

Second after Trinity – 2 Kings chapter 2, verses 1 – 15:-

This week follows on from last week's study where Elisha was anointed as the successor of Elijah. It is worth reading 1 Kings chapter 19, verses 19 - 21 which covers the actual anointing. It is interesting to note the similarity of Elisha as the successor to Elijah and Joshua as the successor to Moses.

2 Kings chapter 2, verses 1 – 2:-

Elisha had spent some time with his master as an 'apprentice'. In these verses they visit the historic sites of worship of the People of Israel. Gilgal, where the people crossed the Jordan after their 40 years in the wilderness – see the Book of Joshua chapters 4 – 5.

And Bethel – see Genesis chapter 28, verses 10 – 22. Elisha is determined to stay with his master Elijah until the end.

Verses 3 - 5:-

Notice that there were "*sons of the prophets*" at Bethel (verse 3) and Jericho (verse 5). Those at Bethel would be connected to the sanctuary but Jericho was not a recognised place of worship. Certainly these prophets were genuine because they were aware of the Lord's dealings with Elijah and Elisha.

Remember that these events were taking place in Judah and not in the northern kingdom of Samaria where the kingship was still involved in pagan worship – see 1 Kings chapter 22, verses 51 – 53 and 2 Kings chapter 3, verses 1 – 3.

Verses 6 – 8:-

Another miraculous crossing of the Jordan – remember Joshua's leadership as the Israelites crossed at Gilgal (see the Book of Joshua chapter 3, verses 7 – 13). The word used for 'the mantle' of Elijah is not normally used for an everyday cloak / mantle which was more like a poncho.

The 'prophetic' mantle was presumably regarded as a badge of office falling from Elijah as he was taken up (verse 13).

Verses 9 - 12:-

It is not within the power of Elijah to grant the request. The giving of the prophetic spirit depends on the sovereign will of the Lord God. Note that the two are separated by the chariot and horses of fire – verse 11. Elisha was to remain behind to continue the ministry. Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind not in the chariot as is often supposed!

The words in verse 12 are echoed later at the death of Elisha by king Joash – see 2 Kings chapter 13, verse 14. The rending of one's garments was a sign of grief.

Verses 13 – 15:-

Elisha picked up the prophetic mantle of Elisha and in his turn struck the water of the Jordan. It would seem that he wanted the reassurance of a miracle to prove his inheriting the prophetic ministry. That this was seen to be the case is shown by the reaction of the "*sons of the prophets who were at Jericho*".

*I'll go in the strength of the Lord,
In paths he has marked for my feet;
I'll follow the light of his word,
Nor shrink from the dangers I meet,
His presence my steps shall attend,
His fulness my wants shall supply;
On him, till my journey shall end,
My unwavering faith shall rely.*

*I'll go in the strength of the Lord
To work he appoints me to do;
In joy which his smile doth afford
My soul shall her vigour renew.
His wisdom shall guard me from harm.
His power my sufficiency prove;
I'll trust his omnipotent arm,
And prove his unchangeable love.*

Edward Turney 1864