

The Mantle of Elijah

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II Kings 2:1,2

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

There's a message that quickly unfolds here beginning right in the first verse. It was the day in which the Lord would take Elijah to heaven – by a whirlwind. Elijah was someone who was very close to the heart of God. When you look at the years of his life you have to admit he was a man who put his whole heart into serving God. He no sooner finishes where he is than you find him going on to do yet more for the Lord.

Having a Heart after God

And here in II Kings we see where he had finished his work here on earth. When you've put in your eight hours, you like to go home, don't you. Well, when our work for the Lord is done (and one of these days it will be) we'll want to go home to ever be with the Lord. Elijah had finished his course, faithfully standing up for God. And one day when it's our time to go home we want to know that we have finished our course, been faithful to the Lord in all things. Would you want to go knowing that you had been half-hearted, not putting your whole heart into serving the Lord? Would you want to come to the end knowing that you did just half of what God wanted you to do?

We want to ever keep in mind that we want to not only start the work, but also to finish it – and finish it with our whole heart, putting everything we've got into serving God. If we've been faithful, and our work is finished there's little object to stay here, knowing the Lord is waiting to welcome us home – saying, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*

II Kings 2:4

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.

Young Elisha wasn't about to let Elijah out of his sight. He was a faithful servant, and intended to stick with his master.

II Kings 2:6

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.

Again Elisha had his opportunity to stay where he was. But this wasn't something he wanted to miss. Would you want to skip church only to find out that the Lord opened blind eyes that night! Whose fault would it be that you weren't there? Would you think that God should have realized you weren't there, and waited until you were so you wouldn't miss out?

II Kings 2:8

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.

That's a spiritual act, isn't it! a manifestation of the power of God. Why didn't Elijah simply get on a boat? Because God had different plans. So, looking here at an example of the power of God at work – just to have these two men cross over. In doing this, He left us record of His power that was working in Elijah's life. Just by smiting the water with his mantle the water was cut off, piling up on this side and being held back on that side . . . giving them a path to merely walk across.

And here they are on the other side of the river. My, that was easy! It was a manifestation of the power of God in the prophet's life. Is this an every day miracle? Something one sees day after day? Listen, it was a miracle of God through Elijah's obedience.

II Kings 2:9

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.

Elijah was about to leave, with Elisha ready to jump in and follow on with the anointing of God. What would he ask Elijah for before he left? A double portion of his spirit, twice what he had.

II Kings 2:10

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.

You've asked me a hard thing. In other words, what can Elijah do to give it to him? there's nothing Elijah can do to put it in his hands. Nevertheless, he said, If you see me when I am taken up, it shall be so. So, if that's not God's purpose then Elisha won't see him when he goes.

ELISHA

Elisha was a sincere young man of God whom God had called to be put in the path of Elijah that he might learn his ways to take his place. God had the need of another great miracle worker, someone else to stand in the gap.

II Kings 2:11,12

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. 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.

What a way to go home! It certainly wasn't the ordinary way of leaving this world. and neither was that chariot a normal looking chariot, I don't know of anyone else who went to heaven in a chariot, let alone a chariot of fire. And neither do I know of anyone else who received a double portion of the Spirit that was on Elijah.

If it's for you, God will give it to you. If it's for you, God will work it for you. That's the only reason this happened: God intended to send Elisha forth in Elijah's

place. It was God's blessing upon Elijah to take him home in this manner; and God's blessing on Elisha to let him be there when that took place.

Elisha saw it. wasn't that the key? If you see me when I go this double portion will be yours. This double portion is something that we should think about. Basically, we can have a double portion: getting saved – and being filled with the Spirit.

A Double Portion

What a blessing salvation brings, the promise of everlasting life. Now, not everyone who has gotten saved has gone on to be filled with the Spirit. Yet this is the double portion God has promised to those who have gotten saved. We should all want that double portion: salvation and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Do you have the Baptism of the Holy Spirit? You can. If you don't have this gift yet, don't give up. Don't let a day go by without seeking God – until that day you are filled, because God wants you to be filled with the Spirit.

Luke 11:11-13

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

Now, what is this double portion of Elijah's anointing going to do for Elisha? He would certainly need this to go forth and do the type of works that Elijah did, to do the miracles God would want to use him for along the journey that lay ahead.

II Kings 2:13

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

Elijah's mantle: with Moses it was the rod of God. With that rod, God worked miracles through the life of Moses. Wasn't it the rod he held out over the Red Sea? Many things were done with that rod. Now, is there any power in a rod? The power

wasn't in that stick, it was in the man who used it because this is what God gave Moses to bring forth manifestations of His power.

And here it is Elijah's mantle (something worn as clothing). With that mantle, like Moses with his rod, Elijah used it to bring forth manifestations of God's power. He smote the waters and they parted, and they walked over on dry land. It wasn't the mantle that did it, neither was it the rod that opened the Red Sea: it was something God gave them to use as an object of faith.

