benefit his brother.

The law teaches this. Leave the corners of the field uncleaned. Make it possible for those who are not so well off to sustain themselves.

The rich man has an abundance and he does nothing with it. He has no eye to his brother. What does it tell us? Look out not only for your own interest, but also for the interest of others.

Let this mind be in you like it was in the Lord Jesus. If the Lord Jesus was only interested in himself, he'd have never gone to the cross and we wouldn't have any salvation. Well, this idea is what Abraham has the conversation with the rich man over.

The reason Jesus tells that parable is the man's condemnation. It's kind of like what we're going to see when we do the parable of the sheep and the goats. What is the basis of condemnation for the goats? When I was thirsty, you did not give me to drink.

When I was hungry, you did not feed me. It's identical to the condemnation of the rich man. In life, you were comforted.

Lazarus was not. Now Lazarus is comforted and you are not. In that scenario, lack of comfort really says something.

He says, let the unclean man, Lazarus, dip his finger in water and put one drop on my tongue. I am tormented in this flame. I'm not so worried about the unkempt, unclean status of Lazarus now.

You couldn't be defiled more quickly than to have a man with skin sores dip his finger in something and put it in your mouth. But he's all for that now, for comfort. There is a need for a turning, a change of mind among God's people in the northern kingdom.

That need is not so evident, not so apparent yet in the southern kingdom of Judah. So where do the miracles come? Up north. And this is one of the points that God is establishing, because does the north in fact turn when they see Jeroboam's hand wither, when they see Jeroboam's altar split? Is there a nationwide revival and renewal? No.

Which makes the point that Jesus is going to make in the parable, miracles don't change anybody's mind. Miracles are a way of God getting attention and bringing them to the point of decision, but a miracle will not change anyone's mind. Don't let any atheist or any fence-sitting quote-unquote agnostic tell you, well, if God would just make the evidence a little more clear, I'd be happy to believe.

No, they wouldn't. The evidence is abundantly clear. God the Holy Spirit has come to their heart and one-on-one, mano-a-mano, has convicted them of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

They know there's a God. What may be known of God is manifest. It's not a matter of more evidence.

It's a matter of more repentance. Additional evidence isn't required. And you think about this, as I've said many times, when you think about doctrines like infant salvation.

Somebody who's going to reject God, even the evidence of standing before His very throne. Lucifer stood before the throne of God and still, as we used to say, went negative, rebelled, rejected God and God's authority, and got kicked out of heaven. If the greatest creature that ever came from the hand of God, perfect in every way, can stand in the presence of God and make a negative decision, do you seriously think that just enough evidence of the presence and the power and the glory of God would make somebody always choose for God? It's demonstrably false.

A third of the angels who have been in the very presence of God, in ways we can't even imagine, left because free will is well and truly free. When God makes a thing free, it is free indeed, right? And free will is free indeed. It is not coerced.

It is not cajoled. It is not compelled. It is not sovereignly forced in one direction or in the absence of divine forcing, inevitably falling in another direction.

It is well and truly free. So God sends Elijah. And by the way, this is the seventh.

Let me remind you of the list. The first great miraculous sign to the kingdom in this generation was Jeroboam's altar. The man of God goes up there.

Remember that? And he points to him to try to have him hailed into prison or worse. And the thing shrivels up and shrinks. And then it is restored.

The altar splits apart. This is a miraculous intervention by God, violating several laws of physics and biology and everything else, in the presence of a huge assembled throng. Everybody up there on that day sees this and hears about it.

It ripples. It is the most widely known event of the day. Nobody doesn't know about this or doesn't hear about it within hours.

That's in 13, 1 through 10. Second, the fate of the prophet that delivers the word on that day. That story quickly gets around.

Remember the old prophet that manages to distract him? The king invites him and he doesn't go. But then he fails his second test. And when the old prophet invites him in, he disobeys the word of the Lord.

And even this small amount of disobedience costs him his life. And there's that long extended section. You think, why does the word of God devote so much time to this? Because it's important.

It is a supernatural sign. God intervenes and the man supernaturally dies in fulfillment of God's word. That's in 13, 11 through 32.

And note particularly verse 33. Just flip back there. 1 Kings 13.

