

Bible Study questions: Elijah walking with God!

Below are the study questions that follow along with our Elijah sermon series. Please note that the questions below are only suggestions and please feel free to adapt/add/take away questions to best fit your group. Please also note that below are Bible Study questions for each week but we are aware that many communities follow a different pattern such as having a Bible study every other week. If that's your community then feel free to combine weeks together or simply pick which ones you want to do. Finally, at the end of this document are some Leader's study notes, I would stress these are not THE answers but are just some thoughts that might help you as you prepare.

Week 1 (links to the sermon on 17/01/21): Prayer that works – Passages I Kings 17:1 and Matthew 6:7-13

Read 1 Kings 17:1

This is our first introduction to Elijah in the book of Kings, what are your first impressions of him?

Elijah says that his prayers have the power to stop and bring about rain! How do you react to prayers in the Bible like this that are so powerful?

How can judgement lead to revelation of God?

Read Matthew 6:7-15

Elijah is carrying out and declaring the will of God and Jesus tells us we should be praying for God's will to be done, what does that look like for us to do in our lives today?

Is there anything that God has been putting on your heart (His will) this week as you've been praying in the church's week of prayer?

Is there anything as a community that you feel like God is saying to you about Holland Road church at the moment? If so we'd love to hear about it! You can email elders@hrbc.org.uk the Elders of the church can pray over and consider it as well. Praise God that God speaks to His people!

Week 2 (links to the sermon on 24/01/21: Fed by God's Word – Passages 1 Kings 17:2-6 and John 6:25-35)

Read 1 Kings 17:2-6

What do you think would have been your reaction to God's command to Elijah in this passage?

What is surprising about the way God provides for Elijah's needs in this passage?

Why do you think God chose to provide for Elijah in this way?

Following on from the Exodus (see leader's notes) and our passage here read John 6:25-35

What does it mean that Jesus is the bread of life?

Has there been a time in your life where you've stepped out in faith in obedience to God's word and He has provided for you?

Elijah was going to go on and do great things (spoilers Mt Carmel!) but here with no one around him he has to trust God for his most basic needs everyday. What are you (or what could you) be trusting God for at the moment?

Week 3 (links to the sermon on 31/01/21): God's miraculous provision! Passages 1 Kings 17:7-16 and Mark 12:41-44

Does it surprise you that the brook that God had provided for Elijah dried up? Why didn't God just keep it going?

Who is it that Elijah receives help from and why is that significant?

Elijah is asking a lot from this woman, what can we learn from her generosity?

Read Mark 12:41-44. Is another example of how God loves the generosity of his people!

Why do you think that God asks us to give out of our weakness?

What does the miraculous way God provides for the widow and her family show us about God?

What do you need from God at the moment?

Our nation (and the world) is going through a time of great need and it is only likely to get worse in the coming years as the fallout from Covid continues. Where do you think we as the church can give to the people around us?

Week 4 (links to the sermon on 07/02/21): Walking through pain. Passages 1 Kings 17:17-24, John 9:1-3 and Luke 13:1-5

Why does the woman think her son has died?

When something bad like this happens is it fair to say it is a judgement from God?

Read John 9:1-3 and Luke 13:1-5 – What are some of the reasons Jesus gives that people might suffer?

What does v20 show us about the reality of a relationship with God?

What does Elijah's interaction with the woman tell us about walking with people in suffering?

The son's resurrection changes things for the woman, how does Jesus' resurrection change things for us?

When has God helped you through a time of suffering? Have there been times you feel like he hasn't?

Week 5 (links to sermon on 14/02/21): Walking through Opposition, Passages 1 Kings 18:1-15

Verse 1 tells us that there has been a famine in the land for three years! Why do you think God took that long before telling Elijah to confront Ahab?

Obadiah was a believer – a righteous man – and yet he works for Ahab, can we reconcile these two things? Was Obadiah sinning or was he exercising faith by working for Ahab?

Obadiah has been secretly hiding prophets away from Jezebel and Ahab at great risk to himself.

What would it look like for you to take a risk for your faith?

What might hold you back and what would give you courage?

