

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

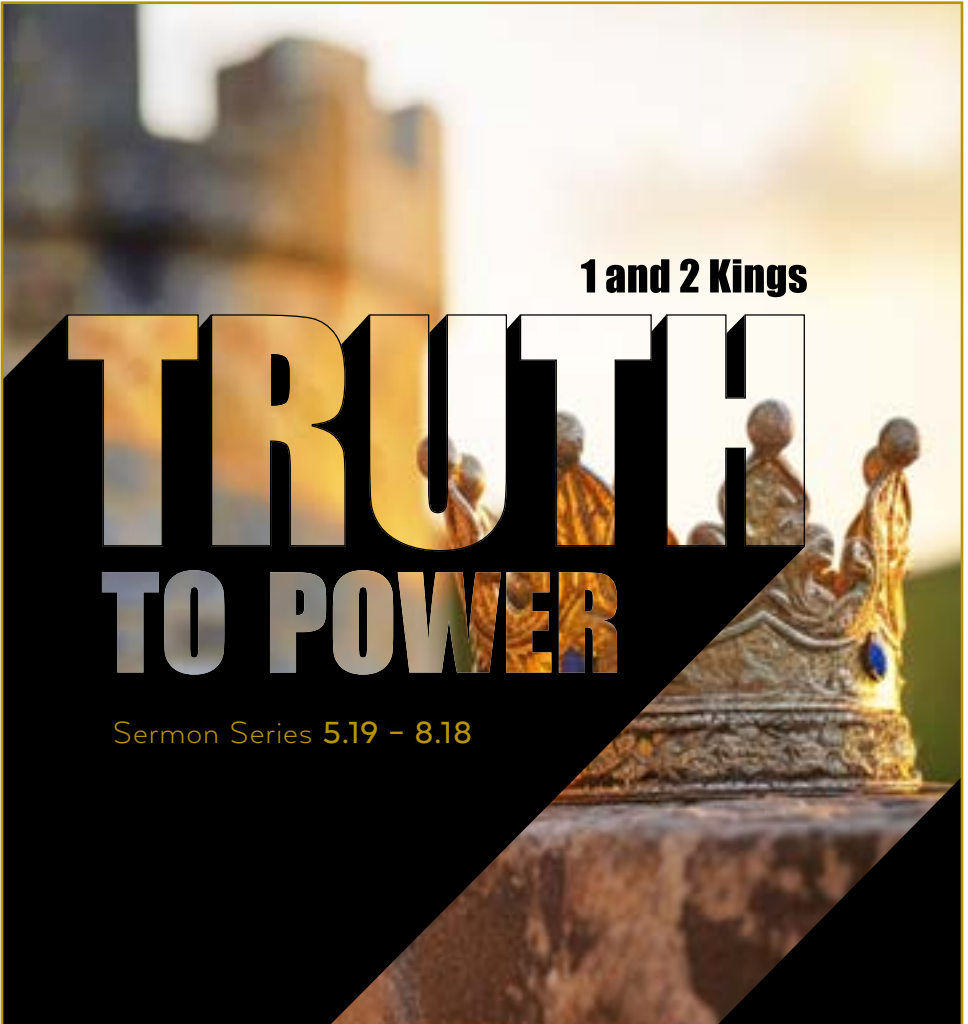
# DEVO

JULY 8 - 12, 2024

**1 and 2 Kings**

# TRUTH TO POWER

Sermon Series 5.19 - 8.18





# MONDAY

Read **1 Kings 18:13; Ecclesiastes 3:14**

Elijah's legacy reveals a life of a servant who was dedicated to living and speaking God's truth. Most of Elijah's life was an uphill battle in which God's people had given way to rampant sin and idolatry. He served through the reign of Israel's worst king, Ahab. We saw how the greatest moment of Elijah's ministry led to his deepest discouragement. He called fire down from heaven, and when the people saw it, they declared, "*The LORD, He is God*" (1 Kings 18:39). They were convinced but not converted. At the end Elijah must have wondered, "What has changed? Ahab is still on the throne and Jezebel is worse than ever!"

Does what we do for God really matter? Sometimes we wonder. We look around at others who do not care about God who seem to be getting ahead far better than we are, and we become discouraged. Every type of leadership role in our churches can be burdened with similar struggles as Elijah. But God never abandons those who honorably serve Him. The final decade of Elijah's life is filled with renewed ministry and a surprising legacy.

What can we learn from Elijah's discouragement? God will meet you when you are fatigued, frustrated, fearful and failing. God did not say to Elijah, "You've had your day, go off and retire in obscurity." He had been exhausted and discouraged. God allowed him to

withdraw for a time to rest, but brooding on your own tends to make the depression worse. Useful work is a wonderful gift from God; He calls Elijah to pour the remaining years of his life into a new generation of younger leaders, including Elisha, who will continue the work he had begun. For most of his life, Elijah had served alone. But in this last season of his life, it proved to be a great blessing and more was accomplished.

