

How Elijah Went to Heaven

Scripture Reading — 2 Kings 2:1-12

Suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them. 2 Kings 2:11 —

"Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home ..." Because of that song, I'd always thought the chariot was Elijah's limousine, with first-class service to heaven. But the Bible says--twice in our reading for today--that Elijah went "up to heaven in a whirlwind" (a symbol of God's presence, like the pillar of cloud and fire during Israel's time in the desert--Exodus 40:36-38). What a sight that must have been!

But then what was the chariot for? Elisha knows it is part of the angelic army that fights Israel's battles (see 2 Kings 6:11-17). Its function at this moment is to separate Elijah and Elisha.

This chariot guards the boundary between earth and heaven. Elisha has been holding on to Elijah with fierce devotion, but God is saying, "This far; no further." Elijah is going to heaven, and Elisha must stay behind.

Did you know that heaven has a security force? We can't just show up like we do at a grocery store or a fast-food restaurant. We can't just wander in, say "Jesus" like a code word, and expect to get inside.

No, heaven allows us in when we lay down our defenses and recognize Jesus as King of our lives, and then walk with him always. Then one day our moment will come, and we too will be lifted into the presence of God, to heaven. Are you ready for that?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, live in me now. Take my heart and rule me today. And, Lord, take me home someday to be with you in the Father's presence forever. In your name, O Lord, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [1 & 2 Kings](#)

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