



One Hand, Two Feet, & A Mantle

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Eternally Speaking Now

Here's a trivia question for you:
How many times in the Bible did God part waters?

Take a moment to play this game with me.
Pause and count the number in your head.

Do you have your guess?
Was it once? Twice? Three times?
The final answer may surprise you!

Let's go through it together, beginning with the obvious: **the parting of the Red Sea.**

The book of Exodus documents this miraculous event during which the Lord delivered His people out of slavery in Egypt. When the Israelites were finally permitted to leave Egypt, they headed towards the wilderness to worship God, only to discover that Pharaoh had changed his mind. He and his chariots were gaining on them in hot pursuit. The Israelites suddenly found themselves trapped, with a huge sea in front of them and the enemy closing in from behind.

*And the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me?
Tell the children of Israel to go forward.
But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it.
And the children of Israel shall go on **dry ground** through the midst of the sea.*

*Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea;
and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night,
and made the sea into **dry land**, and the waters were divided.
So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the **dry ground**,
and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

Exodus 14:15-16, 21-22

God gave Moses a rod.
Moses obeyed the Lord and lifted his rod, stretching his **hand** over the sea.
The Lord caused the sea to go back and made the sea into **dry land**.

Take note:

Who obeyed God and did what He said?

Moses.

Who parted the waters?

God.

That's one water-parting.

Do you know the next one?

It was the Jordan River.

In Joshua 3, the Lord told Joshua that as He was with Moses, He would also be with him. He then instructed Joshua to say to the children of Israel,

*"By this you shall know that the living God is among you,
and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites
and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites
and the Amorites and the Jebusites:*

*Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth
is crossing over before you into the Jordan.
Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel,
one man from every tribe. And it shall come to pass,
as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord,
the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan,
that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off,
the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap."*

*Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord
stood firm on **dry ground** in the midst of the Jordan;
and all Israel crossed over on **dry ground**,
until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.*

Joshua 3:10-13, 17

The second time God parted insurmountable waters for His people was when He ushered them into the Promised Land. The Jordan River was the only thing left standing in their way.

God gave the priests their **feet**.

The priests obeyed the word of the Lord and stepped those **faithful feet** into the Jordan River.

Then God, whose presence crossed over beforehand, the Lord of all the earth, cut off the waters, which then stood as a heap.

Take note:

Who obeyed God and did what He said?

The priests.

Who parted the waters?

God.

Would you like to know the third and fourth times when a large body of water was separated?

Did you know that the Jordan River was parted *two more times* after Joshua 3?

Yup, there were a total of *three* Jordan crossings.

The other two occurred for Elijah and Elisha, as chronicled in 2 Kings 2.

At this point in Scripture, the Lord was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind. He led Elijah and Elisha into several towns, ultimately bringing them to the Jordan River. As the two men of God stood by its edge, fifty "men of the sons of the prophets" stood at a distance, watching.

And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.

*Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on **dry ground**.*

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha,

"Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

So he said, "You have asked a hard thing.

Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so."

2 Kings 2:7-10

Elisha then witnessed a chariot and horses of fire appear, along with a whirlwind that took Elijah up into heaven. Notice the impact of the following events on the sons of the prophets.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan.

Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha."

And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him.

2 Kings 2:12-14, 15

Take note:

God gave Elijah and Elisha the **mantle**.

Both of them used what God had given them and did as they were led.

Then the waters separated.

So, in these two cases, who parted the waters? *Hmmm. Good question.*

It would appear that Elijah and Elisha did. What about God?

The Lord clearly gets all the glory and credit, as the Scriptures repeatedly report that Elijah and Elisha were empowered and anointed by the Holy Spirit. They simply could not have done what they did without the power and presence of God's Spirit upon them.

To summarize, so far, we've addressed four parting of the waters:
Two were for Moses and Joshua, and two were for Elijah and Elisha.
Interesting. Do you see the parallel?

Moses passed on his ministry to Joshua, and Elijah passed on his to Elisha.