Obadiah's faithfulness in hiding prophets is very different from the very direct and confrontational faithfulness of Elijah, what does this tell us about different ways to stand for God?

Obadiah is very hesitant to obey Elijah and call Ahab to meet him. What are some of the reasons he gives for not doing it and what are some of the reasons we give when we think God is asking us to do something?

Obadiah is scared for his life and In v15 Elijah promises him that he will not disappear when Ahab arrives and he promises using God's title of the "Lord of Hosts". Why would this be a comfort to Obadiah?

Many of us work for secular businesses and organisations and while it's unlikely we're at risk of being killed for our faith it can still be difficult to be a Christian in the workplace. How can we be praying for each other in our different places of work?

Week 6 (links to sermon on 21/02/21) Walking by faith, Passages 1 Kings 18:16-39

After three years it doesn't appear Ahab's attitude has changed at all and he blames Elijah for the situation Israel is in. Why does Ahab try and shift the blame to Elijah and do we find that we do that ourselves sometimes?

We live in a culture where people effectively say, "You've got your God and that's great for you and I've got my God and that's great for me". How does Elijah challenge that type of thinking with his contest?

We may not worship other gods but we can easily slide into our own form of idol worship? What does that look like and how can we resist the temptation to worship things other than God?

Both Baal's prophets and Elijah pray, but their prayers are vastly different! What do their prayers reveal about both of the different God(s) they believe in?

What is the significance of the altar that Elijah uses for his sacrifice in verses 30-31?

God answers Elijah's prayers and the people respond by declaring that the Lord is God! What happened in a time when God clearly responded to your prayer?

Pray: Elijah has a real heart for the people to turn their hearts back to God v36-37. Who can we be praying for to have a real "fire from heaven" that they may know that the Lord is God?

Week 7 (links to sermon on 28/02/21) Walking through despair, Passages 1 Kings 18:40-ch19:9 and Mathew 12:15-21

(Note you might want to ask this question first and then pray for the study) There is a real difference between the way Elijah boldly prayed for fire to come down in ch. 18 and how he comes before God in v42 (almost certainly in prayer). What does this tell us about the different ways we can approach God?

Read 1 Kings 18:40 – ch19:9

There is also a real difference between God's swift answer to prayer for fire to come down in ch. 18 and the seemingly slow response to send rain from Elijah's prayers in v41. What does this tell us about the process of prayer and how God answers it?

Elijah seems to think the battle is over and he runs (superhumanly fast) ahead of Ahab back to the palace (probably signifying the Word of God leading the king) where he expects Ahab to turn back to God after seeing the fire and rain. And yet he doesn't, in fact quite the opposite happens and Jezebel threatens to kill him! Why do you think this later leads to Elijah asking God to take his life?

Elijah has gone from the spiritual high of his victory at Mount Carmel to a spiritual low needing to run for his life? Spiritual highs and lows often seem to go hand in hand (Jesus' baptism and temptation). Why do you think that is often the case?

Elijah is both physically and mentally exhausted and he asks God to take his life because he feels like he has failed. When we fail God (or feel like we have) how do we sometimes respond?

Rather than answer Elijah's prayer to grant him death God sends an angel on two occasions. What can we tell about God in the way that he cares for him in verses v5-8?

Read Matthew 12:15-21

How does Jesus show the same care to us that he showed to Elijah and the sick in this passage?

Response: God does not promise to take depression away and it can affect Christians just as much as anyone else. As a group pray for those who may be going through difficult times at the moment and seek God for his care in the present and trust and look forward to the day that is coming where Jesus will wipe all tears away.

Week 8 (links to sermon on 07/03/21) Walking with renewed purpose Passage 1 Kings 19:9-18

Read 1 Kings 19:9-18

Elijah travels 40 days and night to Horeb which is another name for Mount Sinai. Why do you think Elijah travelled to that particular mountain to speak to God about Israel?

God being God knows exactly why Elijah had come so why do you think he asks Elijah twice "what are you doing here Elijah"?

What is Elijah's frustration that he brings God about? What can you relate to in his complaint and what could he let go of for his own benefit?