After this event, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way. The king knows about it. The king knows the fate of this prophet.

But what does it say? After this event, after this whole thing, he's seen his own hand shrivel and be restored. People say, well if God would just do something that I can personally verify. I don't want it second hand.

I don't want to be listening to these old dusty accounts from hundreds and thousands of years ago. I want God to do something that I can see. Look at Jeroboam.

Jeroboam's own personal hand shriveled and withered up. He panicked, pleaded, screamed out for help. God miraculously restored it.

And look at verse 33. Do miracles change people's minds? After this event, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way. But again, he made priests from every class of people for the high places.

Whoever wished, he consecrated him and he became one of the priests of the high places. This thing was the sin of the house of Jeroboam so as to exterminate and destroy it from the face of the earth. Why does God exterminate and destroy people from the face of the earth? And in my opinion, from the face of the future? Why does God exterminate and destroy? Because they are incorrigibly negative.

They incorrigibly, irrevocably, irreversibly reject God. What more could God do for Jeroboam to convince him that he's the real God and the rest of this stuff is nonsense? It has no effect. Remember verse 33 when people appealed to the miraculous.

Why hasn't God given more evidence? Why is it so obscure? Why is it so hard to find? It's not hard to find. God the Holy Spirit has been in that very person's heart already and they have already rejected and now it's just sea lawyering. It's just yak, yak, yak, yak making excuses for their personal, individual, accountable rejection of God.

We're seeing here that miracles don't work. That's why they're in the Old Testament. That's why they ceased in the New Testament.

They're not necessary. They don't convince. They don't convert.

They don't turn people who aren't willing to turn. Sometimes people just need an attention getter so that they will turn and God has used miracles in those cases to draw someone up short. Paul on the Damascus Road is a good example.

That was a supernatural intervention. What was Paul's response? Did God wither his hand? No, God blinded his eyes. But what did Paul do at that point? Saul at the time.

He immediately had a change of heart and a change of mind and became God's greatest apostle. So that's what we're looking at here. That's the second supernatural sign and God is going to give them seven supernatural signs.

The third one was Jeroboam's wife and son in chapter 14. Remember that? The son becomes ill and they appeal to the prophet and the prophet says as soon as she enters the city, the child is going to die. No sooner does she get to the threshold, the child dies according to the word of the Lord.

And you notice each of these is the word of the Lord, the word of the Lord, the word of the Lord through the man of God. God fulfills the word on the man of God about the man of God because of his disobedience. And the word is fulfilled here with Jeroboam's son in chapter 14.

That was the third very public, very easily broadcast and well-known sign. Number four was Nadab being assassinated in chapter 15 verses 27 and 28. And this is a new shocking thing in Israel.

Think about it. No king in Israel in either kingdom has ever been assassinated. This is like Lincoln.

The Lincoln assassination over 150 years later, well, I guess it's not quite over, but it's close to 150 years later, is still one of the most shocking and talked about things in American history. 150 years later. Why? It was the first.

No United States president had ever been assassinated. Well, no king in Israel had ever been assassinated. And Nadab is the first in chapter 15 verses 27 and 28.

And this is the beginning of a great chaotic state. You think back, what is the history that the people in Israel are used to? You've got Saul reigning for a long period of time. There's ups and downs, but the monarchy itself is stable.

You've got David and his long reign. You've got Solomon and his long reign. You've got these long-lived, long-reigning kings in both the northern and the southern kingdom with Jeroboam and Rehoboam coming on down.

Now all of a sudden it's coups and assassinations and plots and guys that reign for a week. And it's all topsy-turvy. What do you think this did to the economy? What do you think this did to the stability or the predictability of anything in the kingdom? That's the fourth great sign is God's removal of protection of any sort from the rulers.

And all the house of Jeroboam is wiped out. It's not just one guy assassinated. They're all slaughtered.

And it's a massacre. It's worse than St. Valentine's Day. In the days of Israel, this would be more the equivalent of the Twin Towers or some other very remarkably unusual loss of life.

