

Living Your Assignment

Opening text: 1 Kings 19:19-21

Introduction:

Elijah was a prophet who lived at a time when Israel, especially the northern kingdom, was ruled by kings who were degenerate, vicious and cruel and who didn't serve God but rather Babylonian and Assyrian deities (around the 6th century BC).

Elijah's assignment was to bring God's word and demonstrate God's power to a people that were far from God. Today, God is still using people to do that. God is still announcing His plan to people who are far away from Him.

This passage relates to a time when the prophet emerges from a time of deep discouragement. Elijah felt overwhelmed but God visited him in a cave and renewed him.

Elijah felt alone and as if he was fighting a losing battle. However, God brought Elisha into his life, not just to be his intern but also to encourage him.

- God is into teamwork. We can do so much more if we work together!

Deut. 32:30 - *How could one chase a thousand,^[L]And two put ten thousand to flight,^[L]Unless their Rock had sold them,^[L]And the Lord had surrendered them?*

- God is also into generations.

No one generation can do everything. The Lord was calling Elijah to stop weeping over his past and running away from his present. The time had come to start preparing others for the future – Elisha was going to be positioned as a future prophet to Israel.

Today, I want to look at this encounter between Elijah and Elisha.

- 1. It was not just a casual encounter. It was not just something random or accidental, but it was one of those life-changing, God-moments.**

God doesn't do random or accidental.

Elijah saw more than a man working the ground in the sweat of his face - he saw a man about to be anointed and appointed to live life in a different dimension – a man who was about to be plugged into his life's assignment!

- Two men meet but they are at two different levels: one comes from the presence of God in the mountain and has just experienced God move in his life. The other, Elisha, is at work in the field, and at that point is unaware of any divine plan for his life. One is on a divine mission, the other just fulfilling the basic mission of natural life, which is to work and make a living.

- Most people I know perhaps stand where Elisha is standing when he met the prophet: living life in the natural dimension, unaware that God created them for a specific assignment. However, God had a mission lined up for Elisha. His very name indicated the assignment he was born for: “God saves”.

At the time of their meeting, God had already been speaking to the prophet about Elisha (previous verses). I am sure that Elisha had no idea that he was that important to God. Maybe God’s been speaking to angels about you and you don’t know it!

- 2. Today’s message is really about letting you know that God has as an assignment for your life. You can live in this natural dimension or you can be bold and embrace a life driven by a sense of assignment and divine purpose. You can live a missional life!**

(When I say “mission’, I am referring to the assignment of God for your life, the purpose for which you were created, the high calling He has for you).

If you’ve ever wondered about the secret to a happy and fulfilled life, here it is: **finding your assignment and living the reason for which you were born.**

I stand here today like a bit like Elijah who stood before Elisha pointing him to the reason why he was born: To proclaim that ‘God saves’ to people far away from Him and to demonstrate His power to them. I stand here to declare today that **God wants you enter into His mission.**

- 3. Elisha could have resisted the call**

- After all his hands were full – literally. He was ploughing with 12 yokes of oxen. His lands must have been quite sizeable.
- Not only his hands were full but he had much at stake: In order to have that many cattle and land he must have been very wealthy.
- Lastly there was also the expectation of his parents. Elisha had to count the cost.

He did and he responded to the call, regardless of the cost. He didn’t dishonour the parents but came back to them.

However, once the decision was made, he didn’t want to ever look back: he burned the things that didn’t belong in his future – in his new life of purpose.

Luke 9:62: *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

- Elisha was working with oxen when the prophet found him
- Saul was looking for donkeys when Samuel found him to make him king
- David was tending the sheep
- Amos was also tending sheep when King Amaziah came to him.

Amos 7:14 *“Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: “I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, But I was a sheep breeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.”*

- Nehemiah was in the King’s kitchen when God called him to rebuild Jerusalem.
- Peter was fishing when Jesus found him.

All of these men had a natural occupation, but they also experienced one of those God-moments when **one suddenly connects with the higher purposes of God and find the assignment for which they were born.**

I am today encouraging you towards that shift: find your calling, find your place in the great mission of God. That is not to say that you are to neglect the natural side of things. No. This is simply to encourage you not to stay at that level but to embrace your assignment in life.

“Well, I thought that only Pastors and missionaries have a calling”. No, we are all called and we all have an assignment in God:

Hebrews 3:1 - *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,*

2 Tim.1:9 - *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,*

1 Peter 4:10 - *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Ephesians 2:10 - *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Conclusion

1. **Live a missional life:** You are part of God’s plan for mankind. Live life driven by your heavenly assignment.
2. **Pursue and acknowledge God-moments** and God encounters
3. **Trim away excess** and things that do not belong in your calling. Never look back.
4. **Look for opportunities.** Take risks and embrace what God puts in front of you.