What do you think is the significance of God not being in the wind, earthquake and fire but instead speaking in a whisper?

How has God's quiet voice spoken to you in the past?

God tells Elijah that he has protected 7,000 people who are faithful to him and he also tells him to go and raise up Elisha as the next prophet. Why do you think that this was important for Elijah to hear?

God recommissions Elijah into the calling he sets out for him. What do you think God is calling you to? How can you pray for each other as a Community as you consider what God is calling you to do?

Week 9 (links to sermon 21/03/21) Walking with Others, Passage 1 Kings 19:19-21 and 2 Kings 2:7-14

Read 1 Kings 19:19-21

In v10 and v14 of chapter 19 one of the things Elijah is struggling with is his feeling of being alone in standing up for God. And yet God tells him he is not alone and in our passage today we see Elisha raised up to work alongside Elijah. If God is always with us why is it important to also have other Christians around us?

In v21 Elisha sacrifices the oxen we see him working with in v19. What does that show about Elisha's attitude to his new calling to follow Elijah?

V21 tells us that Elisha's first call to serve was Elijah's servant. How does this challenge the way we sometimes approach serving?

Read 2 Kings 2:7-14

In Exodus 14 Moses parts the Red Sea and then in Joshua 3 Moses' successor Joshua parts the river Jordan. Here in our 2 Kings passage Elijah parts the river Jordan and he and Elisha cross over. Finally at the end of our passage Elisha also parts the Jordan and crosses back over. What is God saying through this?

In v9 Elisha asks for a double portion of Elijah's spirit and while this is a specific request from God's chosen prophet (in the God's Spirit is fully available to all believers since Pentecost) it highlights the respect and admiration Elisha has for Elijah and all that he has done in God's name. Who are the Christians in your life or Christians from history who have inspired you? What was it about them that made you want to be more like them?

Before Elijah is taken up to heaven he is able to talk and share with Elisha and prepare him to be the next prophet to Israel. What one word of advice, encouragement or warning would you pass on to the next generation of Christians who are following after you in their own Christian walk?

Response: Pray for the next generation of Christians in our church whoever that may be for you!

Bible Study Questions – Leader’s notes

Week 1: Prayer that works – Passages 1 Kings 17:1 and Matthew 6:7-13

Read 1 Kings 17:1

This is Elijah’s introduction to the book of Kings, what are your first impressions of him? *A bit of background: If you scan through ch. 16 things are not going well in Israel. They’ve had years of terrible kings who have encouraged sin and idols into the land and it seems like a bit of a lost cause at the end of the chapter. And then Elijah steps in in 17:1 and boldly declares that God hasn’t turned a blind eye to their evil, he will bring justice.*

Elijah says that his prayers have the power to stop and bring about rain! How do you react to prayers in the Bible like this that are so powerful? *They can increase our faith because we get to see the power of God but also we can be a bit intimidated to pray with such boldness! Link to James 5:17-18. We don’t know anything about Elijah and we have no C.V. given to us that tells us he’s eligible to be a prophet. All we know is that he was willing to be used by God.*

How can judgement lead to revelation of God? **Interesting note: The Israelites had turned to worshipping Baal and Baal was the god who was supposed to have authority over rain and fertility. God was showing that He was the one true God who brings life to the land through rain, he upholds the seasons and he is the one who has the real power. God is very specific in His judgement because His desire is for His people is for them to leave there false gods and return to Him.*

Read Matthew 6:7-15

Elijah is carrying out and declaring the will of God and Jesus tells us we should be praying for God’s will to be done, what does that look like for us to do in our lives today?

Is there anything that God has been putting on your heart (His will) this week as you’ve been praying in the church’s week of prayer? *Leave time to discuss this and they pray for each member of the community that they would know and obey God’s will in their lives and bring him glory as they walk in His light.*

Is there anything as a community that you feel like God is saying to you about Holland Road church at the moment? If so we’d love to hear about it! You can email elders@hrbc.org.uk the Elders of the church can pray over and consider it as well. Praise God that God speaks to His people!

Week 2: Fed by God’s Word – Passages 1 Kings 17:2-6 and John 6:25-35

Read 1 Kings 17:2-6

Considering the judgement in v1 on the land of Israel

What do you think would have been your reaction to God’s command to Elijah in this passage?