The fifth is Jehu's prophecy to Baasha in 16.1-4. The word of the Lord came to Jehu, the son of Hanani, against Baasha, saying, Inasmuch as I lifted you out of the dust, I made you ruler over my people Israel, you've walked in the way of Jeroboam. Even after the fate of Jeroboam and his fulfilling the word of the Lord again, that wiping out of the house of Jeroboam was according to the word of the Lord. It was predicted and the prediction was fulfilled.

The assassination of Nadab and the wiping out of all that was foreseen and forewarned and prophesied ahead of time. But you've ignored all of that. You provoke me to anger with their sins.

I will take away the posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the fields. And again, this is a prominent prophetic word on the royal household, and that's the fifth great public supernatural sign because of course they all are.

This will be soon fulfilled. The sixth is at the end of chapter 16, as we saw, when Hiel tries to build Jericho. Verse 34, laid the foundation with Abiram, his firstborn, and with his youngest son, Segub, he set up its gates according to the word of the Lord, which had spoken through Joshua, the son of Nun.

And you have that harking back and a reminder of the word of the Lord coming and then the fulfillment of the word of the Lord. And that was number six. What is the big seventh sign for Israel? It's Elijah.

It is the coming of Elijah. Look at chapter 17, verse 1. After Jericho being rebuilt with the blood of the sons of its rebuilders, number six, you have number seven. Elijah the Tishbite comes and Elijah is going to be a multifaceted sign.

Remember in the book of Revelation where you have the seals and the first seal is open, second seal is open, third seal is open, fourth, fifth, sixth. Then when you come to the seventh seal, what happens? You get a rewind and you've got the trumpets and you've got trumpet one, two, three, four, five, six. And when you get to the seventh trumpet, you have a rewind and you go back and you have the bowls and you have the seven bowls.

And as you get to each seven, there is a multiplication and exponential elevation as we saw in our study of Revelation. These are not sequential so much as three different perspectives. It is three sets of seven.

And we're going to see that there are three sets of seven even here in Kings. We've got Ahab being the seventh king. We've got Elijah being the seventh sign.

And we're going to see some sevens involved with Elijah but there are multiple sevens just like the book of Revelation. God's pattern in prophecy and in fulfillment is so consistent. So in Elijah, and remember now we're still keeping in mind what we talked about in the first session, that

there is a harmony or an echo, a correspondence of the first in a set of two.

Enoch, Noah, Elijah, Elisha, the Lord Jesus and His church as your primaries. Moses and Joshua as perhaps your primary earlier archetype. Elijah and Elisha in the center and the Lord Jesus and His church in the New Testament.

Let's just look at those three but I think there are other echoes that you can piece in. And they inform the picture, they flesh out and add threads to that pattern. But when you think about Elijah, we're going to see that he's threes and sevens.

Everything with Elijah is threes and sevens with the Lord Jesus. It's threes and sevens, it's threes and sevens. So we're going to see that Elijah is going to be involved with and represent and be a part of three public challenges.

The first one is in 17.1 and everybody knows about this. There's going to be no rain except at my word. This is a nationwide drought and it's going to extend north all the way up into the regions of Tyre and Sidon.

We know this because of the widow. She's also, there's famine up there as well. It's an area wide drought.

No rain. How long does it last? You look at chapter 18 verse 1. It came to pass after many days the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year saying, go present yourself to Ahab and I will send rain on the earth. Now it says in the third year and if you know anything about the chronology, trying to piece together the history of the northern and southern kingdom and the kings and their reigns and how long did each one rule and accession year rules and all that.

In the third year doesn't necessarily mean two full years had passed and part of a third. How do I know this? How do I know that it's actually been three and a half years? Because the Bible tells me so. This was a three and a half year drought.

I can absolutely unequivocally without any shadow of doubt tell you this was a three and a half year drought. How do I know this? Well, first of all, I need to find my note. It is found in Luke chapter 4 verse 25.

Keep your finger here and turn over to Luke. Luke chapter 4. You would expect we might run across a little bit of red ink here. Luke chapter 4 verse 25.

The Lord Jesus. Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heaven was shut up.

How long? Three years and six months. That's good enough for me right there. If the Lord Jesus says it was three years and six months, I've got a pretty good idea that He knows.

Not three years and three months. Not two years and nine months. Not three years and nine months.

