

Bald Head



The twelfth chapter of II Kings describes the translation of Elijah and the beginning of the ministry of Elisha, his successor. Elijah had just been taken up to heaven by a whirlwind. I want to just indicate the true Oriental meaning of verses 23 which has caused the Western people to error much.

II Kings 2:23:

And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head: go up, thou bald head.

Elisha was on his way to Bethel. The word Bethel means "House of God." Elisha was going up to worship God, and while he was on the way "there came forth little children out of the city and mocked him" (verse 23). The words "little children" does not mean children in the sense we in the West interpret it, 6 or 7 years of age. Grown up people in the East are many times referred to affectionately as children, and more especially as "little children" when grown-ups show their stupidity.

These were all adults who came out of the city after Elisha and said to him, "Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head" (verse 23).

When you understand what had transpired you can't miss the importance and greatness of this happening. Elijah the great prophet of God had just been taken away and here was a "little nobody" called Elisha who was going to try to fill the shoes of that great man of God. How foolish could a man get, a man like Elisha, to think that he could now

go to Bethel, the House of God, and take up where Elijah had left off. To them it was conceit and folly on the part of Elisha, therefore, they said "Go up, bald-head, go up, but it won't do you any good. You are a fool."

In the East to call a man a "bald-head" does not mean he hasn't any hair, it means fool. To call a man this is a great insult and more especially so here because Elisha had been called of God to "fill the shoes" of Elijah.

These people were mocking Elisha, trying to make a fool of him, but God won't have His called ones mocked. Elisha could have passed on without saying or doing a thing but that again would not be the Oriental way of life.

In Eastern society when men or women are acting up, being silly or making foolish remarks, it is an established principle and procedure that the older people or a religious man must correct them because they believe that if they do not correct them that their sin will be upon them for not correcting the parties concerned. So Elisha as a religious man could not let them go uncorrected.

The West simply does not understand the Eastern way of society nor idioms or figures of speech. We need to know the truth in order to be set free. This applies to everything in life including the Bible which is The Word of God.

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