

Elijah's Departure

- I. Introduction
 - a. We don't like to think about leaving this world
 - b. But someday it will happen to all of us
 - c. Our lesson today is a study of the departure of Elijah from this world
 - i. One of the most unique exits in all of human history
 - ii. But even though it is unique it is not that different from ours
- II. KEY THOUGHT: There are some ways in which our departure will be like Elijah's and other ways in which it should be like Elijah's.
- III. Elijah's departure
 - a. Was in the Lord's time and in the Lord's way (2:1)
 - i. The same with us
 - ii. We don't know when and how we will depart
 - iii. But if God takes care of those details, it will be fine
 - b. Included the presence of a caring and devoted companion (2:2, 4, 6)
 - i. Elisha – Elijah's closest friend and companion
 - ii. A true and righteous man
 - iii. A fellow servant of God
 - iv. If we could have one such companion at our death it would be a great blessing
 - v. But even if we die without a human being to comfort us
 - vi. We have our Savior by our side
 1. I will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb 13:5-6)
 2. I hold the keys of death and Hades (Rev 1:18)
 - c. Was known in advance by many (2:3, 5)
 - i. We may or may not have advance warning
 - ii. If Christ comes, we will have no warning at all (1 Th. 5:1-8)
 - iii. We must be prepared
 - d. Left those closest to Elijah with the support of many caring and concerned friends (2:7)
 - i. One of the hardest part of the thought of leaving this world is the knowledge that we will not be able to personally take care of those we love
 - ii. It is comforting to know there are many standing by to assist
 - iii. In the church, we know that our loved ones will be cared for and supported
 1. Orphans?
 2. Widows?
 3. They are taken care of (James 1:27)
 - e. Was accompanied by great miracles (2:8, 11-12)
 - i. If we depart the world with Jesus, there will be many miracles also (1 Th. 4:13-18)
 - ii. But if not, does it really matter?
 - iii. If we are departing to be with Christ, do we need fanfare?

- f. Included leaving a heritage and a blessing to those who would come after (2:9-10, 13)
 - i. What a comfort it would be in our last hours to know we have provided for every need of our loved ones
 - ii. To a large extent, we cannot be sure of that, because it is out of our control
 - iii. But if we have left our loved ones a spiritual heritage
 - 1. They have something that cannot be taken away from them regardless of the circumstances
 - 2. AND they have everything they really need
 - iv. Peter's example (2 Pet. 1:12-15)
- g. Included close fellowship until the end (2:11)
 - i. They walked and talked together
 - ii. What a beautiful picture!
 - iii. This is another aspect of our departure that we do not have control over
 - iv. But whether we have someone to walk and talk with us until our moment of death,
 - v. God is with us (Ps. 23:4)
 - vi. The instant we leave this life, as a child of God, we have someone to walk and talk with us forever
- h. Strengthened the faith of those left behind (2:12)
 - i. What a shame it would be if our faith and spiritual strength gave out in our last hours!
 - ii. What a discouragement to those left behind!
 - iii. What a blessing it is to those left behind to see their loved one responding to the trials and sufferings of death with courage, grace and faith
 - iv. In this way, we can strengthen the faith of our loved ones
 - v. To be faithful until death, we must be faithful in life. (Rev. 2:10)
- i. Left behind those who would carry on the Lord's work in the next generation (2:14-15)
 - i. God will always have someone to carry on His work
 - ii. But the primary way God prepares new generations of servants is through their laboring alongside the previous generation
 - iii. Timothy's example (2 Tim. 2:2)
 - iv. What a comfort it was to Elijah to know he was leaving a man like Elisha to labor in his place
 - 1. He was hopeless before
 - 2. Now he is hopeful
- j. Was also an arrival
 - i. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord
 - ii. 2 Cor 5:6-10

IV. Conclusion

- a. We will certainly not leave this world in the same way as Elijah

- b. But the most important and desirable features of his departure can be an example to us.
- c. Invitation
 - i. We all have an appointment with death
 - ii. We will keep it whether we are prepared or not
 - iii. Are you ready?