What is surprising about the way God provides for Elijah’s needs in this passage? *God told Elijah to go far from any civilized place and he would have no way to provide food for himself. He was told he had to rely on ravens who are known for taking things rather than giving them away!*

Why do you think God chose to provide for Elijah in this way? *In a very stark way God is showing Elijah that he provides for him and gives him life every day. We need to daily rely on God for everything. Elijah's story here mirrors Israel's journey to the promised land back in Exodus where God provided manna from heaven each day. You very specifically couldn't store it more than a day (except for Sabbath) as it was a daily reliance on God. See Matthew 4:1-4 (Jesus' temptation) for being sustained by the Word of God.*

Following on from the Exodus and our passage here read John 6:25-35

What does it mean that Jesus is the bread of life?

Has there been a time in your life where you've stepped out in faith in obedience to God's word and He has provided for you?

Elijah was literally surviving on the words of God for his survival.

Elijah was going to go on and do great things (spoilers Mt Carmel!) but here with no one around him he has to trust God for his most basic needs everyday. What are you (or what could you) be trusting God for at the moment?

Week 3: God's miraculous provision! Passage 1 Kings 17:7-16 and Mark 12:41-44

Does it surprise you that the brook that God had provided for Elijah dried up? Why didn't God just keep it going? *Sometimes God changes the way that he helps us in order that we might be a blessing to others. If the stream had kept flowing Elijah would never have met the woman and her son and they both would have starved to death! Even in our need God can use us to be a blessing!*

Interesting note: God provides for us in unexpected places! We're told Zarephath was in Sidon and we also know that Ahab's Father in law was the king of Sidon so this is the heartland of Baal-worship. Elijah has been sent right in enemy territory! And yet God protects Elijah and provides for all his needs. God has all the power even in places where His name is not praised!

Who is it that Elijah receives help from and why is that significant? *She was a widow and widows were typically those who needed to be looked after in the Bible. The passage really emphasises the dire situation that the woman is in and yet God wants her to be the provider for Elijah. However, little we think we might have we should never under-estimate what God might do through our generosity.*

Elijah is asking a lot from this woman, what can we learn from her generosity? *It can be costly to give and it is always a step of faith to give particularly if we feel like it's in an area we don't have much ourselves.*

Read Mark 12:41-44. Is another example of how God loves the generosity of his people!

Why do you think that God asks us to give out of our weakness?

What does the miraculous way God provides for the widow and her family show us about God? *You cannot outgive God! In fact even what we have in the first place is from God and if we give what we have back to Him, He can do amazing things with it.*

What do you need from God at the moment?

Our nation (and the world) is going through a time of great need and it is only likely to get worse in the coming years as the fallout from Covid continues. Where do you think we as the church can give to the people around us?

Week 4 Walking through pain 1 Kings 17:17-24, John 9:1-3 and Luke 13:1-5

Why does the woman think her son has died?

When something bad like this happens is it fair to say it is a judgement from God?

Read John 9:1-3 and Luke 13:1-5 – What are some of the reasons Jesus gives that people might suffer? *To glorify God and because bad stuff just happens to people because we live in a fallen world that is under judgement.*

What does v20 show us about the reality of a relationship with God?

What does Elijah's interaction with the woman tell us about walking with people in suffering?

The son's resurrection changes things for the woman, how does Jesus' resurrection change things for us? *Obviously there are a million answers to this but it might be good to point towards the fact that it means that the woman believe the word of God from Elijah. Similarly Jesus resurrection proved everything that Jesus did and said was true. It is the cornerstone of our faith. See 1 Corinthians 15:14*

When has God helped you through a time of suffering? Have there been times you feel like he hasn't?

