

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

The story of Elisha and the prophet's wife takes place in the middle of the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, and it shows me that you are just as concerned about the troubles of a widow as you are about the affairs of state. You delight to lift up those who are downtrodden, and you love to rescue those who are oppressed. You are a God of kindness, and I worship you today with joy and gladness. "Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!" (Ps 146:1).

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me about Elijah's translation to heaven and the beginning of Elisha's ministry. Elijah lived to see Ahab pay for the murder of Naboth, and he also lived to see the death of Ahab's son, Ahaziah. Ahaziah "walked in the way of his father" and he "provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done" (1 Kgs 22:52-53). So I don't think it was an accident when Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber and was badly injured. I see this as a severe mercy, for when people see death approaching, they tend to get serious about you. But rather than turn to you for help, Ahaziah turned to Baal. Even then you continued to be merciful, and you sent Elijah to give Ahaziah a warning that he would "surely die." Ahaziah didn't realize it, but you were reaching out to him, reminding him that you were the one true God and urging him to repent and turn to you. Instead of being grateful, Ahaziah sent his men to capture Elijah, and it took over 100 deaths before they honored Elijah as the servant of the living God. If there was any doubt in Ahaziah's mind about your power, the charred corpses of his men laid it to rest! Elijah finally went to see Ahaziah and rebuked him for his idolatry. Yet Ahaziah refused to repent and he died soon afterward. Ahab had set an evil example for his son, and Ahaziah followed faithfully in his wicked steps. How tragic when parents set their children on a path of destruction, and how sad when men refuse to repent even in the face of certain death! Later that year you took Elijah to heaven in a chariot of fire, and he became one of only two men who were taken to heaven without seeing death (Enoch, Gen 5:24). Before he left, Elijah tested Elisha's commitment. Elisha refused to stay behind while Elijah continued, and he showed himself to be true to your call. He received a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit, and immediately began a powerful ministry in the northern kingdom. You were far from done with wayward Israel!

### *Reflection*

What a contrast Elijah and Elisha make to Ahab and Ahaziah! They are an inspiring example of what it means to pass the torch of faith to the next generation.

### *Request*

Father, help me to be a godly example to my family and friends. May they see your Spirit in me and desire to follow me as I follow Christ.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for meeting my needs each day and for your many blessings. But more than that, thank you for giving me victory over sin through your Son, Jesus Christ!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: "[Trenches in the Valley](#)" – Henry J. Zelle.*

*Meditation Verse: 2 Kings 4:3.*