

# Father's Day 2019: Elijah and Elisha, Spiritual Fathering

## **Intro:** Elijah and his setting:

- today's story comes from Ancient Israel's History about 3,000 years ago
  - roughly 900 years before the birth of Jesus
  - Israel was in very bad spiritual and national condition
  - they were compromised and worshipping idols, socially and politically divided
  - they were being picked apart by foreign oppressors
  - they had a king who was openly wicked and was KILLING OFF the PROPHETS of God
  
  - Elijah was called to speak to the nation as a prophet during this very dangerous time
  - he saw lots of really dramatic miracles but nothing seemed to turn Israel back
  
  - he did ministry alone for years and then as HE AGED he realized that he needed to pass on his role to OTHERS who would continue once he was gone
  - He saw something in a young man named ELISHA
- All what we talk about in the next few minutes will focus on Elijah being a Spiritual Father to Elisha. (how he handed off all he was to the next generation)

## **Spiritual Fathering requires us to Initiate Relationships of Intentionality.**

-1 Kings 19:19-21 (**explain as we go**) So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. 20 Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye," he said, "and then I will come with you."  
"Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"  
21 So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.

-There are a few unique things we can learn from this story because Elijah was not the biological father of Elisha.

- we can actually see the process because no relationship existed except what was created for the purpose of passing things on
- so his relationship was very intentional

-It doesn't always require intentionality to be a physical father, but it does require intentionality to be a Spiritual Father.

-if your goal is simply to pass on your genetics that's easy  
-if you want to pass on PASSIONS, ABILITIES, WISDOM, CHARACTER, and Spiritual direction,,,,, that stuff is NOT AUTOMATIC

-Elijah saw Elisha and decided to create a connection and a direction where there was not one already.

-Men, We must be **intentional** and we must be the **Initiators**.

-don't believe the lie "*they will ask me what they need to know.....*"

**-NO!!! They don't know what they don't know, that is why you must initiate**

-If Elijah had not invited Elisha, then Elisha would have just kept doing what he was doing. He would have plowed fields and earned money...

-he would have just done what other men in his culture did

-that was not necessarily bad, but as we will see later the legacy that Elijah invited Elisha into was so much bigger and more important

-If we do not initiate relationships, provide connection and direction to those in our lives and care, they will simply follow the flow of culture.

*-don't allow those entrusted to you, to simply drift into something*

**-We have the God given opportunity to Direct, rather than allowing Drift**

**-Men its YOU that throws your cloak around their shoulders**

-We don't know what Elijah saw in Elisha, but we know he saw a spark of something. And he thought that with enough time and attention he could fan that spark into a great flame.

-men, its you who spots something that could be great in them

-its you who says "lets not just go where we end up,,,,, lets set a course together"

-Men creating a connection and direction is not hard but it requires a few things of us:

-you must get into the world of the one you want to connect with

-you have to pay enough attention to see the deposits of greatness in them

-you have to create A CONTEXT FOR INTERACTION

**-relationships cannot happen in a vacuum,,, you need context**

-Elijah invited Elisha to be his servant.

-that meant that he would always be there with him. (he created a context)

-they would share tasks, and therefore information, and communication

**-that serving relationship gave them context to pass on all that needed to be passed on and cultivated.**

*-Maybe you and your son are going to fish together once a month. (CONTEXT)*

*-maybe you are going to help your daughter train for track, so you are running with her in the mornings,,,,, (context)*

*-maybe your kid is into Minecraft,,, so you will start there by playing with them once or twice a week (a context)*

*-maybe they are adults and you are having breakfast out with them once a month.....*

*-maybe you are working on some hobby together.....*

-to be a spiritual father requires you to Initiate a CONTEXT

**-you often have Re-Initiate multiple times through different seasons of life**

-once the connection is built you will begin to see the things that need direction

-you will begin to know what to encourage and speak into.....

## **Extraordinary things were Cultivated in Elisha as Elijah shared the Ordinary parts of life with him.**

-Elijah spent 7 or 8 years with Elisha serving him.

**-We are not told any specific thing Elijah did with Elisha because the what is not as important as the WITH WHOM.**

-In all those 7 or 8 years there are only 2 events that seemed a big enough deal for the writer to tell us about. (tell you bout those in a sec.)

**-everything else was YADA YADA YADA**

-Why: -because it was just typical life of a Servant/ Protege. (didn't need spelled out)

-Elisha was be his SERVANT / UNDERSTUDY

-he would be with him 24/7.....

