**Elisha, Axes, Trees And A "Place" At Jordan**

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| |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | **SCRIPTURE TEXT:** |   2 Kings 6:1-7 KJV  And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.  (2)  Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.  (3)  And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.  (4)  So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.  (5)  But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.  (6)  And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim.  (7)  Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.  Matthew 3:5-11 KJV  Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,  (6)  And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.  (7)  But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  (8)  Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:  (9)  And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.  (10)  And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.  (11)  I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:   In both instances of the above scriptures, the Jordan, axes and trees are noted.  I wish to speak a message to you today about our need to realize the key to effective spiritual ministry for every single believer.   * Every one is called to a ministry of some fashion.   Elisha's disciples were called "sons of the prophets" in much the same manner Timothy was called Paul's son in the Lord.   * They were students following Elisha, similarly to Elisha's days under Elijah. * They were being trained up. * But they recognized that the dwelling place of Elisha was too small for them to abide with him. * There was no room for them there.   Upon this realization they suggested to Elisha that they go to Jordan and fall some beams of timber for material to construct a "place" for them.   * This would allow them to continue following Elisha and become prophets, themselves. * They asked Elisha to come with them there.   Elisha was all alone, in the respect that the dwelling PLACE was too small for the others with him.   * Something had to be done in order to provide PLACE for the disciples.   The JORDAN marks the place of very many supernatural occurrences in scripture.   * It represents a demarcation point to enter spirituality. * Israel crossed Jordan when the river was divided by the ark of the covenant, and entered the Promised Land. * Elijah crossed Jordan at the start of his ministry and entered Israel and worked wonders. * Elisha also followed Elijah over Jordan, when temptation to stay back was provided. * Elisha wanted to go all the way, and found it was the last barrier between himself and a double portion ministry he received from Elijah.. * All the other sons of the prophets stayed the other side of Jordan and would not pass over. * So many come up to this point and stop. * This point marks going past your fleshly abilities and seeing God work. * Not many cross this point, because they are too fearful of letting go and letting God work.   You will find most Christians here, and no further.   * Crossing Jordan means entrance into genuine Spiritual ministry with the supernatural involved. * Elisha saw Elijah open up the Jordan with his mantle. * He did the same thing to begin his ministry. * So JORDAN marked the beginning of Elijah's, Elisha's and even Jesus Christ's ministries.   Jordan is such a dividing spot because it also speaks of Christ's death.   * Jesus was baptized in Jordan, and baptism indicates a death. * He later actually did die, but it was prefigured by the baptism of John. * And this is how Jordan is so important. * Our deaths with Christ allow His Spirit to claim our lives.   But it's not simply a death with Christ as at general salvation.   * General salvation is represented by leaving Egypt in Exodus through the Red Sea. * 1 Cor 10 even notes the Red Sea as a type of baptism. * And then there is the wilderness to walk through where Israel fought amongst themselves and battled with their own carnality. * The Lord cannot pit us against devils, represented by the giants of the promised land, until we can at least get along together as a Church Body, because we require unit to defeat the enemy as a body. * So many never get out of the wilderness, and like the doubters who disbelieved God could take them successfully into the Land, many believers backslide and spiritually die in the wilderness without ever having entered into true ministry. * Everyone is a minister. * Some never do more than sit on pews all their lives. * That is not ministry.   So these disciples of Elisha were intended to enter ministry, and it is no coincidence they had to go to JORDAN, as did Elisha and his predecessor, Elijah.  Christ was the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON at one point.   * Not now, though, because we read we are begotten by the incorruptible seed of the word of God. * Now there are many begotten sons and daughters of God. * But like Elisha, he was alone.   Jesus even stated this fact several times.  John 17:24 KJV  Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.  He was standing directly with the disciples, but prayed they be where He was.   * And the context speaks of Him being in the Father and the Father in Him. * He was praying for this spiritual relationship with the Father to occur with them. * He was therefore in a PLACE they were not in.   Jordan was the answer.  At Jordan trees were cut down to make the dwelling place.   * Many trees fell before something happened that caused fear. * This work speaks of Jesus' work to prepare a PLACE for us, that where he was we might be also. * A place in the kingdom. * And Jesus had to do some things before the cross. * He had to teach and minister and preach and perform wonders. * All this was preparatory work for the PLACE.   But something happened and caused one disciple to fear.   * His AXE HEAD flew off into the Jordan and sank into it's waters. * It was borrowed! * It had to be returned! * Elisha asked the young man where it sank, and he threw a stick into the waters at that point. * Then a miracle occurred. * The axe head rose to the surface of the water and swam towards the shore.   Of all Jesus Christ's preparation for the KINGDOM PLACE for his disciples, His death was not expected.   * He prepared them for it several times describing his impending crucifixion, but they could never grasp it. * And when it occurred, they, too, were in fear! * He is the HEAD.   Without that axe head, the house could not be finished.   * The work of providing a PLACE for us in the kingdom could not be completed unless Jesus DIED AND RESURRECTED. * As the axe was borrowed, Christ was given to this world because God so loved the world. * He was to return.   As He walked wit the two on the road to Emmaeus, after His resurrection, note the fear in the couple's hearts.  Luke 24:13-24 KJV  And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.  (14)  And they talked together of all these things which had happened.  (15)  And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.  (16)  But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.  (17)  And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?  (18)  And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?  (19)  And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:  (20)  And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.  (21)  But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.  (22)  Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;  (23)  And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.  (24)  And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.  John the Baptist told the Pharisees and Sadducees at the Jordan that they were a generation of vipers and were like trees not bearing fruit meet for repentance.   * They had to be cut down, as the axe was then laying at the root of the trees. * This could be spoken spiritually o fall people born in sin. * We yielded to the serpent's temptation, and became, as it were, a generation of serpents. * And we ate from the wrong tree, and became trees that had to be cut down. * This is what salvation demands. * Our lives like trees were unproductive, and had to be cut down to give way for a new creature hood and newness of life.   Trees must be cut down at the JORDAN of Christ's death.   * The truth of His death must be applied to each of us in reality, since we actually do DIE WITH CHRIST in baptism into His death that we might walk in newness of life. * We never understand the deeper details of this until we follow Christ for some time, as did the students with Elisha. * We are saved and experience a RED SEA division from sins. * But Paul told the Romans in chapter 6 that they had to rise above sinful activity and carnality by coming to a revelation of DEATH WITH CHRIST. * This marks the JORDAN revelation. * Paul could not accomplish the spiritual things he desired due to his flesh. * It was not until he came to a revelation, shared in Chapter 6 and 7, concerning sin in his flesh, that he understood the key. * He crossed JORDAN so to speak upon receiving that revelation.   The story ends with what may seem to be an irrelevant note.   * Elisha told the young man to take up the axe head in his hand. * The young man did so.   It may seem unimportant, but all scripture is there for a good reason.   * WE EACH HAVE TO GRASP THIS TRUTH of death with Christ FOR EACH OF US. * We have to apply it to ourselves. * We have to each put ourselves into the equation, and stop generalizing it and knowing that He did this for everyone. * Many people know He did this for everyone of us, but when it comes down to it, they do not grasp it for themselves, personally.   John 14:1-3 KJV  Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.  (2)  In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.  (3)  And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.   Jesus spoke about preparing a PLACE for us, much like the DWELLING PLACE the students of Elisha required.   * And he speaks again of being somewhere they were not.   (3)  And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.  They were standing there, but He said they had yet to be where He was.   * They were not in the kingdom yet. * They had to be born again to enter the kingdom.   But He had to GO somewhere.   * John 14 does not say He had to go the PLACE that would later become a place for them, as though it existed somewhere else and he had to go there and do renovations upon it, like a set of condominiums. * He said He had to go so that THE FATHER'S HOUSE would be THEIR PLACE. * But many mistaken this due to somewhat shallow traditional thinking. * The FATHER'S HOUSE is occupied by THE FATHER! * Not us! * And Jesus said the FATHER'S HOUSE had many "mansions". * The Greek term for mansions is not what 21st century people imagine it to be. * In our culture a mansion is a gigantic wealthy house for wealthy people with luxuries beyond what common folks can ever know. * That is not what the term means in the Greek. * It simply means AN ABODE or a ROOM.   In fact Jesus said WHAT THE FATHER'S HOUSE WAS in just a couple more verses later.  John 14:6-11 KJV  Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.  (7)  If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.  (8)  Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.  (9)  Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?  (10)  Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.  (11)  Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.  THE FATHER INDWELT JESUS!   * He was the Father's House. * Let us be consistent with the context.   Jesus explained that THE BODY OF CHRIST was the Father's house, and there was intended MANY MANSIONS/PLACES in that house for each of them to become part of His body and have the FATHER DWELL IN THEM AS WELL.  He even states this very fact later in t he same chapter, using the same Greek word translated as MANSIONS, but translated later as ABODE.  John 14:23 KJV  Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.  ABODE is the same Greek word for MANSIONS.   * WE ARE THE ABODE! * Jesus said He had to go away so that they could become THIS ABODE of the Father. * And He had to go to the Father. * He had to go to the Father for ATONEMENT, even though the Father was actually in Him, as well.   John 15:26 KJV  But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:  John 16:7 KJV  Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.  John 16:10 KJV  Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;  John 16:28 KJV  I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.  He is BORROWED!  He went BACK.  He would go to the Father to send the HOLY GHOST COMFORTER to us.   * But we also read more was involved in order for Him to have the Holy Ghost come...   John 7:37-39 KJV  In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.  (38)  He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.  (39)  (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)  He had to be glorified before the Holy Ghost could come.  Acts 2:32-36 KJV  This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.  (33)  Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.  (34)  For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,  (35)  Until I make thy foes thy footstool.  (36)  Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.  And we read He had to die and be resurrected and then glorified in going to the Father.   * So He had to go to the cross to start it all off. * First stop, the cross. * Second stop, the grave. * Third stop, resurrection, * and Fourth stop, straight through to the Father in glory!   And when the Holy Ghost came into the lives of the 120 in Acts 2, PLACES for them came into existence.   * FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST IN US! * JESUS!   Elisha tossed a STICK into the Jordan where the axe head sank.   * The Hebrew word for STICK is the same word translated as TREE and GALLOWS in the Old Testament. * And their gallows did not use a rope and noose. * It was like the cross of Jesus, where people Hung from their arms on trees. * So the MESSAGE OF THE CROSS is what the STICK represents.   YOUR axe HEAD must be understood to be Christ's death, applied to you.   * The message needs to be directed to the thought that YOU WERE BURIED IN JORDAN WITH CHRIST, so to speak in water baptism. * The water does nothing, folks. * It's the INVISIBLE WORK of God that occurs due to your faith and obedience in water baptism.   Colossians 2:11-12 KJV  In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:  (12)  Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.  Apply the message to yourself and GRASP IT IN YOUR HAND!  Enter into spiritual ministry ON THIS UNDERSTANDING! |