

Bible Studies for Life: August 29

Lead Others to Serve • 1 Kings 19:19-21; 2 Kings 2:6-14

By Clay Anthony



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We are closing out our look at God moving in the life of an Old Testament prophet. Our hero Elijah is close to his earthly departure and the mantle of his office is to be passed on to another. This passing from one to another was unlike what we are used to in elections or even a monarch passing a crown down to the next in line. This succession was driven by God.

The life of a prophet was not one of ease, and the next spokesperson needed to ready themselves for what lay ahead. The people had become accustomed to having God's spokesman stand for them against evil and to reveal God's power.

Something as grand as Elijah's showdown with the false prophets of Baal captured the attention of the nation. Now the people were being called upon to follow a younger, unproven prophet.

Elisha needed to experience a few object lessons to introduce him to the full extent of God's reign. I believe there is nothing better for God's people than God's word, and with that in mind it would be good for the story of Elijah's departure to give us certain reminders about the God we serve.

Every future encounter we have with a questioner must be lovingly undergirded with the fact that our God is over all aspects of their lives:

God is over relations. For an older prophet to cast his cloak upon a younger man was to be understood as the younger being next in succession. Elisha was on deck, so to speak, and he would now be in a mentor/mentee relationship with Elijah. This relationship, being birthed by God, would take precedence over all other relations in Elisha's life.

Note the undertone (v. 20) that points us towards Jesus' teachings in Luke 9:61. Hometown, profession, and even parents had to take a back seat to the ultimate relationship in which Elisha found himself. The same must be true in our lives as well.

God is over nature. Elijah had just experienced the power of God over wind, earthquakes, and firestorms. Now his successor would have a front row seat to that same power from God once again parting waters. The two men were able to pass through on dry land.

Again, *both* men crossed over. This is not something that Elisha had to take on hearsay. He was with Elijah, step for step, as they both walked through a miracle of God. Everyone witnessing this act would know that the one following Elijah was also following a God of power.

God is over death. Numerous people in Scripture had different run-ins with death. Moses died and was buried by God. Lazarus knew death, but not for long. Jarius' daughter received a touch from the Giver of life. Enoch simply walked into the presence of God.

The false god of Baal was known as the god over storms. He had a great opportunity in the previous chapter to make himself known through a firestorm, yet it was the One true God that stole the show.

How does that prove that He is over death? We read of the same God using another firestorm to show His power to move His beloved prophet from earth to heaven without tasting death.

God is over doubt. Now that Elijah is gone, with what are the people left? God's main mouthpiece has just left the scene and Elisha has done nothing to prove his worth. How would God's people know that this protégé would prove to be a prophet? Any doubt in the mind of the people was eased when the young prophet showed the exact same connectedness to God as Elijah.

As the Israelites learned at the edge of the Red Sea, waters never part until your feet get wet. Elijah might have left, but the God he followed remained in place.

Elijah's story proves that the Bible has many characters, *both* good and bad. For those we are influencing to follow our lead in following God, it is a must that we portray the main star of all the Bible to be God Himself. He proves on every page that He is worthy of our devotion for reigning over all parts of our lives. All our relationships, the nature that surrounds us, every doubt we have, and even the threat of death itself all bow before the God we serve.

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