

ELISHA



A TALE OF RADICAL FAITH

Part 1: Radical Commitment (1 Kings 19:19-21)

3 Kinds of Call

1. The Christian Call (To Salvation)

Romans 1:6 *And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.*

2. The Call To Holiness And The Spirit-Filled Life

2 Timothy 1:9 *who has saved us and called us to a holy life-- not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.*

3. The Ministry Call (To Devoted Full-Time Work)

Romans 1:1 *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God*

Background

Follows the story of Elijah at Mt Horeb
1 Kings 19:11-16

A time of drought, apostasy, persecution and civil war in Samaria (Northern Israel) which was worshipping the foreign idol Baal.

God tells Elijah to anoint Elisha as his prophetic successor

Is just after the encounter with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18)



ELISHA : A TALE OF RADICAL FAITH

God Meets Elijah At Mt. Horeb

- **1 Kings 19:11-16** *And He said, Go forth and stand on the mountain before Jehovah. And, behold, Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains, (12) And after the earthquake was a fire, but Jehovah was not in the fire. And after the fire was a still, small voice. (13) And it happened when Elijah heard, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out, and stood at the cave entrance. And behold, a voice came to him and said, What are you doing here, Elijah?*

God Instructs Elijah

- **1 Kings 19:14-16** (14) *And he said, I have been very zealous for Jehovah, the God of Hosts, because the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, have thrown down Your altars, and have slain Your prophets with the sword. And I, I alone, am left. And they seek to take my life away. (15) And Jehovah said to him, Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you come, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. (16) And you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi to be king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.*

Elisha's Call

- **1 Kings 19:19-21 MKJV** *And he left there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, and he was plowing; twelve pairs of oxen were before him, and he was with the twelfth. And Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him. (20) And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, Please, let me kiss my father and my mother, and I will follow you. And he said to him, Go back again, for what have I done to you? (21) And he turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and killed them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave it to the people, and they ate. And he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered to him.*

Who Was Elisha?

1. Elijah son of Shaphat was a wealthy farmer in the north of Israel at Abel Meholah
2. He barbecues his assets / means of production and gives them away to people of the village – absolute renunciation
3. Follows Elijah, ministers to the prophet, becomes lowly and humble.
4. Terrifying life prospect given the government of the day, Jezebel, Syrian invasions etc

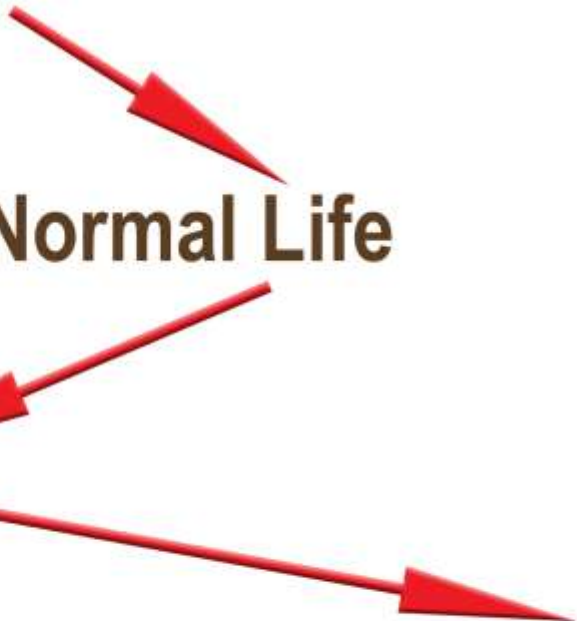


What Happens Next?

- Walks into the middle of the revolution led by Jehu son of Nimshi, which was cruel and ruthless.
- Is mentored by Elijha for a while
- Ends up with a very itinerant but miraculous lifestyle
- Becomes a prophet of great power and influence.



The Biblical Pattern For Success

1. Success In Normal Life
 2. Renounce or Lose The Normal Life
 3. Time of Wandering
 4. Spiritual Success and Historical Significance
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Biblical Hero	Success	Renunciation	Wandering	Victory
Noah	Wealthy builder, patriarch of the line of Seth	Builds Ark	18 months at sea	Founds human race
Abraham	Prince in Ur	Leaves home	Wanders in Canaan	Father of faith/ Israel

1. This is the EXACT OPPOSITE of the Prosperity Gospel / Televangelists
2. God nearly always calls (for senior ministry positions) busy people who were doing well in business, politics, academics, farming or who were from key regional families.

Biblical Hero	Success	Renunciation	Wandering	Victory
Joseph	Favored son of a great prince in the land (Jacob)	Sold into slavery	Obscure years in Egypt and in jail	Becomes Prime Minister of Egypt.
Moses	Prince in Egypt	Identifies with Israelites	40 years in Midian	Leads Israelites out of Egypt
David	Kills Goliath, marries Saul's daughter	Flees Saul and obeys God	14 years living in caves in the desert	Becomes king of Israel and writes the Psalms.

Biblical Hero	Success	Renunciation	Wandering	Victory
Daniel	Prince in Israel	Babylonian invasion	Captive in Babylon but obeys God	Becomes ruler of the province of Babylon
Saul/Paul	Young leader among the Jews	Damascus Road	11-14 years in Arabia	Becomes a great apostle
Jesus	God in Heaven	Incarnation, takes the form of a man.	30 years of working a carpenter, death on a Cross	Resurrection, Messiah, Savior, Son of God

Immediate Obedience

- ✓ Elisha obeyed God's call immediately and without any reservations
- ✓ Elisha obeyed sacrificially and totally
- ✓ Elisha was content to be Elijah's servant and apprentice
- ✓ Elisha did not concern himself with his loss of social status, home and creature comforts



What Does This Mean For Us?

- There is more to life than just worldly success.
- We need to be on God's side in a crisis and a time of national apostasy
- You do not have to understand fully in order to **obey immediately**
- We need to trust in God's spiritual processes and in Romans 8:28
- The ones that God uses the most are those who hold on to the least.
- Sometimes we might have to give away the farm in order to reach our spiritual destiny