

sion, Elisha entered into God's subsequent purpose for him.

- a. Spiritually. v.13. The mantle of Elijah "fell on him." Earlier the mantle had been cast on him (1 Kings 19:19). Now it falls on him as directed by a sovereign God! Blessed are those who have such come to them. The ministry of the Lord is not sought, but given! He had been called and commissioned and now he is installed into the ministry. From henceforth he will stand in Elijah's stead! Anything less than a call from above with a fallen mantle is less than what God provides.
- b. Actively. v.14. The mantle was not a symbol of status, but an active token of God's hand upon him. Through faith Elisha acknowledged that the mantle was more than cloth. The God of Elijah still reigned. God often takes His Elijahs but Elijah's God always remains the same. It is His work and not ours. On Him is the responsibility and to Him shall the glory be also. Oh to learn the glorious truth that though Moses is dead, the cry is "arise, go over this Jordan" (Joshua 1:2)!
- c. Miraculously v.14. The ratification of God's power was granted. Like Elijah, Elisha smote the waters with the mantle and they parted. Elijah's God is still the same! God's provision for His called servant was adequate for Elisha "went over" the Jordan. Glory to God!

Conclusion. The sons of the prophets could not fully realize what had taken place (vv. 15-18). They attempted to live under a status quo. They wanted everything to remain the same. But God had taken Elijah. They needed, like Elisha, to press on. Are you striking out with Elisha or following some whim of your self life like the sons of the prophets? Amen.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES ON ELIJAH

"The Double Portion"

2 Kings 2:9-18

Introduction

1. The miraculous ascension of Elijah without suffering death is the background for exciting experiences for Elisha his successor.
2. One would tend to believe that exceptional spiritual episodes come at extraordinary times. The truth of the matter is they might be experienced in one's ordinary occupation with God's will (v. 11).
3. To get the full impact of seeing how God works with men to fit them for His unusual service, consider the events associated with Elijah's whirlwind ride and Elisha's induction into the prophetic office. God never calls a man without preparing that same man! Here are the points to ponder:

1. An INVITATION v.9.
 - a. Stated. In simple plain terms, Elijah lays a carte blanche before Elisha. He is to ask anything to be done for him. What a huge statement! One would think that only God could do this, but Elijah's walk with God and his knowledge of Elisha was such as to be in keeping with a statement of this order. It is given in the spirit of the Word (Psa. 37:4). No cause for Elijah to think that Elisha would ask anything but what would profit spiritually. A similar open invitation is offered us (John 15:7).
 - b. Timed. Elijah had no false conceptions of his deity or position. All must be done "before I am taken away." It was the opposite with our Lord. His going away made the way to the Father more open (Heb. 10:19, 20). Elijah knew his season on earth was limited. Like our Lord, following suffering and affliction, Elijah was taken up!

2. An APPLICATION v.9.

- a. Petitioned. Elisha never lost sight of his subordinate position to Elijah. God had an order then and He does now. The polite and respectful manner of request is employed by Elisha in speaking to Elijah. It connotes our own need for worship and fear in the presence of God when making requests.
- b. Specified. Elisha is forthright and definite in his petition. He boldly asks that the "double portion" be his of the Spirit of Elijah. Here is support for the truth that Elisha's thoughts were imbedded in spiritual things. He never considered worldly gains. His full face was toward spiritual goals. How great a lesson is here taught for our day which is filled with carnal and fleshly designs upon a God Who yearns for higher goals amongst His own. The "double portion" is really the single word for "twice" and suggests that Elisha is asking for the place of the firstborn (Deut.21:17) in gaining a two-times portion. This is somewhat underlined by Elisha's use of the term "father" later on (v.12). Elisha's request for this should not be considered a matter of competition with some other person known to Elijah as if Elisha sought to outstrip him. Rather, the thought is that Elisha was overwhelmed with the upcoming loss of Elijah. As his appointed successor (1 Kings 19:16), Elisha felt keenly his own inadequacy and inability. He cried for an adequate supply from above! His single aim was to glorify God and he knew of no other fashion by which to perform this! If only the numerous false connotations of this phrase were set aside and the nub of the truth seen, namely, Elisha wanted and intended to get the equipment with which to perform his call from God (cf. 2 Chron.1). How desperately tenacity of purpose in this matter is needed today. Men are not too concerned about spiritual equipment today; the emphasis is almost entirely upon educational and behavioral competence. As a result, the church of God is dead and floundering in a sea of

intellectual morbidity. What was the "spirit of Elijah?" If anything, it included: 1. Belief in God. To him God was living, faithful, immanent, and powerful (1 Kings 17:1). 2. Obedience to God. This is the mark of Elijah. God spoke to him and he obeyed! We need double portions of this today.

3. A QUALIFICATION vv.10, 12.

Elijah did not underestimate the request of Elisha. He labeled it a "hard thing." The Hebrew phrase is literally: "Thou hast made (Hifil form of causality) hard in asking." The life of faith and dependence upon the Spirit of God is utterly out of step with the flesh and normal procedure. No wonder it is hard!

- a. Marked. v.10. The condition under which Elisha can be promised his request is that he view the taking away of his master. It is a matter of vision and nothing else. The point is not the actual historical item, but the truth taught. It is this: what you ask for can only come from God! It is only when a man's total expectation is from God that he will know what the "double portion" is all about! It is a glorious truth and placed within the experience of all who will take it. Hallelujah. The simple truth of being filled with the Spirit and walking by the power of the Spirit is really expecting all from HIM!
- b. Fulfilled v.12. The common Hebrew verb for "see" is used here. There is nothing ecstatic about a walk in the Spirit. It is the normal Christian life! The term "father" marks a matter of endearment. The chariot and horses connote the presence of God (Psa. 104:3, 4; Isa.66:15; Hab. 3: 8). All Elisha could do in such a display of divine glory was to tear his own clothes! Those who find themselves in God's presence and sensitive of it always cast themselves down as worthless (cf. Isa. 6: Rev. 1).

4. A PARTICIPATION vv. 13, 14.

Having experienced the sight of Elijah's ascen-