Anoint with Oil – another object of faith

James 5:14,15

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

God has given many ways to manifest His power – such as anointing the sick with oil. He never led me to use a mantle, never led me to use a rod – but He has led me to anoint the sick with oil, and pray the prayer of faith; He has led me to lay hands on the sick in faith believing, and they would recover.

Here, now, Elisha doesn't just have any old mantle. He's got Elijah's mantle. And with that mantle we find him working the miracles God worked through him. He's going to pick this up and head over to the river – and all these other prophets are looking on. He was going to prove this mantle – whether or not he had a double portion of Elijah's anointing.

II Kings 2:14

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.

What a transformation in this young man's life, called unto a great calling of God. The mantle wasn't just put in his hand: he had the faith to take it – and use it. God would begin this very day to use his life. God hadn't lost His prophet, He merely placed that anointing in someone else's hands.

There will always be a mantle being left behind somewhere. There will always be a man of God coming to the end of his day, the time when God is ready to take them up. Realize that God will have someone else ready to continue His working. Would you be ready if He called you? I believe God has a place for each of us to be used of Him. And I believe He would have all of us ready to take up the call and go forth in faith.

We can see that God began that day to use Elisha's life with this first miracle. Actually it was like Elijah's last miracle. Elijah's miracle took Elisha across Jordan, and Elisha's miracle brought him back alone.

In God's Time, and In God's Way

Think of it like this: there is a day that will eventually come – but wait. Don't try to go ahead of God. God's time will come – when God is ready. He will bring to pass the council of His will. We should all want His blessing to fall upon our lives. It's always a blessing and a pleasure to be in God's service. It can be such a joy as you work and labor in His vineyard. It's not discouraging, not drudgery. But we want to be found ready.

Elisha was ready that day to pick up that mantle and go on with the Lord. God had him prepared. The time he spent walking with Elijah was important. God has much to give – to those who are ready. If God leaves you where you are, and passes by – it's because you showed no interest in doing His will. He can see those who are interested, those who are sincere, who are seeking Him with all their heart to Him. God can prepare you, and have you ready – if you're willing.

Here in Elisha's life, it was the perfect timing of God: Elijah went up – and Elisha turned to follow the Lord down the road. Elisha took up Elijah's mantle and replaced him because he was ready.

Be ready

You may not always see the importance of it: but you need to be praying earnestly. Your prayer life ought to be fruitful today. This is the day to prepare your heart, the day to seek the Lord. Don't be satisfied in giving the Lord a little: a little time,

a little effort. Listen, if you want the things God has for you you need to apply yourself daily.

Proverbs 13:4

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Press in with prayer and supplication. get the mind of the Spirit, and get in the flow for revival. Have that expectation deep within, and be ready to move with Him. Be prayed up, anointed of the Spirit, ready to do whatever God gives you to do.

Time surely can pass by and leave one high and dry. You can just sit by and wait for the day that God needs you before you decide it's time to get prepared. Listen, the time to start preparing was a long time ago. God wants you to be diligent, consistent in preparing your heart to receive all He has for you. And, if you do, you'll receive of Him: but if you've done nothing to prepare your heart, then you're going to have to start out from scratch, trying to figure out how you can get prepared now.

Surrender your heart to seeking the Lord, preparing for what He has for you to do and for what He wants to give. It ought to motivate your heart that God wants you to be ready. We found that Elisha was ready to move forward. Here we find him ready: ready for the revival, ready for what God gave Him to do. He was in touch with God. He talked with Him, and surely heard from Him.

Understand that being ready is being fully prepared to step out. That's what getting ready is about. Let your heart be open to God. let the cry of your heart go up to God every day: Lord, I want You to use me in whatever way You choose. Start praying about the gifts of God.

Seek My face – with all your heart

Seek My face: in other words – come to God with a hungry heart, surrendering your all to Him, and looking to Him to bring things into your life that will benefit the kingdom.

Now, here's Elisha going back across the water all by himself. He's on his way. He has that double portion he asked for. When you look through the next chapters until he was in the grave you find that he worked twice as many miracles as Elijah did. Yes. many great things were done through him as the result of that double portion of Elijah's anointing.

God Get Hold of Me!

This should be your daily prayer: God get hold of me! How God can work through people. How He can get hold of them. Couldn't He get hold of you? Well, stand still for Him, and let Him take hold of your life and prepare you? Would you get down before Him, and seek Him with all your heart? Would you lay your life down, offering yourself to be used of Him?

Romans 12:1,2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Lay your life down completely as a living sacrifice unto God: holy, truly separated unto God. Are you ready to give God the rest of your life? What time you have left, are you willing to live it totally for Him? why not? Tell Him, Lord, I'm Yours. While I'm here use My life as you choose until the day I drop, the day You're ready to take me up.

If you read Romans 12:1 and 2 in your prayer closet, and do as it says. You know what might happen? He might take you at your word. He may take what you say, and keep your busy the rest of your life in His service.