**Interesting note: We don't really know why Elijah chooses to stretch himself over the boy. Some writers think it's Elijah identifying with the boy's weakness before God and interceding for him and others think it might be a foreshadowing of Christ being in the tomb for three days taking our death on himself and then rising from the dead (as the boy does)! But we don't really know, we'll have to ask him in the new creation!*

Week 5 (links to sermon on 14/02/21): Walking through Opposition, Passages 1 Kings 18:1-15

Verse 1 tells us that there has been a famine in the land for three years! Why do you think God took that long before telling Elijah to confront Ahab? God's timings are different from ours! It may have been to give the people time to turn back to him or to bring people to a place where they knew they need to turn back to him in their desperation.

Obadiah was a believer – a righteous man – and yet he works for Ahab, can we reconcile these two things? Was Obadiah sinning or was he exercising faith by working for Ahab? Obadiah's name means "Yahweh's servant" and in many ways he is acting as God's provision just as the ravens and widow were God's provision through his hiding of the other prophets. Obadiah works for an evil king but he uses his position to serve God.

Obadiah has been secretly hiding prophets away from Jezebel and Ahab at great risk to himself. What would it look like for you to take a risk for your faith? What might hold you back and what would give you courage?

Obadiah's faithfulness in hiding prophets is very different from the very direct and confrontational faithfulness of Elijah, what does this tell us about different ways to stand for God? *God uses all sorts of people for his kingdom! We are all called to serve God but at different times of our lives it may look different.*

Obadiah is very hesitant to obey Elijah and call Ahab to meet him. What are some of the reasons he gives for not doing it and what are some of the reasons we give when we think God is asking us to do something?

Obadiah is scared for his life and in v15 Elijah promises him that he will not disappear when Ahab arrives and he promises using God's title of the "Lord of Hosts". Why would this be a comfort to Obadiah? *It's a comfort to know that however powerful Ahab and Jezebel are with their seeming power to kill Obadiah if they so choose, they are no match for the God who controls the armies of heaven! When we face opposition we can remember that God is for us and not against us and nothing is outside his power.*

Many of us work for secular businesses and organisations and while it's unlikely we're at risk of being killed for our faith it can still be difficult to be a Christian in the workplace. How can we be praying for each other in our different places of work?

Week 6 (links to sermon on 21/02/21) Walking by faith, Passages 1 Kings 18:16-39

After three years it doesn't appear Ahab's attitude has changed at all and he blames Elijah for the situation Israel is in. Why does Ahab try and shift the blame to Elijah and do we find that we do that ourselves sometimes? *It's often so much easier to blame others for our own mistakes!*

We live in a culture where people effectively say, "You've got your God and that's great for you and I've got my God and that's great for me". How does Elijah challenge that type of thinking with his contest? *The Israelites at the time may have had the attitude that they could worship Baal and Yahweh interchangeably but Elijah doesn't give them that option. He says v21+24 that you have to choose, you can't follow both. We live in a very individualistic post-truth society that says your truth is for you and mine is for me but we have a God who says I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the Father except through me John 14:6.*

We may not worship other gods but we can easily slide into our own form of idol worship? What does that look like and how can we resist the temptation to worship things other than God?

Both Baal's prophets and Elijah pray, but their prayers are vastly different! What do their prayers reveal about both of the different God(s) they believe in? *Both prayers are fervent but Elijah doesn't need to sing and dance to be heard by his God. He can come before his Lord and friend and we don't have to convince God to listen to us through the things we do. We are accepted as we come through Jesus. A follow up question could be thinking if there are times that we can think to ourselves if I just pray harder/spend more time in devotions/serve in more areas then God will listen to me?*

What is the significance of the altar that Elijah uses for his sacrifice in verses 30-31? *Elijah repairs the broken altar and it's as if God is offering to repair his relationship with the Israelites. It comes through the altar where sacrifice is made for the forgiveness of sins. It's also a sign of unity taking into account all the tribes of Israel (12 stones) as well as looking back (v31) to remind the people of the faithfulness of God that goes all the way back to the sons of Jacob and beyond!*

God answers Elijah's prayers and the people respond by declaring that the Lord is God! What happened in a time when God clearly responded to your prayer?

Pray: Elijah has a real heart for the people to turn their hearts back to God v36-37. Who can we be praying for to have a real "fire from heaven" that they may know that the Lord is God?