We all leave a legacy, but God determines the eternal value of our lives. We need to remember that for all of eternity God will honor every moment we trust Him, every word we say to communicate His truth, and every move we make to follow His leading. Nothing is wasted or forgotten (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

## QUESTIONS

What are you doing these days that has eternal value? How has God helped you in your place of discouragement?

## PRAYER

### For Deacons

Our Deacons are our care giving front line at Glenkirk Church. Pray for them to be renewed during the summer. Pray for the Lord to continue to use them as vessels of care, prayer, and support.



# TUESDAY

Read **2 Kings 2:1-3**

A bucket list is a list of experiences or achievements that people hope to accomplish during their lifetime, essentially before they “kick the bucket” or die. Many people have them these days, from Cameron Diaz and Bill Clinton to bloggers who document their progress in detail. There is a social-media site called BucketList.org with more than 194,000 members who can help you make a list. Five primary themes identified were the desires to travel (78.5%), achieve specific life milestones (51%), spend quality time with family and friends (16.7%), achieve financial stability (24.3%), and do a daring activity (15%).

A believer’s bucket list may include: finish reading the Bible, forgive someone, reconcile a broken relationship, attend a weekend retreat, donate time to a charitable organization, share the Gospel with a friend, and/or become a missionary short-term or long-term. Only God knows the number of our days, but how we set our goals to end well with God can bring you greater joy today.

Elijah is only one of two people in the Old Testament who went from earth to heaven without passing through death. The other is Enoch (Genesis 5:21-24). Elijah was in an unusual position of being strong and vigorous on the last day of his life. He used this last day to make a farewell tour in which he visited the sons of the prophets in

three historic towns before crossing the Jordan River. Elijah travelled 25 to 30 miles on this trip, saying goodbye to the people he loved. Would that be you? What keeps you from putting things right with God? Do you hang on to a secret sin or hidden life one day longer?

What a remarkable thing that when it comes to the last day of Elijah’s life, he does not have to make peace with God. And if you are a Christian, you have peace with God too: *“Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1). *“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 8:1). When this final day comes for Elijah, he is not in a panic as he stands in grace, and he knows that the hope of glory is ahead of him (Romans 5:1-5).

## QUESTIONS

What is on your spiritual bucket list? If today were your last day on earth, how would you spend it?

## PRAYER

For Deacons

We currently have 23 elders on our Session. These elders are responsible for the “big picture” mission of the church. Pray for them to have vision, wisdom, and discernment as they lead and make decisions to glorify God and benefit our church.



# WEDNESDAY

Read **2 Kings 2:2-6**

God commissioned Elijah (1 Kings 19:16) to anoint Elisha to succeed him as prophet to Israel. It had been approximately 10 years since Elisha responded to the call fully committing and becoming the assistant and disciple of Elijah. This is a great deal of responsibility for this young prophet. Would he be up to the challenge?

The power that Elisha would need was not a problem for it will come from God. But he would need spiritual character to face the trials and pressures in these idolatrous times. Elisha would need courage, endurance, loyalty, and biblical desires and priorities. The events in verses 2-6 were designed to test these character qualities in Elisha and demonstrate his readiness for the tasks before him.

Three times in verses 2, 4, and 6 Elijah asks Elisha to stay where they were while he journeyed on as commanded by the LORD: first from Gilgal to Bethel, then from Bethel to Jericho, and finally from Jericho to the Jordan river. At both Bethel and Jericho there were schools for the training of prophets, virtual seminaries for training young men to teach the Torah and use their gifts for the LORD. Elijah was, perhaps, the head of these schools and God sent the pair to bid farewell and to encourage them in their work for the LORD

before he was taken (see 2 Peter 1:12-15 also). Why ask Elisha to stay? It is not plainly stated, but it may be a test of the depth of Elisha's commitment.

Each time Elisha was asked, he refused to stay behind. He even used a double oath to show his tenacious commitment to stay with his mentor to the very last. He said, "*As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you*" (v. 2). This is the kind of character that God wants to develop in us as we lead and serve for the Lord Jesus Christ. He was devoted to God's calling in his life and had a teachable spirit. Elisha was loyal and loving and committed to ministry. He demonstrated servanthood, the most fundamental requirement for leadership.

How is God preparing you to be like Elisha, devoted to serve and lead for the love and glory of God?

## QUESTIONS

Who is your Elijah and who is your Elisha? How is God calling you to cultivate these types of relationships?