-assisting and participating in all tasks of Elijah's life,,, small and great

-he watched him eat. -he watched him prayed and study the scriptures

-He watched him take care of his home and property

-he was there as he spoke with, prayed with and encouraged people each day

-Elisha learned from Elijah over the course of 7 years what it looked like to maintain the Spiritual and Personal life of Man of God.

-so much of value that you can pass on, is just basic information about how to live as a human being,,,,, but that stuff isn't automatic.

**-Elisha was also there when the crazy, history making moments happened.**

-There was a really Wicked King and Queen and God told Elijah to go pronounce Judgment and tell them that Dog's would drink their blood and birds pick their bones.

*-Imagine Elijah telling Elisha:* Elijah: put your boots on  
Elisha: where we going?  
Elijah: to pronounce judgment on the king and queen  
Elisha: you mean the genocidal maniacs?  
-Elijah: Yep  
-Elisha: ok, well, I probably wont bother putting dinner in the crockpot....

*-(Gimli Lord of the Rings video if we have it)*

-Then that king and queen died in exactly the way God told Elijah.

**-On one other occasion something similar happened:**

-The very next king was wicked and God told Elijah to Pronounce Judgment and Death on Him as well,,,,,, and he did

**-that king died,,,,, And over 100 soldiers who tried to take Elijah were CONSUMED BY FIRE THAT FELL FROM HEAVEN**

-Point?: 7 or 8 years of daily small things: living life in consistent obedience to God and in pursuit of him.

-all of that gave Elijah the faith and courage to be the Leader God needed in those CRAZY MOMENTS

**-and it modeled that same pattern for Elisha:** he learned that being a Great Man or Woman of God is years worth of faithful YADA YADA YADA and two days of CRAZY HISTORY MAKING.

**-Men:** Greatness is 99% faithfulness in the Yada YADA YADA and 1% courage in the big moments.

-but the 99% builds what you are in the 1%

## Elijah was faithful in his role and trusted God with outcomes.

### **-Here is how this story ends: -2 kings 2**

- God reveals to Elijah that his end in this story is coming
- Elijah and Elisha are walking together and they reach a RIVER
- Elijah takes off his cloak rolls it and smacks the water, **the Jordan river divides and they cross on dry ground!**

### **-ON the other side of the river they have their last moment together:**

- Elijah asks “what can I do for you before I go?”
- Elisha says “give me a double portion of your spirit?”
  - meaning:** double portion of wealth was given to the first born son in an inheritance, it was the ability to continue in the role of the father

### **-Elisha is asking to “Be the next Elijah”**

### **-MEN -Imagine Fathering those around us in such a way that this would be their Request!**

- “I want to be just like you,,,, I want to be YOU ALL OVER AGAIN”

### **-Elijah knew the role was not his to give. That was up to God.**

- Elijah told him,,,, “If God allows you to see me when I go, then he is granting your request”

**-A fiery chariot from heaven comes down between them and sweeps Elijah up in what appeared be a whirlwind of Fire.**

### **-But Elisha watched as Elijah went up and finally everything Disappeared except the Cloak that Elijah had put around his shoulder 8 years before.**

- the cloak landed on the ground near Elisha

*-cloak: was to a Prophet what a white lab coat is to a doctor.....*

- This was God’s way of granting the request

**-Elisha would receive the “double portion” he would carry on the ministry God began through Elijah.**

-Elisha picks up the Cloak and walks back over to the River the way they had come.

– **he smacks the water and it parts!!! The same way it had for Elijah.**

-Already in that moment Elisha was every bit the prophet Elijah had been.

–Elijah had been a successful Spiritual Father,,,, he passed on everything good about who and what he was.

## **-closing**

-Not only did Elisha carry on the work on but he carried it Forward....

-Years after Elisha's death the Israelites were burying a man

-some raiders were approaching so they need out of there

-instead of opening the mans tomb they tossed the dead mans body into the Tomb of Elisha, so they could run away quickly

-when they threw it in, the mans dead body came in contact with Elisha's BONES, and the dead man jumped to his FEET RESURRECTED

(then he had to run from the bandits also....)

-Counting that miracle Elisha was responsible for exactly 2x's the number of miracles that Elijah was responsible for.

**-what does that mean.**

-He received a DOUBLE PORTION FIGURATIVELY and LITERALLY

-He carried on the office and he carried TWICE AS FAR

-Men if we will be Spiritual Fathers, we can deposit an Emotional, Physical, and Spiritual Wealth in those who come after us.

**-we can propel them to accomplish things we never even dreamed possible.**

-If Elisha ended up being twice the man Elijah was, then what might lay ahead for your sons and daughters?