Week 7 (links to sermon on 28/02/21) Walking through despair, Passages 1 Kings 18:40-ch19:9 and Mathew 12:15-21

(Note you might want to ask this question first and then pray for the study) There is a real difference between the way Elijah boldly prayed for fire to come down in ch. 18 and how he comes before God in v42 (almost certainly in prayer). What does this tell us about the different ways we can approach God?

Read 1 Kings 18:40 – ch19:9

There is also a real difference between God's swift answer to prayer for fire to come down in ch. 18 and the seemingly slow response to send rain from Elijah's prayers in v41. What does this tell us about the process of prayer and how God answers it? *Elijah is as certain of rain as he was of the fire being poured down from heaven (also v41). He is certain God's Word to him will come to pass. But this time he is patient and persistent with waiting for God to come through for him.*

Elijah seems to think the battle is over and he runs (superhumanly fast) ahead of Ahab back to the palace (probably signifying the Word of God leading the king) where he expects Ahab to turn back to God after seeing the fire and rain. And yet he doesn't, in fact quite the opposite happens and Jezebel threatens to kill him! Why do you think this later leads to Elijah asking God to take his life? *Elijah has seen God do incredible things and yet it seems that nothing has changed! God's power has been disregarded! It can be difficult when people we love hear the Gospel and yet don't change and Elijah feels like he has not been able to do what God has called him to do.*

Elijah has gone from the spiritual high of his victory at Mount Carmel to a spiritual low needing to run for his life? Spiritual highs and lows often seem to go hand in hand (Jesus' baptism and temptation). Why do you think that is often the case?

Elijah is both physically and mentally exhausted and he asks God to take his life because he feels like he has failed. When we fail God (or feel like we have) how do we sometimes respond?

Rather than answer Elijah's prayer to grant him death God sends an angel on two occasions. What can we tell about God in the way that he cares for him in verses v5-8? *God doesn't rebuke Elijah for his request but instead lets him sleep and then provides food and water. God cares about the physical and spiritual lives of his people. He is God of the body just as much as he is of our hearts.*

Read Matthew 12:15-21

How does Jesus show the same care to us that he showed to Elijah and the sick in this passage?

Response: God does not promise to take depression away and it can affect Christians just as much as anyone else. As a group pray for those who may be going through difficult times at the moment and seek God for his care in the present and trust and look forward to the day that is coming where Jesus will wipe all tears away.

Week 8 (links to sermon on 07/03/21) Walking with renewed purpose Passage 1 Kings 19:9-18

Read 1 Kings 19:9-18

Elijah travels 40 days and night to Horeb which is another name for Mount Sinai. Why do you think Elijah travelled to that particular mountain to speak to God about Israel? *Mt. Sinai is the place of covenant and promise and it's where God declares again that Israel will be his people. And yet Elijah is struggling to see God's promises being fulfilled so he goes to the source of the promise, God at Mt Sinai.*

God being God knows exactly why Elijah had come so why do you think he asks Elijah twice "what are you doing here Elijah"? *God is kind to Elijah and lets him pour out his heart to Him with all its anger and frustration. It is an invitation for Elijah to be totally honest before God. God always knows what we need but he asks us to come to him with it in prayer as part of the process to change us.*

What is Elijah's frustration that he brings God about? What can you relate to in his complaint and what could he let go of for his own benefit? *Elijah is frustrated about the lack of belief of those around him. He is broken to see God's words disregarded by those around him. It may be that we need to pray to be more broken by the lostness we see around us in our city, more earnest to see God's name honoured and lifted high rather than rejected. While Elijah's zeal is to be commended it is not all on him to bring back the people to God. It is beyond his power but it is not beyond God's and God sets in motion his plans. He calls Elijah to a mission he is able to fulfil and he calls him to obedience and faithfulness to that call.*

What do you think is the significance of God not being in the wind, earthquake and fire but instead speaking in a whisper? *There's a lot of avenues you could think about with this but here are some! 1. Although the wind, earthquake and fire are powerful they are nothing compared to the power of God's words. In the next verses God tells Elijah his new mission and it's through God's word that the whole political and spiritual landscape is going to change. 2. Although God can reveal himself in dramatic ways it is most often in his Word that we should expect to hear him. We often need to find times of silence and quietness to pursue our relationship with God and hear from him. 3. God had "spoken" to the Israelites before on that very same mountain through lightening and thunder (Exodus 19:16) but in this instance God gives Elijah what he needs and speaks to him gently.*

How has God's quiet voice spoken to you in the past?

