

LIVING A LIFE OF DOUBLE PORTION — Part I

by Carter Conlon

The Quest: The search for the life of double portion. How do I find it? How do I get there? How do I appropriate the double portion? And once I have it, what is the outworking of this in my life? And if I live a life of double portion in God, what will I leave behind when I die? The life of Elisha gives some very clear answers.

2 Kings 2:9-10 says: *"And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he (Elijah) said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so."*

Elijah knew that the double portion was not his to give. This is why he said it's "a hard thing." In effect he was saying, "Elisha, if you had asked for anything that I was able to give, I would have given it to you."

I think of a church age where people are running throughout the country, even throughout parts of the world, looking for men who will give them what only God can give. Elijah made this very clear, "It isn't mine to give you... If you had asked for something I could give you I would have given it to you, but you've asked for something that only God can give."

■ WHAT IS THE DOUBLE PORTION?

It's important to understand the double portion, and why Elisha was asking for it. In a Jewish family when the father died or was taken away, his children received an equal portion of his goods,

except for the firstborn, who received a double portion. He didn't inherit the entire estate, but he received twice as much as everyone else.

Once we have come to Christ, we're no longer outsiders begging God for a few crumbs from his table. We are sons and daughters of the living God. In Romans 8:17 we read that not only are we heirs of God, but joint-heirs, co-heirs, and equal partners in the inheritance with Christ. This means the inheritance of the Firstborn, the only begotten Son of God, is mine! Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and is seated in glory at the right hand of God—and I am in line for the double portion because of Him.

■ THEY BOW BUT THEY WON'T OBEY

In 2 Kings 2:15, the scripture says, *"The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him."*

In this passage the prophets bowed before Elisha and acknowledged that he was a man of God, and that God's word emanated from him. They realized that the Spirit that was upon Elijah now rested on this man, but despite this, they would not believe what they were hearing. *"And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send"* (2 Kings 2:16).

Now this is interesting. These prophets bow but they won't obey! They

acknowledge Elisha as a vessel of God, and that God's will is revealed through him. Yet they will not obey the word they are hearing—"Ye shall not send." These prophets represent the type of person who claims to have faith but the faith is mixed with unbelief and human reasoning. This is the downfall of some in the church of Jesus Christ today, this mixture of faith and reason that says, "God is able, sort of." It is one thing to acknowledge the anointing and presence of God, but another to possess the double portion.

Once Elisha had received what he had asked for, he began to understand how deeply God feels when men bow before what they perceive to be his presence, and yet do not obey him. Jesus Christ was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was grieved at men who only gave him lip service and did not obey him. I don't know if you've experienced this, but as a pastor I have also known the sorrow in my heart of seeing people who claim to worship before God, but yet will not obey.

■ MISCARRIED WOMBS AND FRUITLESS LABOR

2 Kings 2:17 says, *"And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not."* Just think of all the unnecessary energy these prophets expended, energy that could have been channeled to true praise and worship, the true service of God and faith. They were on a fruitless search, exhausting the strength of many. God was not there, and it was a fruitless work! There are many today who are on a fruitless search—looking in the wrong places for the presence of God—the double portion.

“And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth, but the water is naught and the ground is barren” (2 Kings 2:19).

The men in Jericho participated in building what they believed to be pleasant cities, but inside these cities was bad water. Some say that these waters had caused miscarrying wombs in both animals and humans, and the crops would not grow. This was a place of great hope that only ended in fruitless labor. People would toil and hope; they planted and hoped for a harvest, but their planting was futile.

And so today you have people who place their hope in institutions that profess to be speaking for God. They hold out great hope, but there is no power or strength to bring forth true life. The needy come to the altar hoping to be freed, but no freedom comes; hoping to change, but no change comes.

These are the barren places to which God sends the man or woman with the double portion in his efforts to bring healing. The Bible says Elisha called for a new vessel and then he called for salt. Through this new vessel, an inward purifying power came into the water and the water was healed. Until you walk in the double portion, understanding and desiring the life of Christ with all it brings, you will never have a

word that will bring healing. You may bring hope but no healing.

■ FIRST - A JOURNEY OF FAITH (BETHEL)

2 Kings 2:2 says, *“And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.”*

Before possessing this double portion, Elisha had to undertake a journey; likewise, it is a purposeful journey that we also must undertake. The life of Christ is never imposed on you or me—we have the option given to us from God. The double portion is the life of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit abiding in me.

