



Session 6: Waiting On The Whirlwind

As [Elijah and Elisha] were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, "My father! My Father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two
2 KINGS 2:11-12



CONNECT

When have you had a surprising encounter with the natural world?

What is your most striking memory from a funeral or a graveside service?



WATCH

Watch the video for this session, Below is an outline of the key points covered during the teaching. Record any key concepts that stand out to you.

OUTLINE

I. God Promises to come at an unexpected hour and take us to our eternal home.

- A. Since we don't know that new world, we aren't sure we want to go.
- B. But we don't need to fear that future moment, because our God is a good Father.

II. Elijah began his story in a blaze of glory and exited in the same way.

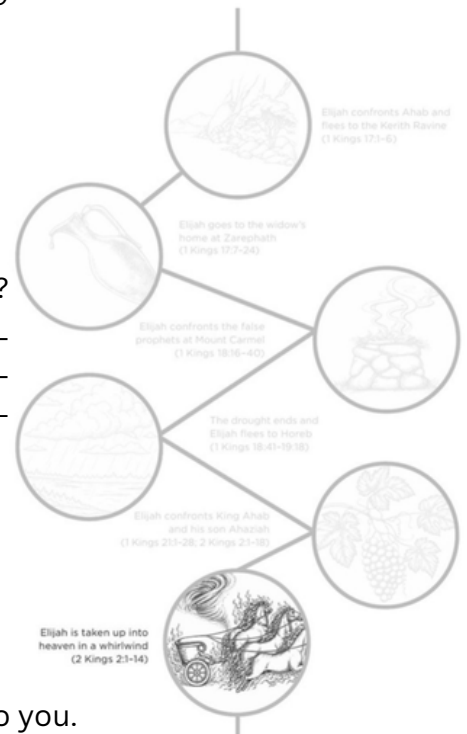
- A. Elijah's final day was spent in the company of his protege Elisha
- B. Fellow prophets told Elisha that his master would be taken that day.
- C. Elijah was visiting training grounds for future prophets in Bethel, Jericho, and the Jordan
- D. We don't know how Elijah responded to the news that his final day on earth had come.
- E. Ultimately, a chariot of fire appeared, and Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind.

III. Elijah teaches us how to live with courage *and* how to face our final days with faith

- A. We all have a start date and an end date, known by God before we were born.
- B. We cannot control our time of death, but we can control what we do with the time we're given.
- C. Until we die or Jesus returns, we have work to do - beginning with the Great Commission.

IV. At the end of the day, what can we learn from Elijah's story?

- A. We can be a beacon of uncompromised faith even if we are in the middle of a compromised generation.
- B. We follow in Elijah's footsteps by believing what he believed - that the God of Israel lives!
- C. Draw near to God. Keep believing and growing. Let your faith be steadfast in him.





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Discuss

Discuss what you just watched by answering the following questions.

1. Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 15:51-57. Death is a subject that most of us want avoid, but we know that an “extraction” from this world is coming. Growing up, how was the subject of death dealt with in your family? What does Paul say about death in this passage - what comfort does it bring you as a follower of Christ?

2. Jesus, on the night before his death, told his disciples, My father's house has many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? (John 14: 2). What comes to mind when you picture the “house” with “rooms” that Jesus is preparing for you? How does that imagery bring you hope?

3. Ask someone to read 2 Kings 2:1-14 out loud. What is the significance of Elijah visiting Bethel, Jericho and the Jordan regions on the last day of his life on earth? What are your impressions of Elisha based on his actions in this passage?

4. James said, “Life is like a mist. You can see it for a short time, but then it goes away” (James 4:14 NCV). You cannot control the inevitability of death, but you can decide what you will do between now and then. For those of us who are not prophets like Elijah, what does God expect from us as we live, work, play and minister each day?

5. At the end of the day, what is your biggest takeaway from Elijah's life? What have you learned from his story that will help you to have unbreakable courage?



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Respond

Paul wrote that as a servant of Christ he had been in prison frequently, flogged severely and “exposed to death again and again” (2 Corinthians 11:23). During one such imprisonment, likely in Rome, he wrote the letter of Philippians. Paul was under threat of death at the time and was scheduled to appear before an emperor known to despise follower of Jesus. With the benefit of history, we know that Paul was released from jail - for a time. He went on to plant more churches and spread the Gospel even farther throughout the known world. But at the time he wrote his letter to the Christians in Philippi, he had no idea what was going to happen. Would he live or die? Continue to server or transition to heaven?

Paul’s meditations on those two options have encouraged followers of Jesus Christ for nearly two thousand years:

21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall i choose i do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: i desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that i remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, i know that i will remain; and i will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through by being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me. Philippians 1:12-2

What benefit did Paul see from being granted his freedom and allowed to continue his ministry? What benefit fid he see if he ended up being martyred for his faith?

Paul referred to his work as “fruitful labour.” What is your labour for God’s kingdom here on earth? in other words, what is the work that God has set aside for you to accomplish?

Pray

Conclude this session by celebrating the fact that God has prepared an eternal home for all his children. Affirm your desire to be a productive member of God’s kingdom for what ever time he has granted you to be here on earth. Ask the Holy Spirit to imprint on your heart the lessons from Elijah’s life that he wants you to learn and apply, finally, for one last time in this study, use the space below to write down any requests that you and your group members have so you can pray about them in the weeks and months ahead