Three years and six months. Three and a half years. Who is the Lord Jesus comparing Himself to here? Is He not more or less making a direct association between Himself and Elijah? A prophet is not without honor except in his own country.

And Elijah was not accepted. He was not believed. He wasn't honored.

He wasn't followed in leading a revival in his own nation. Who responded? The widow. The Syrophoenician widow up in Sidon.

Which, by the way, is the hometown of Ethbaal and Jezebel. And in the very heart of where you would least expect there to be a response, that's where the widow is from. And when Israel is rejecting the ministry of the Lord Jesus, trying to present them the kingdom, who is it that comes and says, but Lord, even the dogs can lick up the crumbs that come from the master's table? It's the Syrophoenician woman in the New Testament.

There is conscious hooks linking the Lord Jesus back to Elijah. He does it Himself in His very own words right here in Luke chapter 4. There is an Elijah aspect to the Lord Jesus ministry here. Turn over to James chapter 5. Just in case we need a second witness in the mouth of two or three, a thing is established.

You go to James chapter 5, verse 17. 16 says, Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain and it did not rain on the land for how long? Three years and six months. Now why does James bother to give us that exact time? Why does the Lord Jesus bother to give us that exact time? Because it's significant. Three and a half years.

When you come to the 70th week of Daniel, how long is it? It's a week. Seven years. And it is divided neatly into two three and a half year parts.

Three years and six months followed by three years and six months. That week is the culmination of this Old Testament age and there is a foreshadowing. There is a harbinger here.

Three and a half years followed by what? The first three and a half years are the time when man gets to try his stuff. Right? The Antichrist with the power of Satan. He gets to try to run the world.

God is hands off for the first half of the Tribulation, isn't He? God does not intervene in the first half of the Tribulation. It's the beast and the false prophet. Right? It's the Antichrist.

It's his world dominion. He's got the kings and the dragon and the woman and the whore of Babylon and all the rest of it. That's all his purview.

Mark of the beast and the prophet great things and everybody that doesn't worship and

doesn't have the mark is hounded away. And all you have are the witnesses. And the witnesses are slain.

All of that is in the first three and a half years. First three and a half years of the Tribulation, Daniel's 70th week, is man's half. Satan's half.

Then what happens? At the three year and six month mark, there is a change. That's when you start having the judgment of God. What happens in Elijah's day? You flip back there to 1 Kings.

You get to chapter 17 and chapter 18. What's going to happen now? For three and a half years, there's a drought. And what does God do? What does Elijah do during that three and a half years? He goes to Ahab and says there's going to be no rain.

He goes to the brook Cherith. And he has some personal things going on. Him and the widow and so on.

What happens in the rest of the land? Elijah's out of sight and out of mind. And for three and a half years, what are you going to do, Ahab? What are you going to do, people of northern Israel? The drought is holding according to the word of the Lord. You had plenty of time to think about it and chew on it.

You had plenty of time to appeal to Baal, the god of storms, whose daughters are due in rain. Remember that? Baal is the storm god, flashing his lightnings to the earth. And his two daughters, one of them is due and the other one is like rain showers.

And of course, lightning and due are either his wives or his daughters. We have this from ancient Near Eastern texts. So this is as big a finger in Baal's eye as when Moses does the plagues in every god in Egypt.

The god of frogs can't control the frogs. The god of flies can't control the flies. The god of the Nile can't control the Nile.

The god of light, the sun god, can't control the darkness. God puts a finger in the eye of every Egyptian god in those plagues. Well, he does the same thing here with Baal.

Why a drought? Why not lice or foreign invasion or something? Because this is Baal's specialty. Baal is the god of agriculture and prosperity because he controls the weather. Well, there's a drought, according to the word of the Lord.

And people have three and a half years to think about this and draw a conclusion. Well, they don't. So then God is going to intervene and then you have Mount Carmel.

Which, by the way, is these three great public demonstrations on Elijah's part. Remember, he's the seventh sign and he's full of threes. So the first one is no rain.

The second one is Mount Carmel where there's a very public repudiation and falsification of

Baal. And the third one is in chapter 18, verse 41 through 44. Because at his word, just like James says, he prayed earnestly and the heavens were shut up.