We see in the scripture that Bethel is the place of hearing and believing. Elijah was not taking a sentimental journey. This was about God wanting a successor to Elijah. In every generation he’s looking for successors. I’m not just talking about specific, powerfully anointed men and women of God; I’m talking about a successor to the true church. Every church has to beget a church. Fifty years from now most of us will be dead, but there will be another church. The question is will we have led them to the double portion? What will they have found from our lives? Where will we have taken them? We will not be able to take them any farther than we ourselves have gone.

Bethel is also where Abraham heard God, moved in God, pitched his tent and built an altar—that’s Bethel. It’s a place of saying, “God, I’m hearing you, and I’m moving with you.” The scripture tells us clearly that Abraham didn’t know where he was going, but he heard and obeyed. And God said, “I’m going to bless you; I’m going to multiply you; your descendants will be greater than the sand of the sea. I’m going to bless the world through you.” I know that God is still speaking today through

the example of the life of Abraham to his church. He is saying to us, “I’m going to use you, I’m going to bless you, and I’m going to multiply you. I’m going to make you greater than you are. Your descendants will be greater than the sand of the sea.” Abraham was old; he didn’t even have a son, but he heard and believed. He got up and said, “I’m pitching my tent in the land; I don’t care what anybody else does. I’m pitching my tent to a God who is speaking to my heart through his Word. I’m building an altar and I’m going to worship him there. I’m going to trust him with all of my life.” That’s Bethel, and that’s the Christian life!

■ SECOND - A JOURNEY OF TRUST (JERICHO)

Again Elijah and Elisha move on and the scripture says, in 2 Kings 2:4, *“And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.”*

Jericho is the place of conquering worship. It’s a place of quietness and confidence in God. It’s where the man says, “I’ve heard his word and I believe God.” It was at Jericho that Joshua met Christ himself and took off his shoes (Joshua 5). It is also the place where human plans die and faith in God begins to take over. It’s where seven priests bearing seven trumpets and rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord went before the people. They marched around and around a city that was impossible to conquer in the natural. And all they were doing was worshipping. They were just blowing the trumpets and their instruction from God was, “Be quiet.” It is the same for us today. Say nothing! God has spoken, and nothing needs to be said. Just start walking and worshipping God. Start trusting God that everything he said he would do, he has the strength to perform. He is not a man that he should lie, and when he speaks, he will do what he says he will do.

WHAT WILL BE OUR LEGACY?

Fifty years from now most of us will be dead and there will be another church. The question is, will we have led them to the double portion? What will they have found from our lives? Where will we have taken them? We won’t take them any farther than we ourselves have gone.

■ THIRD - JOURNEY OF MOVING IN TO POSSESS (JORDAN)

2 Kings 2:6 says, “*And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.*” And again, the two went on.

Now throughout scripture Jordan is symbolic of the place where we cross over to possess the promises of God. The water symbolizes the obstacles that are before us, and it is by faith that we walk through those obstacles, moving from the natural to the supernatural.

Many Christians today live in the wilderness where it is dry, a place where there is no satisfaction. They may be Christians, but they are living on the wrong side of Jordan. Once in a while somebody says, “I’m going over, I’m going to possess the land; God has something for me and I’m going to cross the Jordan to possess it.” The crossing over the Jordan to possess the double portion is an individual choice that every believer makes with Jesus Christ alone. He’s the only one who can take us over.

■ RECEIVING THE DOUBLE PORTION

When they had gone over, Elijah said to Elisha, “What will I do for you?” By today’s standards Elisha would have said, “I would like a Cadillac, and I’d like more position and power and status in the community. I’d like a wife. I’d like a nice house.” Do you see the wrong in what many people are asking God for? Elisha said, “I want a double portion of the Spirit of God that is on you. Spiritually speaking, Elijah, I want the son’s inheritance that comes through you.” And that is the cry of every true Christian to Jesus Christ. It is not something that is presumptuous. It is the right of the sons and daughters of God to have this double portion, which is the life of Christ being lived in and through you. Elijah said something very interesting to Elisha, “This is a hard thing.” In other words, he was

saying, “This is not something that can be given by man, but if you see me when I am taken, it shall be yours, and if not, it shall not be so.”

If you see me.” Here’s the best way I can explain what he was saying: “If you are found close to where I am, it will be yours. If you and I are looking eye to eye, it will be yours.” In essence, Elijah was saying to Elisha, “If you are still on the journey doing what I’m doing, and if you are still walking together with me, this double portion will be yours.”

