

"The Life and Miracles of Elisha"

Part 2

Introduction: Last week in our study of Elisha we looked at the conditions of his day and why God used Elisha to bring about so many miracles. The Nation of Israel was deep into idolatry and they had all but forgotten God. Let me refresh our minds again with the words of Elijah.

1 Kings 19:14

¹⁴ And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

This information will have an important part in what we are going to look at tonight.

I. The Call of Elisha

Part 2

Notice 1 Kings 19:19-21

Last week we looked at how Elisha was busy in the field and it was while he was working that Elijah cast his mantle upon him which was God's way of calling Elisha into a full-time ministry.

The application for our lives is that many times when God's people are at their daily activities God will often cast a burden upon our hearts. It can be a burden to reach out to a certain person, it can be a burden to stop by and visit someone whom we have not seen for a while or it may be a burden to serve in a particular office of the church.

Notice 1 Kings 19:19 again.

There is a very important lesson here for parents. Elisha's father was a very wealthy man, but he also made sure Elisha learned good work ethics. Elisha did not have a life of ease because his father was wealthy. His father made sure Elisha did his fair share of the work that needed to be done. The interesting thing here is that Shaphat could have probably afforded to hire people to plow his fields but instead he used the need to teach his son the value of hard work.

Application:

As parents it is very important that we teach our children the value of hard work. I hear parents often say that they desire to see that their children have what they never had. Or they desire that their children never have to experience the hardships which they had

to live. So, it is their desire to make sure their children lead a life of comfort and ease. Let me just say that many young people have grown up with very poor work ethics because they were showered with "STUFF" and never were given responsibilities when they were young. There is nothing wrong with our children going through tough times. It is in those times that they may learn to rely upon the Lord. Let me show you what the Bible says concerning work ethics.

Proverbs 10:4

⁴ He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

Proverbs 12:11

¹¹ He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding. [The one who follows someone in their worthless pursuits lacks wisdom]

Proverbs 14:23

²³ In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury/poverty.

Proverbs 18:9

⁹ He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

Proverbs 20:4

⁴ The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

Proverbs 21:25

²⁵ The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

Proverbs 22:29

²⁹ Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.

Ephesians 4:28

²⁸ Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-9

⁶ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

⁷ For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

⁸ Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

⁹ Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

These are just a few of the verses that show the value of hard work. The point is that we need to teach our young people good work ethics instead of giving them a life of ease.

1. **The Testing**

Notice 1 Kings 19:19 again.

Before we get to Elisha's response to the call there is something else here which we need to see. This call was quite the test for Elisha. To answer the call meant to experience a drastic change in his life.

1. He would now be identifying with a man who was surrounded by people who hated him, namely Ahab, Jezebel and the prophets of Baal.
2. He would be walking away from the wealth and security of his family. He would be leaving the family farm.

Application:

We are not all called to a full-time ministry as Elisha was, but we are all called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. To be the disciple that Jesus desires us to be there are two points from this verse that we need to see.

1. **As we step out to follow Jesus Christ we too are identifying with someone who is hated by many in this world and we can expect the very same treatment from them.**

John 15:18-21

¹⁸ If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

¹⁹ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

²⁰ *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

²¹ *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*

Therefore, we can expect that as we follow Jesus Christ and we stand for His Word there is going to be opposition.

2. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ requires submitting to a New Master and exchanging our old focus for a brand-new focus.

Before the calling of Elisha his life was centered around his father's farm and his work there. His focus was upon helping his father keep up the farm. But if he was going to be the representative of Elijah this would all need to be left behind him. He would now be a servant of Elijah and his focus would now be on the will of God.

As we follow our Lord as His disciples He demands that we submit to Him and no others.

2 Timothy 2:3-4

³ *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

⁴ *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

Luke 14:26-27

²⁶ *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

²⁷ *And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

II. The Response

Notice 1 Kings 19:20

One of the first things we notice about Elisha is he readily accepted the position of a servant. He would not even go back to bid farewell to his parents without the approval of Elijah.

Application:

What a lesson there is for us here on discipleship. As disciples of Jesus Christ it should be our desire to know and to follow the will of our Lord. We should be constantly seeking His

will for our lives and praying about the decisions we are faced with in this life. Too many times believers make their decisions based upon "FEELINGS" and "EMOTIONS". Feelings and emotions must be set aside when it comes to the decisions we are faced with in this life. We must seek the wisdom and the will of God before we make our decisions.

James 1:5-8

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

⁸ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Matthew 7:7-11

⁷ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

⁸ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

⁹ Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

¹⁰ Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

¹¹ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Notice 1 Kings 19:20 again.

Elisha did not desire to go back home to seek the approval of his parents. He wanted to return to tell them he was leaving.

Let me show you a conversation Jesus had with 3 individuals while He was on the earth. To each of these men Jesus presented a test to see if they were serious about being disciples.

Man #1

Luke 9:57-58

⁵⁷ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

⁵⁸ And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

To this man Jesus was saying, "If you follow me you are not promised any comforts of this world." This was a test for this man to see if he was willing to follow with no promise of the riches and the comforts of this world.

Application:

We too must ask ourselves, "Are we willing to be a true follower even if it means a life of great sacrifice and a life of very little of this world's comforts?" This is the opposite message of the prosperity preachers. This is also the opposite of how many believers perceive the Christian life. You see, we have somehow come to believe that as disciples of Jesus Christ we will never go through difficult times. When difficult times come upon us we begin to question the goodness and the love of God. It is in these times that we lose sight of the cross which is the greatest demonstration of God's love for us.

Man #2

Luke 9:59-60

⁵⁹ And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

⁶⁰ Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

This man heard the conversation which Jesus had with the first man. He understands that to follow Jesus Christ might mean there are no extras in life. He understands that if he commits to Jesus Christ there is possibly going to be some very lean times. So, he requests to go bury his father. WHY? He does not want to commit to following Jesus until he receives his father's inheritance. He wants to carry with him a cushion just in case the lean times come. He is not willing to suffer for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Application:

If we are going to be true disciples of Jesus Christ, then we must be willing to suffer for the cause of Christ. It is going to cost us to be followers and to make a difference for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Man #3

Luke 9:61-62

⁶¹ And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

⁶² And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

This man heard both previous conversations. He was a home body and he had many ties to his family. He needed to dwell upon the words Jesus spoke in Luke 14.

Luke 14:26-27

²⁶ If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

²⁷ And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Conclusion:

Elisha will answer the call with eagerness as we shall see next week. He is an Old Testament example of what it looks like to be a disciple.

Might we also be fully committed to following Jesus Christ and going wherever He calls us to go. Might we echo the words of Isaiah.

Isaiah 6:8

⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.