Then he prayed again and what happened? Now there's rain. Everybody in Israel knows there's rain. People say, wow, three and a half years and we suddenly have rain.

What brought that on? Man of God prayed. Do you need any more evidence? Do you need any greater miraculous proof that God is God? Prophets of Baal have done their utmost, not just on the day of the Mount Carmel test, but for three and a half years. God, with a word, brings rain.

And he has his representative on earth manifesting that it is by his command and at his will that the rain comes. That's 1841 through 44. And when you look at this, notice how it is communicated.

Elijah said to Ahab, go and drink for there is the sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and drink and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. Then he bowed to the ground and put his face between his knees and said to his servant, go up now, look toward the sea.

So he went up and looked and said, there's nothing. Seven times he said, go again. Elijah is the man of threes and sevens.

Seven times he told us. Why seven times? Why not five times? Why not nine times? Why not twelve times? Why seven times? We're going to see this over and over again. The man Elijah is the man of threes and sevens.

Just real quickly, just look back at chapter 17. When the widow's son dies, you know this story. And she sends to Elijah and he comes back.

What have I to do with you, oh man of God? In verse 18 of chapter 17, this is 1st Kings 17, 18. What have I to do with you that you bring my sin to remembrance and kill my son? He said, give me your son. So he took him out of her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, laid him on his bed, cried out to the Lord and said, oh Lord my God, have you also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge by killing her son? And he stretched himself out on the child, how many times? Three times.

Three times. And cried out to the Lord and said, oh Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him. The Lord heard the voice of Elijah, the soul of the child came back to him and he revived.

It's real interesting here that the death of the son keeps getting transferred. The woman says, Elijah, it's your fault. Elijah goes to the Lord and says, Lord, it's your fault.

The widow says, Elijah, what have you done that you've taken my son's life? Elijah goes to the Lord and says, Lord, what have you done that you've taken the boy's life? It's the reverse of what happens in the garden, right? Have you eaten of the tree? Oh, the woman you gave to be

with me. Oh, well the serpent spoke. It's this passing the buck, we call it.

But threes and sevens, you see this over and over again. Why is this significant? Look at the Lord Jesus. There is a tremendous correspondence here and there's a reason why.

We say, isn't that a neat pattern? But there's a reason why. And we're going to develop this as we look at these next few chapters in 1 Kings and close out this book and get into the ministry of Elisha. Because you are Elisha.

You are Joshua. You are the church which fulfills and completes and elaborates what was begun by the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why he says, the one who believes in me will do these works and greater works than these he will do.

Elisha is going to multiply and have a double portion of the spirit of Elisha. Joshua is going to fulfill and exploit everything that Moses got the word of God delivered and shepherded the people for 40 years in the wilderness and presided over their fallen state. Joshua is going to preside over their glorified state.

They're reborn. It's a new generation that goes into the land, right? It's the born again Israel. It's not the old dusty Israel that drops in the wilderness.

It's the new generation that goes in under Joshua. What do you think you and I are going to be doing when the Lord Jesus returns? We are going to be presiding over a new generation. A new kingdom.

A new manifestation. We are the Joshua. We are getting ready to fulfill that mission.

We are going to fulfill the Elisha mission. We are going to fulfill the Noah mission. That's what we're going to be doing.

That's why God calls us as he calls us. That's why he equips us. That's why he tests us.

That's why he trains us. That's why we're learning and growing in grace and knowledge because we are being fitted to fulfill this last and greatest picture. This last and greatest part of the pattern that is the reality that all of these previous ones in many ways typified and foreshadowed.

God has a purpose for your life. God has a purpose for your circumstances. God has a purpose for taking you through exactly what you face.

Your successes and your failures. Your ups as well as your downs. You are being uniquely equipped, uniquely prepared for service in the present and service in the future.

Joshua served during the lifetime of Moses, remember? He lived at the door of the tabernacle. He was Moses' right hand guy. He goes part way up the mountain while Moses goes the rest of the way.

He's a man in training and in preparation. When Moses goes away, Joshua comes to the fore and serves. The Lord Jesus came.

The Lord Jesus has trained and taught his disciples. They have imparted and passed on his teaching. You shall be my witnesses, he told them.