Jesus said it this way in John 12:26, “*...and where I am, there shall also my*

WE CAN CHANGE OUR GENERATION

It’s not a religious people who will change our generation. It’s a people with a double portion. It’s a people who have the life of Christ in them.

servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.” In the Greek, the word honor means “My Father will appropriate or fix a value upon him.” Simply put, “My Father will determine his inheritance. My Father will assign him his portion. If he is where I am, my Father will honor him.” Hallelujah!

■ POSSESSING THE DOUBLE PORTION

“*And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven*” (2 Kings 2:11).

Just as Elisha saw Elijah taken, so it was with Jesus Christ’s last day on earth. The eleven disciples stood on that mount on the last day of Jesus’ physical presence on earth and they saw his ascension. Despite their struggles, weakness and failure, they were

still there, and they were still walking with him. And Elisha cried, “Oh, my Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel and the horseman thereof,” and that is the cry of the church today, “Abba, Father.” This cry has been interpreted through the centuries to be a deep cry emanating from the hearts of those who long for the glory of God to be manifested among men. “Oh, my Father, where will your glory come from now? Who will defend your name? Who will stand for you in the midst of a darkened generation?”

Elijah was suddenly gone and Elisha did something very significant. He took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two. This really represents something very simple. “My plans, my ambitions, everything I thought I was or wanted—I lay down. I don’t want anything of the flesh involved in this. When I cross back over that river into the nation, I don’t want people to see Elisha. I want them to see God’s presence upon my life.”

“*He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over*” (2 Kings 2:13-14).

This means to me that in Christ, I can and will go where others have gone before me. In Christ, nothing can stop me. In Christ, there is nothing impossible. If he said it, it will happen. In Christ, I don’t have to walk by the power of the natural man anymore. I don’t have to rationalize and analyze everything. Oh, yes, I’ll reason the scriptures, because it is the measure of reasoning that God requires from us. But I will add no human reasoning to this. I will take it at face value and I will believe it and walk in it. And by the life of God within me, I will have the double portion. I will be every-

thing that God has destined me to be. Where true men of God have been, I will be. What they have conquered, God has called me to conquer. I will not bow down to the challenges and voices of this generation, but I will stand, and confront a compromising, backslidden generation. I will live by the power of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. I exchange my life for his. He takes my failure and gives me his victory, He takes my confusion and gives me his wisdom; he takes my hatred and gives me his love. The same glorious victory that God gave to the prophets of old, he will give to me. And in the end, my life will lead others to find and follow Christ in the same measure that I have known him.

■ THE DOUBLE PORTION IS YOURS

The double portion is yours, but you have to want it. You have to walk the life that comes with it. You have to drink the cup that it brings. You cannot be afraid of confrontation. You cannot be afraid of contrary voices. Your heart's desire has to be for the glory of God alone, and not only for the comforts of spiritual study.

It's not a religious people who will change our generation, nor a people who are coming up with different schemes and plans. No, no! It's a people with the double portion, people who have the life of Christ in them. The choice is yours and it's mine. It's an individual choice—one that no one can make for you. It's not an instantaneous zap at an altar. Remember it's a journey, and we move to it. It's a journey of faith, a journey of trust, a journey of moving in to possess our inheritance in Christ. After the death of Moses, Joshua said to some Israelites

who had been fighting for some time for their inheritance in the Promised Land, "How long will it take you to go in and possess what is yours? Why are you standing back when this life, this promised place, belongs to you?" Now, if Joshua said this back then, how much more is it not for us in this day? How much longer will we stand back and be defeated? How much longer will we struggle and live in unbelief and in this faulty reasoning that says, "God is sort of able," when God himself has given us his promises?

Whatever the situation is in your life, if you are being defeated, God has called you to be a conqueror. You may have lived in the realm of your own reasoning, and you are tired and saying, "I don't want to live like this anymore," If you've been overpowered by voices, curses that people have spoken into your life—and I consider every word that is unlike God that anybody has spoken into you as a curse—then the Lord will break that and you will hear a new voice.

If you're backslidden, you are always welcome—when it is in your heart to turn from sin—to come back to God. If you are powerless, you are always welcome to receive his power.

If the Lord is speaking to your heart today, only the Holy Spirit can draw you to this river. You can say, "I hear something. I don't care what anybody around me says. Today I feel like Elisha, and I'm going to tell the doubters to hold their breath, because I'm on a journey. I'm going to receive the blessing that God has for me and I'm going to live in this double portion."

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TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of "The Cross and the Switchblade." It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00 AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00 PM	Church Service	
Thursday	7:00 PM	Intercessory Prayer	
Friday	7:00 PM	Church Service	

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