God tells Elijah that he has protected 7,000 people who are faithful to him and he also tells him to go and raise up Elisha as the next prophet. Why do you think that this was important for Elijah to hear? *Elijah had been alone for quite some time. He had been alone before the prophets of Baal, he sends his servant away 19:3 and we know from his coming before God at Horeb that he feels like he's completely alone in his faithfulness. Although God is always with us it's also really important that we have community around us to help us in our walk with Jesus. It also gives Elijah a wider perspective*

on what God is actually doing rather than just what Elijah can see. God is at work even when we can't see it!

Response: God recommissions Elijah into the calling he sets out for him. What do you think God is calling you to? How can you pray for each other as a Community as you consider what God is calling you to do?

Week 9 (links to sermon 21/03/21) Walking with Others, Passage 1 Kings 19:19-21 and 2 Kings 2:7-14

Read 1 Kings 19:19-21

In v10 and v14 of chapter 19 one of the things Elijah is struggling with is his feeling of being alone in standing up for God. And yet God tells him he is not alone and in our passage today we see Elisha raised up to work alongside Elijah. If God is always with us why is it important to also have other Christians around us? *God calls us to be part of a family and body of Christians so we were always designed to be alongside other Christians in our walk with God. A large portion of the New Testament is given to writings about how we should act towards one another as brothers and sisters. God uses His people around us to teach, encourage, challenge and love us!*

In v21 Elisha sacrifices the oxen we see him working with in v19. What does that show about Elisha's attitude to his new calling to follow Elijah? *Elisha is saying goodbye to his old life and he is not looking back. He knows God has called him to serve in a specific way and he is getting rid of anything that might hold him back from serving God with his whole heart. It is often costly to follow Jesus whole heartedly but it is what Jesus asks for and he will bless it! See Mark 10:28-31*

V21 tells us that Elisha's first call to serve was Elijah's servant. How does this challenge the way we sometimes approach serving? *One of the idols we can face when serving is wanting to be noticed by others and wanting to serve in areas that are considered more important than others. Jesus calls us all to be servants and even he himself came to be a servant. See Matthew 20:25-28. Do we find it easy to serve in the small seemingly insignificant ways that God asks us to?*

Read 2 Kings 2:7-14

In Exodus 14 Moses parts the Red Sea and then in Joshua 3 Moses' successor Joshua parts the river Jordan. Here in our 2 Kings passage Elijah parts the river Jordan and he and Elisha cross over. Finally at the end of our passage Elisha also parts the Jordan and crosses back over. What is God saying through this? *God is faithful to his people, when he raises people up he gives them the power and the tools to do what he calls them to do – God gives people himself by the power of his Holy Spirit! God's plans and purposes will continue to be completed by his people till he returns! We may fear for the future generations and the things they will face as believers but God is faithful!*

In v9 Elisha asks for a double portion of Elijah's spirit and while this is a specific request from God's chosen prophet (in the God's Spirit is fully available to all believers since Pentecost) it highlights the respect and admiration Elisha has for Elijah and all that he has done in God's name. Who are the Christians in your life or Christians from history who have inspired you? What was it about them that made you want to be more like them? *Leaders note – Elisha's request mirrors that of an*

oldest son and his father. A father would give a double portion of his inheritance to his first-born son and Elisha here is asking for that inheritance but in spiritual rather than material terms.

Before Elijah is taken up to heaven he is able to talk and share with Elisha and prepare him to be the next prophet to Israel. What one word of advice, encouragement or warning would you pass on to the next generation of Christians who are following after you in their own Christian walk?

Response: Pray for the next generation of Christians in our church whoever that may be for you!
All of us are at different points in our Christian walk and there are always those who are following on after us just a few steps behind us – the next generation! Is there a way you can use your answer to the previous question to bless people in the church?