

JACK-IN-BOX FUNERAL

After reading our lesson text, I was reminded of a childhood toy called, Jack-in-box. It was a small red box with a lid and a crank that produced music (pop goes the weasel). When you cranked it in order to produce music, Jack-in-the box would suddenly pop-up and scar you.

The funeral recorded in our lesson text was one that is not soon forgotten. I conducted a funeral as a young pastor where two daughters tried to pull their mother out of the casket during the funeral service. This was a Jack-in-box funeral I will never forget.

We will examine our lesson text by the following four homiletical points of the Jack-in-box funeral.

Mortal sickness	(2 Kg.13:14)	Death and burial of Elisha
Moabite raid	(2 Kg.13:20)	Cemetery of Elisha
Mishandling of corpse	(2 Kg.13:21a)	Grave of Elisha
Man revived	(2 Kg.13:21b)	Bones of Elisha

This lesson will study five aspects of an unforgettable funeral that we have entitled, Jack-in-box Funeral.

1. The last Scriptural reference of Elisha is found in 2 Kings 9. He was exercising his office of political-prophet to King Jehu (2 Kg.9:1-2).

However at the time of Elisha's sickness and death he was ministering to King Jehoash (2 Kgs.13:10-11, 14).

Elisha's ministry covered a period of about 50 years. He ministered to 4 of the 20 kings of the Northern Kingdom (Israel): Jehoram (10th king), Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash .

Biblical historians calculate that he died in his early 80s.

2. The prophet heir apparent to Elisha was Jonah according to 2 Kg.14:24-25.

Jonah ministered to King Jeroboam II the son of Jehoash (2 Kg.14:16). This Jeroboam (14th king) was named after the first king of the Northern Kingdom (1 Kg.11:26, 40) and was just as evil (2 Kg.14:24).

The main prophets to the last of the Northern Kingdom were Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea.

3. Our lesson text says that Elisha "became sick (chalah / kal pf) with the illness (chali) of which he was to die (muth / kal impf)" (2 Kg.13:14).

The death of Elisha occurred by the sovereign appointed time of God. (Eccl.3:1-3; Heb.9:27) and (2 Kg.20:1-11) [King Hezekiah of Judah].

The coroner's cause of death is not the bigger issue but rather the believer's transfer from time to eternity by dying grace (2 Cor.5:6-8; Phil.1:20-26).

Apart from the Rapture, all church age believers (CAB) will experience physical death because of Adam's Original Sin (AOS) (Gen.2:17; 5:5; 1 Cor.15:21-22; 1 Thess.4:13-18).

Every believer is promised a resurrection body compatible with eternal life in Christ – "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)

4. There is a dispensational order to the resurrection of Believers. It is called the First Resurrection.

(Rev.20:5-6) “The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”

The dispensational order of the First Resurrection is given in 1 Cor.15:20-24.

- **Christ** – “Firstfruits of those who are asleep” (1 Cor.15:20-23a).
- **CAB at Rapture** – “After that those who are Christ’s at His coming” (1 Cor.15:23b) (1 Thess.4:13-18)
- **Jewish age believers at Tribulation** – “After that who are Christ’s at His coming.” (John 5:25-29)
- **The rest of the believers at The End** – “Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He abolished all rule and all authority and power.” (1 Cor.15:24) (Rev.20:5-6)

5. Today’s lesson records the last miracle associated with Elisha (2 Kg.13:20-21).

This miracle took place in a cemetery between two dead men – “And as they were (hayah / kal impf) burying (qabar / kal ptc.mpl) a man (ish), **behold**, they saw (raah / kal pf) marauding band; and they cast (shalak / hiphil impf) the man into the grave of Elisha. And the man touched (naga / kal impf) the bones (etsem) of Elisha revived (chayah / kal impf) and stood (qum / kal impf) on his feet.” (2 Kg.13:21)

What is the lesson in such a miracle? We are not given any additional information about the deceased man. Therefore the focus is entirely upon the dead bones of Elisha.

One factor could be the connected of Elisha to the divine promise of the “double portion” of Elijah’s spirit after his death (2 Kg.2:9-10).

A second factor could be the idea of the continuing effect of the ministry of a super grace believer.

(2 Pet.1:13-15) “And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will also be diligent that at my departure you may be able to call these things to mind.”

Maybe it is not to be answered:

(Isa.55:8-9) “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Or maybe the answer is in the question

Miracle – when the sovereignty of God combines with omnipotence to reverse the natural order of creation to show generations of believers thought-out the ages that the **Lord God is Almighty.**

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, ‘who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’” (Rev.1:8; Gen.17:1) [El-Shaddi / God almighty]