Make disciples, he told them. Well, that's us. Why? We are here to complete and fulfill what was begun by the Lord Jesus and what he is going to complete and fulfill when he returns.

Why are Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration? And by the way, just let me close with this last great picture which is the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. This is in practically... What's our Transfiguration passage? I think I lost my piece of paper that has it written down because we need to look at it. Turn to Matthew chapter 17.

Matthew chapter 17. After six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John, his brother, led them on a high mountain by themselves. After six days, what day would this be? Seventh day.

Why is it after six days? Why do we need this notation? So many things Jesus does, it'll just say, then Jesus did this or afterward he did that. Why do we have this notation? It's significant. After six days.

After the six days of human history, you have the seventh day, the Sabbath day when the glory of the Lord Jesus is revealed. He led them on a high mountain by themselves. Where does Elijah go to demonstrate the power of God? On a high mountain, Mount Carmel.

He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun. His clothes became as white as the light.

And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with them. Now, what are they talking about, I wonder? Well, let's see if one of the other Gospels... ...that we have all of the synoptics giving to us. You flip over to Mark chapter 9, one of the parallels for this.

After six days, verse 2, Jesus took Peter, James, and John. Three guys. Threes and sevens.

Seventh day, three guys. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white like snow. No longer Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

We still don't know what they were talking about, do we? So we go to the Luke parallel. It's Luke chapter 9, beginning at verse 27. So flip over to Luke chapter 9, verse 27.

It came to pass about eight days after these sayings. You've got six days after six days in the first two Gospels. It says about eight days later here.

Eight, of course, is the number for renewal. Peter, James, and John. As he prayed, the appearance of his face was altered.

His robe became white and glistening. Two men talked with him who were Moses and Elijah. Look at verse 31.

Who appeared in glory and spoke of his decease, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. What does Moses have to do before Joshua can come in and fulfill all of these wonderful missions? Moses has to decease. What does Elijah have to do before Elisha can come in and fulfill all of these things that Elijah has begun in the Northern Kingdom? He's got to check out.

He's got to ride the fiery chariot. Why are Moses and Elijah talking to the Lord Jesus specifically about his decease? Because there is a new phase that is going to be inaugurated. Moses has his Joshua.

Elijah has his Elisha. And what do you think Moses and Elijah are going to get the chance to find out from the Lord Jesus? They're saying, Moses says, well you know Lord, after I left, Joshua came in and the people went into the land and set up the inheritance of the 12 tribes and the whole kingdom thing got started right then. Elijah says, Lord, after I left, you remember the two-fold portion of my spirit that you put on Elisha? So what's going to happen with you, Lord, after your decease, what's going to happen? And I would suggest to you that Moses and Elijah are perhaps the first two Old Testament saints that find out about the church.

Because what happens after the Lord's decease? Wait in Jerusalem until the spirit comes from on high. And in Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, you have Joshua and Elisha fulfilled for the Lord Jesus with the inception of the church. That's you and me.

That's us. That's our mission here and now. And it really illuminates, not only what we're supposed to do, but why we are doing it.

How it fits into the larger scope and pattern of God's plan. So we'll develop this as we see the transition. We've studied Moses to Joshua when we went through Genesis and Exodus and then into the book of Joshua.

We're going to see Elijah and Elisha at the end of 1 Kings and the beginning of 2 Kings. And it's going to greatly inform our understanding of what our role is in the here and now under the ministry of God's Holy Spirit. We have, as it were, that double portion because we have the presence of the Lord Jesus.

We have the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. We have direct access to God the Father. We've got not just two, but three presences, divine presences in and with us.

And what is it we're supposed to do? We look back at these archetypes to find out. That's what we'll see in the days ahead, but we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the revelation of truth that you impart to us through your word in the presence and power of your Holy Spirit.

We thank you most of all for the Lord Jesus who paved the way for us, who made a way, who parted the veil and gives us access so that we can come before you and stand in the very throne room on high. We pray that this will be a privilege that reminds us of not only our opportunity, but also our potential for failure if we do not heed the things that we hear, if we don't pay attention to the truth that you have gone to such great lengths to provide to us, that we'll grow in grace and knowledge and that we will completely fulfill our purpose and calling for which you have made all of these wonderful and great provisions. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.