



BELLVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

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Pentecost 2003

2 Kings 2:1-15

John 14:5-21

~ **Brent Russell** ~

- I spoke last week about the **OT and the NT**
- How the two work together
- How the OT points to the NT
- And that if you want to read the OT and make it relevant you need to **look for Jesus**
- And particularly we looked at how the OT contains **copies of the realities**
- The author of **Hebrews** calls these things **Shadows**
- **The OT priesthood was a shadow of the real priesthood of Jesus**
- Today I want to look at another idea in this line
- **A shadow** that may help us understand the real thing far more clearly

Won't you turn with me to 2 Kings 2:1-15

- We have the **great prophet Elijah** who has come to the end of his time on earth
 - God has chosen him like Enoch to be **taken up into heaven without tasting death**
 - But before he goes **Elisha wants a double portion of the Holy Spirit**
 - **Of Elijah's spirit**
 - Before Pentecost the **Holy Spirit did not work as He works now**
 - The Holy Spirit was **not given to every one**
 - The Holy Spirit was **given as God chose** to give
 - And it seems that in places the giving was **also not permanent**
 - **The Holy Spirit worked in a different way to what he does now**
 - Secondly in the OT the Holy Spirit was seen to be **passed between generations**
 - In fact we see this in the NT when **John the Baptist** comes people were saying it is Elijah that has come back
 - So the spirit of a prophet would be seen to span many generations
 - Almost as we would **pass a surname down** to our children
 - **So to was the specific ministry of the Holy Spirit passed down**
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- So in our OT story we find Elisha desiring a double portion of Elijah's spirit
 - **Double blessing, double effectiveness**
 - Elisha is not satisfied with the same he wants **something bigger and better**
 - He wanted a **super-size portion Elijah's spirit**
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- And as Elijah is taken up into the heavens he **drops his robe**
 - **And it is a symbolic passing on of power**
 - **A Passing on of his spirit to Elisha**
 - Now the Bible can be a little bland...if it was written very descriptively it would be huge
 - So let me **expand the story slightly**
 - **Imagine you are Elisha standing on the banks of the Jordan**
 - Imagine Elisha standing staring up - gobsmacked at what he has just seen

- But at the same time bitterly disappointed
- He expected something awesome to happen as Elijah's spirit was transferred
- **Maybe Elisha too was expecting a charismatic experience**
- Shaking, and falling down
- But all that he is given is a lousy robe
- So he picks it up frustrated, hurt, disappointed - ANGRY

- And listen to how he speaks
- Imagine his thought - Big deal all I have this lousy stupid robe
- "OK God where are you now" and almost tauntingly he hits the water and
- Whoosh the waters part
- Suddenly he realizes that he has indeed being given Elijah's spirit

- Elisha has a very **different ministry to Elijah**
- But he does indeed **do twice as many miracles as Elijah did**
- **Clearly having received a double portion of His spirit**

- **Once again we are looking at shadows of the truth that was to come at Pentecost**
- **On ascension day we have Jesus ascending on the clouds**
- **Sitting at the right hand of God**
- **and at Pentecost sending us His Spirit with great power**

Read John 14:5-21

We will do even greater things than these

- Jesus promises us that we will do **even greater miracles** that he did
- **Like Elisha who desired a double portion of Elijah's spirit**
- **We too can desire a double portion**
- An abundant **blessing**
- An amazing **power**
 - **Compassion** greater than that which Jesus showed the adulteress
 - **Wisdom and insight** greater than that which he showed the woman at the well
 - **Greater miracles** than the resurrection of Lazarus
 - **Maybe even better parties** than the wedding at Cana
- **Gifts and abilities that will astound us beyond our wildest dreams**
- **We too can inherit this double portion of the Holy Spirit**

The robe lies at your feet - what are you going to do about it?

- We have this **promise**
 - promise of **power**
 - The promise of **miracles**
 - Promise **authority**
 - Promise of **Eternal life**
- **And in some sense we are standing at the banks of the Jordan**
- **And Jesus has gone to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God**
- **And he has dropped his robe in the sand at our feet**
- **Are we standing like Elisha**
- **Staring up at the heavens?**
- **Are we waiting for something to happen**

- **It has happened**
- It happened at **Pentecost** - the spirit has been sent with all of Jesus authority
- And like the robe it lies at our feet

- **The question is what are you going to do with it**

- The robe **symbolized the spiritual authority and power** that had been given to Elijah
- And it was now passed to Elisha

- And as this power and authority was there for Elisha's taking so it is for us

- **The Holy Spirit is everything we need**
- **Every gift to bless the church**
- **Every fruit to bring peace in our relationships**

- **The Holy Spirit gives us all the spiritual power we could ever hope for**
- **The Holy Spirit gives us all the authority in heaven and earth**
- The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to **greater miracles** than Jesus
- **As Elisha became even more powerful than Elijah**
- **so to we will be able to many miracles of even greater magnitude than Jesus**

- **In His name and by His authority we have all the power the created the universe at our disposal**
- **However not all have picked up the robe**
- **The robe is lying at your feet - what are you going to do with it**

- **It is lying in the sand calling us**
- **It is telling us of its power**

- yet we circle it like we would a **poisonous snake**
 - **Fearful of it's power**
 - **Fearful that it bites**
 - **Fearful because we do not full understand it**
 - **Without the Holy Spirit we are dead**
 - If we leave the robe in the sand we are dead
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- **Twice in 2 Corinthians and in Ephesians Paul tells us the Holy Spirit is our guarantee of eternal life**
 - Let me put it this simply
 - **No spirit - no life**
 - **The robe is at your feet - what are you going to do with it**
 - **Others still have like Elisha picked up the robe but have not realized the power they have**
 - It is like picking up a **treasure chest**
 - Thinking that's pretty
 - I'll put it on the mantelpiece
 - But never opening the chest
 - **Never finding the treasure hidden inside**
 - Perhaps it is only when we in frustration call on the Holy Spirit
 - **We hit the water with the robe wondering Ok where is God**
 - **And suddenly we are confronted by the awesome power of the living God**
 - **We realize that the chest contains a treasure beyond measure**
 - **The robe lies at your feet - What are you going to do with it**
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- It lies in the sand
 - Full of power
 - Full of life
 - Full of everything we could ever need

- Maybe you have never understood that you need the Holy Spirit if you want eternal life
- Maybe you are empty and need a refill - we all leak like sieves
- Maybe you have not understood the fullness of the power you have through the Holy Spirit

- **The robe lies at your feet - Are you going to pick it up?**