

# Fear Is Not Our Future

## *Lessons From Elijah And Elisha*

Growth Group Curriculum

February 6, 2023 – 1 Kings 19:19-21; 2 Kings 2:1-6; 2 Kings 2:7-15; Gal 4:4-5; Acts 2:17-18' Col 3:12  
“Passing The Mantle”

**Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.**

After Elijah experiences God in the “gentle whisper” he is told to anoint Hazael king of Syria, anoint Jehu king of Israel, and finally anoint Elisha to be the next prophet for Israel. God also reminds him that there are seven thousand people who have yet to worship Baal. God wants Elijah to know he is not alone.

In 1 Kings 19:19-21, Elijah throws his cloak/mantle over Elisha symbolizing the transferring of prophetic powers. However, Elijah remains on the scene for another fifteen years or so and continues to prophesy. Elisha leaves a successful life of seeming prosperity – 12 yoke of oxen is a lot – and takes up the mantle of becoming a prophet of God.

After a number of years have passed, Elijah and Elisha travel from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and then to the Jordan river. The whole time Elijah is trying to leave Elisha behind, but Elisha continues to say that he will not leave Elijah. After visiting some significant places in the history of Israel they cross over the Jordan River, away from Israel and the Promised Land.

Elisha asks for a double portion of the Elijah’s spirit. The double portion is what the first-born son was entitled to. See Deuteronomy 21:7. As they walked, “a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.”

Elijah’s whole life was rather spectacular and his departure – since he seemingly did not die - becomes the symbol for great future prophets, including the forerunner of the Messiah in Malachi 4:5–6.

All that is now left is Elijah’s cloak/mantle. Elisha retrieves it and strikes the Jordan river asking where God is. God shows up again and parts the Jordan thus showing Elisha, as well as the 50 prophets, that the Spirit of God was now resting on Elisha. He would be the new prophet of Israel.

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## Exploring the Text

### **1 Kings 19:19-21**

<sup>19</sup> So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. <sup>20</sup> Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. “Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye,” he said, “and then I will come with you.” <sup>21</sup> So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.

### **2 Kings 2:1-6**

<sup>2</sup> When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup> Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; the LORD has sent me to Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. <sup>3</sup> The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, “Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?” “Yes, I know,” Elisha replied, “so be quiet.” <sup>4</sup> Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, Elisha; the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” And he replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went to Jericho. <sup>5</sup> The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, “Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?” “Yes, I know,” he replied, “so be quiet.” <sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here; the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” And he replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them walked on.

### **2 Kings 2:7-15**

<sup>7</sup> Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. <sup>9</sup> When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?” “Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied. <sup>10</sup> “You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah said, “yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not.” <sup>11</sup> As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. <sup>12</sup> Elisha saw this and cried out, “My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!” And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two. <sup>13</sup> Elisha then picked up Elijah’s cloak that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. <sup>14</sup> He took the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and struck the water with it. “Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” he asked. When he struck the water, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over. <sup>15</sup> The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

### **Galatians 4:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

### **Acts 2:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

### **Colossians 3:12**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.



## Questions

*If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.*

1. Elijah and Elisha were very different from one another, yet God called both of them to be prophets. What does this tell us about God?
2. How did Elisha respond to God's call and what might we learn from the way he responded?
3. Pastor Paul told us that God led Elijah and Elisha on a journey from Gilgal to the Jordan River to teach them a lesson. What lesson do you think God wanted them to learn?
4. What do you think was the significance of the fact that God took Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind on the "other side of the River Jordan" rather than on the side of the Promised Land?
5. Elijah put his cloak around Elisha to signify that Elisha was chosen to be his successor as prophet to the nation of Israel. For over 10 years, they traveled together – Elijah as mentor and Elisha as his servant. Have you had an "Elijah" in your life – someone who willingly mentored you to help you grow in Christ? How have you been an "Elijah" to someone else?
6. When Elijah asked Elisha what the latter wanted before Elijah was taken to Heaven, he replied: "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit." What was the significance of this request and how does it have relevance for our lives?
7. God doesn't call all of us to be ministers, missionaries or prophets, but He does call us to be part of his Heavenly family. What does God call each of us to do and how can we practically answer God's call?
8. How can we best prepare ourselves to be receptive to God's calling for our lives?
9. What are some common hindrances which can keep us from discerning God's call and obeying it when we do hear it?