## PRAYER

**For Nominated Slate of Elders & Deacons**

We are preparing to vote in a new nominated slate of Elders and Deacons. Pray for those who have been nominated to be well prepared in this season of waiting to serve the Lord in the areas of their nomination. Additionally, let us pray for the Elders and Deacons who are coming to the end of their term, expressing our gratitude for their faithful service.



# THURSDAY

Read **2 Kings 2:8-11**

*“As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.” (2 Kings 2:11)*

What an incredible miracle! The angels of God are described elsewhere in the Bible as *“chariots of God”* (Psalm 68:17). Also in Hebrews 1:7: *“He makes His angels spirits, and His servants flames of fire.”* I am reminded of a favorite African-American spiritual:

“Swing low sweet chariot,  
Coming for to carry me home.  
I looked over Jordan and what did I see?  
Coming for to carry me home.  
A band of angels coming after me,  
Coming for to carry me home.”

The wind’s spiritual significance in the Bible is linked with the Holy Spirit. In the original Hebrew texts of the Bible, the words for wind, breath, and spirit are almost interchangeable. The wind is unseen, but its effects are visible and tangible. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is invisible, yet His impact on the lives of believers is evident. Jesus explained this correlation to Nicodemus, saying, *“The wind blows where it wishes,*

*and you hear it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit”* (John 3:8). The Holy Spirit produces in every believer love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Before Elijah is taken up to heaven by the angels, we are told that he crossed the Jordan (v. 8) with Elisha at his side. Elijah used his cloak, rolled up to strike the water, causing it to part. God parted the Jordan River to give His people safe passage into the joys of Canaan (Joshua 3:17), Now God parts the Jordan waters to give Elijah safe passage into the joys of heaven.

How does this relate to us? Elijah goes through the Jordan River, and then he is lifted up into the presence of God. When we put these two actions together, it forms a beautiful picture of what will happen for every believer. What is death to a Christian? It is to pass safely through the Jordan (symbol of death) and to be lifted up into the presence of God. What a glorious life we will have. Amen!

## QUESTIONS

What is death for a Christian? How does this passage relate to us today?

## PRAYER

*For Senior Leadership Team (SLT)*

Our senior leadership team includes our pastors and departmental directors. Pray for wisdom as they plan for different areas of ministry to glorify God, cultivate discipleship, and show the love of Jesus to our community.



# FRIDAY

Read **2 Kings 2:12-15**

Elisha's time has come. This is not to say that as an assistant and disciple his time was not a crucial part of becoming the man God called to speak truth to His people. When Elijah was taken up to heaven, Elisha must have felt the loss deeply as he tore his clothes in grief and sorrow (v. 12). He picks up Elijah's cloak, the same cloak that was thrown across his shoulders when he was plowing his field years before (1 Kings 19:19). His first action is to replicate Elijah's miracle with the cloak, asking, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" God divides the water, allowing Elisha to walk back towards those watching from the school of prophets (v. 15), essentially authenticating Elisha's qualifications to succeed Elijah.

This reminds us that people are watching to see evidence of the blessings of God's work in our lives. People want to see authentically changed lives, to see integrity, love, courage, faithfulness, humility, sacrifice and ministry. Only God can see our hearts (Jeremiah 17:10). To have an impact on believers and non-believers, you and I must be able to show our work, the fruit of the Spirit (1 Timothy 4:12; Hebrews 13:7; James 2:14). Crossing the Jordan represents moving out under God's power. It reveals Elisha's faith in God's power that removes barriers (evil, fear, control, tradition, and pride) and do the work God calls us to do (Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

Discipleship is becoming like Christ and is a crucial part of our spiritual growth. It may seem easier, at times, to do life alone, but it was never God's intention for the Church. We are a Body. The Lord speaks to us through other believers, and we lose out when we fail to actively participate in the community. Being discipled by others requires humility and vulnerability, but the reward always outweighs the cost. Whether in a small group or one on one, sharing a word of encouragement or a loving correction is empowering.

The same God who worked in and through Elijah and Elisha is present today and available to help you in spiritual growth, community, positive change, sharing the Gospel, and passing on Christianity to the next generation.

## QUESTIONS

How did Elisha respond to his new responsibilities? How is God preparing you to step in or step up to a position of discipling leadership?

## PRAYER

### For All Staff

Pray for our staff, for rest and for productivity in this busy season as they prepare for VBS.



*These devotionals are written by a team of Glenkirk volunteers who represent a range of beliefs within the evangelical spectrum. As such, some of the expressed views may not necessarily represent those of pastoral leadership. If you find yourself challenged by a devo, explore why that might be and, should you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Pastor Kate Wallace Nunneley at [KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org](mailto:KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org). If you are interested in joining those who pen Glenkirk devotionals, please contact Pastor Kate.*

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