

Lesson X.

ELIJAH GOES UP BY A WHIRLWIND
INTO HEAVEN

March 5, 1911

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—The last chapter of 1 Kings (ch. 22), narrates the closing events of Ahab's reign, his death and the succession of his son Ahaziah. 2 Kgs., ch. 1 tells the story of Ahaziah's sickness and death, and the ascension of Jehoram to the throne.

GOLDEN TEXT—Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.—Genesis 5: 24.

Memorize vs. 11, 12. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—2 Kings 2: 1-11. **Study** 2 Kings 2: 1-18. **Read** 2 Kings, chs. 1, 2.

1 And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Eli'jah into heaven¹ by a whirlw²: 3, that Eli'jah went with Eli'sha from Gilgal.

2 And Eli'jah said unto Eli'sha, Tarry here. I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me² to Beth-el. And Eli'sha said³ unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el.

3 And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Eli'sha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

4 And Eli'jah said unto him, Eli'sha, tarry here. I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came⁴ to Eli'sha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

Revised Version—by a whirlwind into heaven; ²as far as; ³Omit unto him; ⁴near to; ⁵Tarry here, I pray thee; ⁶over against them afar; ⁷Omit away; ⁸which parted.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Elijah goes up into heaven, 2 Kgs. 2: 9-18. W.—Enoch translated, Heb. 11: 1-6. Th.—Moses taken home, Deut. 34: 1-12. F.—Christ's ascension, Acts 1: 1-12. S.—The eternal home, 2 Cor. 5: 1-12. S.—Ready! 2 Tim. 4: 1-8.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. ELIJAH'S LAST VISITS.—1. It came to pass; perhaps ten years after the call of Elisha, 1 Kgs. 19: 19-21. The Lord would take up; not when Elijah would go, but when God would take him. God's servants are in His keeping, and He knows the right time to remove them from their work on earth into heaven. By a whirlwind; literally, "in a storm". With Elisha; who had been Elijah's attendant (1 Kgs. 19: 21; ch. 3: 11), but also his pupil and friend. From Gilgal; not the Gilgal near Jericho (Josh. 4: 19), but a Gilgal amongst the central hills of Palestine, seven miles north of Bethel. Elijah and Elisha had been staying here; some think it was Elijah's permanent home.

2, 3. Tarry here. For some unknown reason Elijah had wished to depart from Gilgal alone. The Lord hath sent me. Elijah's last journey was clearly marked out for him. To Beth-el; twelve miles northwest of Jerusalem. (See 1 Kgs. 12: 28, 29.) Lord liveth... soul liveth; an expres-



FORDS OF JORDAN NEAR JERICO

sion denoting intense earnestness. I will not leave thee. Elisha was influenced by deep attachment to Elijah and a natural curiosity to see what would happen to him. Sons of the prophets; members of one of the companies of prophets who lived together in various centres of Israel. Knowest thou, etc.? The removal of Elijah that very day had been revealed to these prophets. From thy head; from being thy teacher and master. I know it. Elisha had received the same revelation.

Hold ye your peace. It was too sacred a subject, and Elisha's sorrow was too deep, for idle talk.

4-6. Again, at Bethel, Elijah urges Elisha to allow him to proceed alone, and again Elisha insists on accompanying him. To Jericho; fourteen miles southeast from Bethel. (See Geography Lesson.) The prophets at Jericho repeat to Elisha the announcement of Elijah's impending removal, and he again replies as in v. 3. For a third time, at Jericho, Elijah tried to persuade Elisha to remain behind, and