

2 Kings 2:1-12

The importance of witness and telling

As Elijah's time on earth comes to an end, his faithful disciple, Elisha, asks to inherit double what his master has that makes him a great prophet. Elijah is taken up to heaven in a whirlwind on a fiery chariot. Elisha witnesses this and receives Elijah's mantle, symbolizing his succession as a prophet.



Write

Imagine you are writing a postcard to a friend telling them something about God. What would you write? Take a sheet of paper, write this down and possibly share with others you live with.

WALK

Go out for a walk. Where do you notice glimpses of God around you? Keep a record of these either by writing them down, or by taking a photo or making a note on your phone. Can you find a way to tell others the glimpses that you have noticed?

ACT

At the start of the week, set yourself or your family a challenge – to witness to God in whatever way works best for you. This might be talking to someone about God, getting involved in a social action campaign, supporting a neighbour, or saying good morning to everyone you meet on the way to school or work.

Bible notes



This is a masterclass in storytelling. The opening sentence tells us what will happen, but the rest of the narrative bristles with tension as we wait to see how the first sentence will come about. Three times Elijah tells Elisha to stay put. Three times he refuses. Twice the other prophets tell Elisha that today is the day when Elijah will leave them. Three times Elisha says, 'I know'. Everyone knows what is about to happen and yet we strain forward to see how it all ends. Clearly Elijah intended Elisha to be with him; so why did he tell him not to accompany him to the next place? Is this some kind of test to see how ready Elisha is to take on the role Elijah has had? Finally, they arrive at the location of the climax to Elijah's story. And the old prophet offers a final gift. Elisha wants double what his master has. And while they carry on walking and talking – what was the topic of their conversation? – the chariot of God comes and carries Elijah off. This leaves Elisha – who was expecting some such thing to happen – crying out in grief and amazement: grief at the loss of his mentor, amazement at the mode of his departure. And he is left with his grief – but not for long.

First impressions

- What stands out for you in the story of Elisha and Elijah?
- When have you caught a glimpse of the glory of God?
- How do this week's transfiguration stories challenge or encourage you?



A prayer of adoration

Inspirational God, from little acts of faith, you bring huge transformation; from little acts of trust, you bring huge opportunities; from little seeds, you bring huge growth; from little steps, you bring huge progress; from little showings of love, you draw us into your huge heart, and hold us as one – for you are our all, forever. Amen.

REFLECT

Today is Racial Justice Sunday. What different kinds of racial injustice are there? How could each of these be countered? Listen to 'Swing low, sweet chariot', inspired by our first reading and used by oppressed people to encourage them with hope. As you listen, consider how far you would go in being a witness for Christian values and standing up for justice.