

ELIJAH TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN

Elisha took Elijah's place as God's prophet to carry on the work.



THE STORY: 2 KINGS 2:1-5

MONDAY

God's plan was well known

God's plan was well known – God told Elijah to go to Bethel, Jericho, and Jordan.

God also told Elijah that he would be taken from the earth (2 Kings 2:9). The students in the school of prophets (“sons of the prophets” is a title which bestows honor on God’s prophets) somehow knew what was about to happen (2 Kings 2:3 & 5).

Elisha also knew but did not want Elijah to find out that he knew (2 Kings 2:3), so he told the younger prophets to remain quiet. It seemed that God was interested in witnesses and an audience for what He was about to do with Elijah. Similarly, God’s plan to save us today is well known to all men because He has given it to us in His Word. The problem with many people is not that they are ignorant of God’s plan, but that they reject it.

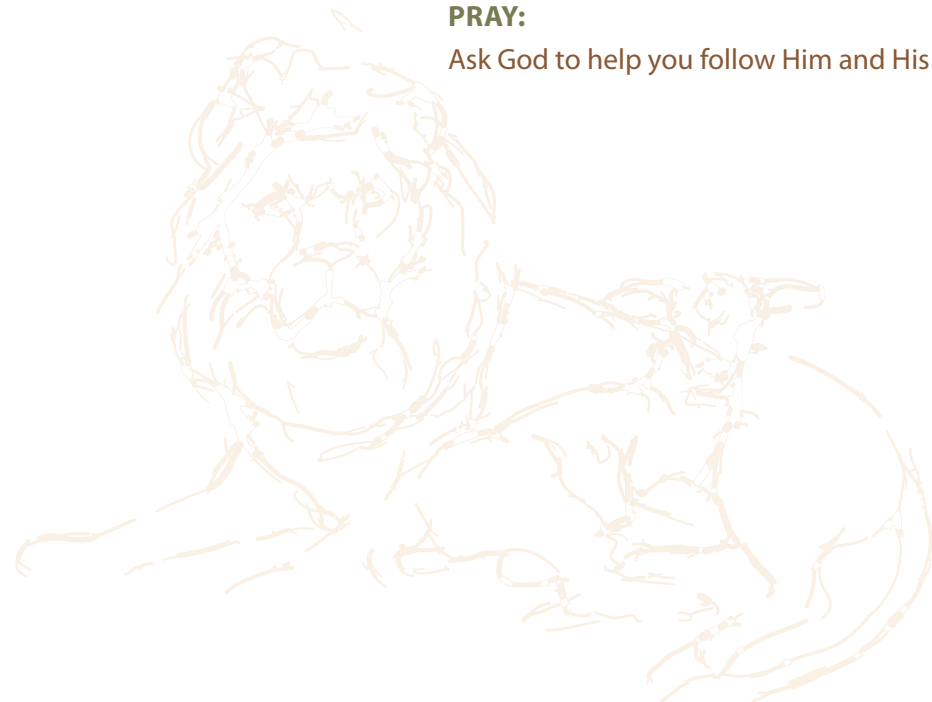
TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did Elisha stay with Elijah? *(Elisha knew that Elijah was going to be taken up into heaven and he wanted Elijah's blessing before he left.)*

As a faithful disciple, Elisha followed Elijah to the end and, consequently, received a reward. Who are you following? Is there a reward for faithfulness? *(We need to follow Jesus and His Word all of our days. In the end, the Bible tells us that we will receive a reward as well.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you follow Him and His Word all of your days.





God's passed on His mantle

God's passed on His mantle – Elisha took advantage of Elijah's offer to grant a favor and requested a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elijah left the younger man's request up to the Lord, knowing that only God could do it. If God allowed Elisha to see Elijah leave, then the request would be granted. When the time came, Elisha did see Elijah leave. In a symbolic confirmation of the transfer of spirit, Elijah's cloak (or mantle) was left behind for Elisha. Though Elijah's cloak was left behind, Elisha knew there was no magic at work. He knew that it was God who moved the prophets as He chose. Elisha prayed to God and struck the Jordan with Elijah's cloak. He called out to God and asked Him to come. God confirmed the transfer of power to Elisha by pushing back the waters of the Jordan just as He did for Elijah.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did Elijah tell Elisha that His request was a hard thing to grant? *(Elisha asked for something that only God could grant.)*

Is it ok to ask God for big and bold things? *(It is fine to ask God for big and bold things. However, we should not expect God to give us what we want if our plan is to make ourselves great. James 4:3 tells us that God will refuse our requests if our design for them is selfish. And He knows our hearts best.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help you use what you already have for others and for the glory of God.



Where is Jesus?

Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot on a whirlwind. That is not the last time we see Elijah. He appeared again in the New Testament with Jesus and Moses at Christ's transfiguration. One day, like Elijah, we will all be with the Lord.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Who else went to heaven while others watched? (*Elijah's ascension into heaven points forward to the ascension of Christ. It also points to our trip into heaven which will come someday.*)

How could Elijah, a sinner, be taken up into heaven? (*All men are saved from their sin through the sacrifice of Jesus. The coming sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for sins was determined by God far in advance of it ever happening. It was never just a "possibility". It was a certainty. God knew Jesus would succeed and sins would be forgiven. On that basis God could spare Adam and Eve when they sinned, and on the same foundation, God welcomed Elijah, a sinner like us, into heaven.*)

How can Elijah's life give us hope? (*God can save us just as He did Elijah!*)

PRAY:

Thank God for His mighty power to save Elijah and His mighty power to save us as well.



THE STORY: 2 KINGS 2:13-15

THURSDAY

God's mission continued even though Elijah left the earth

God's mission continued even though Elijah left the earth – Though Elijah was caught up in the chariot, God's mission continued through the younger Elisha and through faithful men and women who followed. Elijah would be seen again. Malachi, an Old Testament prophet, foretold that Elijah would return before the day of the Lord. The teachers of the law in Jesus' day expected this to take place, (Mark 9:11). Malachi's prophecy was fulfilled when fulfilled when John the Baptist ministered and was compared to Elijah by Jesus who said, "he is the Elijah to come,

see Matthew 11:14.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How do we know that God heard Elisha's request? (*Elisha struck the water just as Elijah had done and the water was parted for him to cross.*)

Who do all the prophets of the Old Testament point forward to? (*All the prophets of the Old Testament point forward to Jesus.*)

Pray:

Thank God for his mighty works through the prophets which point forward to the mightier works God did through Jesus.



On the road to Emmaus.

The last verse of the Old Testament decisively pointed to the beginning of Jesus' ministry. When Jesus came he revealed that John the Baptist was the second Elijah which was spoken of in Malachi (Matthew 11:13-14 and 17:10). This second Elijah, it was said, would prepare the way for the Lord. That is what John the Baptist did.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How did the last verse of the Old Testament prepare Israel for the coming of the Savior? *(This verse left Israel looking for a great prophet who would come prior to the day of the Lord. These would be the last words of scripture written for about 400 years. Malachi became the last Old Testament prophet. The stage then was set for the coming of John the Baptist and the coming of the Lord.)*

Read Matthew 11:13-14. Who did Jesus say was the second Elijah? *(John the Baptist)*

The people in Jesus day knew what the prophets in the Old Testament had said. So what did Jesus statement about John tell them about who He was? *(Jesus confirmed that all the prophets and the law pointed toward His coming.)*

PRAY:

Thank God for His amazing plan of salvation.

