

ELISHA, THE WATER BOY

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel’s servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.”

II Kings 3:11

Elijah and Elisha, two of the most recognized and powerful prophets of the Old Testament, are mentioned in II Kings 3:11. Elijah’s name is synonymous with faith, courage, and spiritual zeal. He announced a prolonged time of drought to Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, and then faced 850 false prophets on Mt. Carmel. Elijah called down fire from Heaven. When it came time for him to leave the earth, he was taken to Heaven in a whirlwind. During his time of spiritual service, Elijah was instructed by God to anoint the man that would be his successor. His name was Elisha. Just before Elijah went to Heaven, Elisha requested that he might have a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. God would greatly use Elisha. God worked many miracles through his ministry, including raising someone from the dead.

In our text, Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah. The king was looking for a man of God to advise a confederation of kings about a military campaign. When Jehoshaphat inquired about a prophet of the Lord, Elisha was recommended to him. Elisha was referred to as being the one “which poured water on the hands of Elijah.” These were his credentials. He had been a faithful servant of Elijah.

Here is a great lesson for our consideration. What did Elisha do before he became the mighty prophet of God that he was? He was known as a servant of Elijah. Elisha

ministered to Elijah, helping with menial tasks, including washing the hands of his mentor. Elisha became a mighty man of God, but he received his training as the servant of Elijah.

This is the way spiritual lessons are learned and spiritual leaders are formed. It is called discipleship, or mentoring. It involves serving others and learning from those we serve. This cannot be overemphasized. Having a college degree is a worthy goal, but that in itself does not make a servant of God. Servants learn by serving. It is not unusual to find people who want to be spiritual leaders who have never been servants. If a person feels he is too good to serve others, he is not fit to lead others. We prepare to lead by following, and we are trained for service by serving.