

A Double Portion

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And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.” 2 KINGS 2:9

Through Elijah, the Lord spoke after a long silence, exposing sin, announcing judgment, and calling His people back to Himself. However, the Lord informed Elijah his ministry was ending. This greatly concerned his assistant Elisha. He might have wondered who would keep revival fires burning with Elijah gone. In coming to grips with Elijah’s departure, Elisha concluded that what he needed most was a greater work of God’s Spirit within his life.

In a sense, the Calvary Chapel movement’s Elijah has departed—Pastor Chuck’s ministry, like Elijah’s, was marked by obedience, faith, and revival. Many of us are still coming to grips with him being gone. But the Gospel has not changed—it still transforms lives, making dead men alive. I believe the Lord desires to pour out His Spirit in greater measures in these last days, and His Word to us is, **“Do not remember the former things ... Behold, I will do a new thing”** (Isaiah 43:18-19a). Whoever desires a double portion of God’s Spirit can learn from Elisha’s life.

Made Ready to Receive

Elisha understood and accepted his calling. Ultimately, Elisha’s selection as a prophet came from God, not Elijah. In 1 Kings 19, Elijah anoints Elisha by throwing his mantle over his shoulders while Elisha plows. Just as the disciples left everything to follow Jesus, Elisha stopped his plow and slaughtered the oxen to demonstrate, saying in effect, “I’m all in. I’ll seek my calling without looking back.” For years Elisha was known simply as the man who poured water on Elijah’s hands, as a servant would do—but he was faithful in his service. It’s one thing to know your call; it’s quite another to be faithful to that calling, especially when it’s difficult. During a ministry transition, I once went through a season of dark discouragement. I got on my

face before God and could only muster one word: “Mercy.” But God, whose mercy is new every morning, showed me mercy. He doesn’t fail. Some of you are there now. You have your hands to the plow but are tempted to look back. If we want a greater work of God’s Spirit in our lives, however, we must remain faithful to our calling.

Elisha refused to settle for less than what God had for him. As he followed Elijah’s every step leading to his departure, many well-meaning people asked Elisha if he knew Elijah was to be taken away. I wonder if the schools of prophets were questioning, “Why are you still with that old guy? Stay with us. This is a different generation we’re heading into.” Even Elijah kept saying, “Stay behind.” But Elisha’s response was, as if to say, “This is where I’m called and I’m not going anywhere until I’ve received all the Lord has for me.” Ask yourself the question I pose to myself: Have you settled for less? Have you stopped taking risks, stepping out in faith? Don’t stop pressing in to all the Lord has for you, regardless of others’ suggestions.

A Map to Surrender

Finally, like Elisha, we must yield to God’s work in our lives. Our tendency is to resist Him—there is a process we must go through to learn to be led by the Spirit. Before Elijah’s departure, he and Elisha visited four historically significant locations in Israel’s history, each with symbolic importance for our lives. First they stopped at Gilgal, a place of purification. At Gilgal, all males were circumcised before going to war to obtain the Promised Land (Joshua 5:2-9). Circumcision is a cutting away of the flesh. We must drastically cut away the fleshly part of our ministry, which is self-focused instead of Jesus-focused. Emphasis on the flesh hinders the Spirit’s work because the Spirit focuses completely on Jesus.

Next came Bethel, where Jacob dreamed of a ladder from heaven. When he woke,

he said, **“Surely the LORD is in this place and I did not know it”** (Genesis 28:16b). He named it “Bethel,” meaning “house of God,” because it was a place of a fresh revelation of who God is. A revelation of God makes you long for more. You cry out, *Lord, reveal the deep things of God to me. I want more of you.* Do you long for greater revelation of the person and work of Jesus Christ? After that was Jericho, a place of submission. When Joshua met the commander of the Lord’s army outside Jericho’s walls, he fell flat on his face and said, **“What does my**

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Lord say to His servant?” (Joshua 5:14b) If there’s to be a great outpouring of God’s Spirit, we must submit to God. Is there any area of your life that is not submitted? Finally, they reached the Jordan, a place of inauguration. “Crossing the Jordan” represents to me entering into the victorious Christian life, the fullness of God’s Spirit. There Elijah says to Elisha, “Ask.” Elisha doesn’t hold back—he asks for a double portion of God’s Spirit. After Elijah’s departure, Elisha took up his mantle, struck the waters of the Jordan in faith, and they parted. As he crossed over, those who saw him said, **“The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha”** (2 Kings 2:15b).

I believe the mantle has been passed to each one of us, a heritage of ministry that’s to be protected and walked in. We must decide individually if we will pick it up. As Elisha took his up, his question was, **“Where is the LORD God of Elijah?”** (verse 14b). He recognized that the power wasn’t in the man, the movement, or the mantle. The power was in God. ✨