

Elijah becomes Elisha's Father

1 Kings 19:19-21

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, 'Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, 'Go back again: for what have I done to thee?'

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

1 Kings 19:19-21

v19 Agricultural language used to remind us of Yahweh's purpose with Elijah to sow His Word into Israel's hearts in the Kingdom: Jer 31:27-28. We must allow God's Word to grow in our hearts now that it may bear fruit: Hos 10:12; Mk 4:8; Gal 5:22-23; 6:8. The no. 12, symbolises a united nation of Israel under Christ.

v21 Elisha ceremonially severs all connection with his previous occupation and way of life. It is a deliberate act to symbolise his total dedication to the work ahead. Jesus' disciples similarly "left their nets and followed him" Matt 4:19-22; 6:24.

Colour code: Blue (God and Jesus Christ); Red (sin/ devil/judgment of wicked); Green (Kingdom); Orange (important words and phrases); Purple (Israel and return of Jews to the land); Yellow (practical exhortation).

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Key lesson: Elijah learns to be like God. God develops Elijah's character through the experiences of life. Elijah becomes a loving father for Elisha. That is what God is like for all of us. His Name Yahweh Elohim is a memorial to remind us that He wants to have a family who are like Him. He will be mighty ones! Ex 34:6-7. This is His purpose: Num 14:21.

v1-2 This is the first time the two are mentioned together since Elijah's call some 10 years earlier. In the meantime, Elisha had become known as Elijah's servant: 2 Kgs 3:11. There is now a very close friendship between these 2 men.

Hold your peace: - ie. Shoosh! It was too painful for Elisha to discuss with them. He had an emotional attachment to Elijah and didn't want to see him go. Taking on Elijah's responsibility may also have been a daunting prospect. It is not easy to take on responsibilities. But God will be with us no matter how difficult it may be at the time

v3 Originated in the school of the prophets originally held at Ramah with Samuel presiding over them: 1 Sam 10:9-12; 19:19-20.

v7 **Jordan:** This river was an apt symbol of the progress of mortality down to the grave. Jeremiah speaks of the "pride of Jordan", as it represented the flesh: Jer 12:5; 49:19.

They two: Only used 9x in the Bible (of which 3 are in this chapter). Other examples are: Ruth & Naomi: Ruth 1:29; David & Jonathan: 1 Sam 23:18; Husband & wife: Eph 5:21.

Wrested Scripture: 2 Kings 2:11: Neither 2 Kings 2 or Matt 17 says that Elijah lived between being taken up and when he met Jesus at the Transfiguration in Matt 17:3. Moses was also present, but he had been dead: Deut 34:5. Moses and Elijah may well have both been raised for the occasion. Even if Elijah was miraculously preserved after he was caught up in a whirlwind, his experience offers no grounds for believers today to expect a similar privilege. There is also evidence that Elijah was back on earth after he was taken away in the whirlwind. It can be shown that a letter was received by Jehoram, King of Judah, from Elijah, after Elijah was taken. Elijah was most likely "caught away" in the same way Philip was in Acts 8:39,40 and then returned to the earth.

Elijah is taken

CHAPTER 2.

1 Elijah, taking his leave of Elisha, with his mantle divideth Jordan, and is taken up by a fiery chariot into heaven. 2 Elisha, dividing Jordan with Elijah's mantle, is acknowledged his successor. 3 Elisha healeth the unwholesome waters. 4 Bears destroy the children that mocked Elisha.

AND it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, 'Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said 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 Elisha, 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 Elijah said unto him, Elisha, 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 came to Elisha, 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.

6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, 'As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

II. KINGS 2.

up into heaven.

* 1 Kin. 19: 19.

† ver. 24. Ex. 24. 22.

* ver. 22. Cp. Gen. 5. 24. † Deut. 22. 17.

* 1 Kin. 19: 22.

† ch. 4. 38. Josh. 5. 9. † Heb. Thou hast done hard in asking.

* ver. 4. 6. Cp. Ruth 2. 15, 16.

† Josh. 16. 2. † Sam. 20. 3.

* ver. 5, 7, 15. ch. 4. 1, 38. † 6. 1. † 9. 2. † Sam. 20. 10. † 19. 20. † 1 Kin. 20. 35.

* Cp. ch. 9. 4. † ch. 6. 17. Cp. 18. 68, 77. † 204. 4.

* ch. 4. 38. † ch. 23. 24. † 1 Kin. 16. 34.

* 1 Kin. 22. 30.

† Heb. 119. Gen. 41. 17. Deut. 4. 48. Josh. 13. 9. 26. Ezek. 47. 7. 22. Dan. 12. 5. † ver. 8.

* ver. 7.

* Heb. in sighs of, over against. ver. 15. ch. 4. 26.

8 And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

9 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, 'Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 ¶ And Elisha saw it, and he cried, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

13 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

15 And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

v8 Mantle a symbol of his prophetic office: 1 Kgs 19:13,19; Zech 13:4.

v9 **Double portion:** Reference to the Law of Moses, right of firstborn child: Deut 21:17. Elisha became like a firstborn son to Elijah.

v12 **Key:** At the end of Elijah's life, Elisha calls him "my father, my father" ie. Dad. Many years later, at Elisha's death, Joash King of Israel came to Elisha saying "my father, my father": 2 Kgs 13:14. Elisha had learnt to also be a father in Israel. Do we develop relationships with those younger than us to guide them and nurture them? Do we give ourselves over to those in need? If so, then we may even be the answer to someone's prayers. But only if we allow God to work with us.

Elisha calls Elijah his chariot. The cherubim is often referred to as a chariot: 1 Chr 28:18; Psa 68:17 Isa 66:15; Ezek 1. The saints are Yahweh's chariot that He rides. His character is revealed in people! In the Kingdom age, the saints will be called Yahweh because they will reflect perfectly the Divine nature, both morally and physically. Elijah has become like God. As such he will be ideally suited to become Yahweh's chariot in the Kingdom.

Horsemen: In Rev 19:13-15 Christ and the Saints (the Cherubim) ride horses, as they tread under foot the latter-day Jezebel (RC system).

Consider the following facts about 2 Kings 2:11:

- Elijah had been taken to heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11).
- Elisha took over the duties of Elijah in the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Kings 3:10, 11).
- Jehoram received a letter from Elijah, the prophet (2 Chron. 21:1, 9-12). King Jehoram reigned after Jehoshaphat. (2 Chron. 21:1).

Also, Elijah did not ascend the dwelling place of God since it is expressly stated that "no man hath ascended up to heaven" (John 3:13). Also, "No man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18). He could not possibly have received immortality, because of "the prophets" it says that "these all.... received not the promise" (Heb 11:13,32,39).