Another observation is the beautiful progression of personal responsibility as we travel through the Bible and examine the chronological order of each water-parting. *Please don't miss this.*

- With Moses, no human throughout history had ever witnessed such supernatural separation of the waters. God did the whole thing, using one man's obedience to lift his staff and **hand**.
- Joshua, though, was a part of the next generation of God's people. Joshua's generation had grown up in the wilderness, experienced God in the cloud by day and fire by night, and daily eaten manna miraculously provided by their faithful God. They may not have witnessed firsthand the Red Sea parting, but you can be sure they knew all about it. Their grumbling parents had learned some tough lessons, and they'd surely passed them down to their children. As the second generation faced their own personal sea in the form of the Jordan River, they were called to a higher expectation, a deeper faith: this time, the **soles of the feet** of the priests had to enter the water *before* **dry ground** would appear.
- With Elijah and Elisha, we don't even read of God telling either of them to do what they did. They just did it. It's possible that God spoke instructions to them that just weren't written for us to read, but we don't know for sure. Either way, what we do know is this: Both

Elijah and Elisha were tightly connected to the Lord, utilized the authority He'd imparted to them and walked by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

This leads us to today. Right here and now. You and me.

Is it possible the Lord is challenging us to willingly and intentionally follow this progression from Moses to Joshua to Elijah to Elisha in our own walk of faith?

This is what I mean:

- **Moses:** Have you witnessed the Lord part your own personal Red Sea yet? For example, have you come face to face with a situation where you had no humanly possible way out-- except to call on the name of the Lord and trust Him to fix the unfixable-- and He did? If not, pray through Exodus 14. Ask Him, seek after Him, and choose to do your part as He comes to your rescue. There's nothing like knowing the Lord like this, as your Deliverer. *(For further encouragement on this, revisit the previous writing, "I Am Not Stuck!" [here](#).)*

And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

Exodus 14:13

- **Joshua:** If you have already experienced the Lord crossing you over on **dry ground** through life's Red Seas, He may want you to 'step into the Jordan' next. Whatever He is calling you to do, make sure He has confirmed it, then don't sit back waiting for Him to separate the raging waters in front of you. Yes, He will make a path for you, but He may be calling you, His priest or priestess, to step forward by faith *first*. *(Enjoy the previous writing, "Step Into The Jordan" [here](#).)*

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light..."

1 Peter 2:9

- **Elijah/Elisha:** Finally, if you've walked across on the **dry ground** of life's parted Jordans, it may be time for you to bravely take up that **mantle of God** and strike the waters before you. This Jordan River for you today looks different than the one you walked through in the past. Look to your left and your right. Is there an Elisha in your life? Look across in the distance. Are there "sons of the prophets" standing by watching? They need encouragement. They need direction, guidance, and discipleship, and you are the one holding that in your hand. It's **God's mantle**, and it's time to **use it for His glory**. *(Feel free to read all of 2 Kings 2 [here](#) on your own. It's full of intriguing patterns and symbols not covered in this writing.)*

CHALLENGE

I confess I've been holding out on you. There's one more water parting I haven't mentioned.

Yes, there were five total times the Lord separated waters.

The last one to discuss here was actually the first time it ever happened, and it occurred *before* Elisha, *before* Elijah, *before* Joshua, and *before* Moses.

Would you like to know when it took place?
On Day Two of Creation.

Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.
Genesis 1:6-7

Did you catch that? On the second day of creation, *before* He made **dry land** appear on earth and *before* He brought forth animals and sea creatures, God Almighty divided the waters which were under the heavens from the waters which were above.

There was no human element in this picture.
There was no **hand** lifted up,
no priests' **feet** stepping in,
no **mantle** in man's possession.

As I contemplated this, I sensed a weightiness to its significance.

It's as if the Lord wants us to see that
before any of our overwhelming situations existed,
before He even created humanity,
He established Himself as the "One Who Divides our Waters."

The Lord God Almighty-- Elohim, our Creator-- was, always has been, is today, and will always be the One who makes a way for you, especially when you see **NO** way out. And He has been this for you long *before* you were born. He has been your Way-Maker and Dry-Land-Provider well *before* you found yourself facing any of your own tumultuous oceans.

As I conclude, I can't help but address something that kept bugging me about Elijah and Elisha. It all has to do with that **mantle**. What does the word **mantle** mean, anyway? Here is its Hebrew root word and definition from the Strong's Concordance.

Mantle: מַדְרָגָה' addereth, ad-deh'-reth
something ample (as a large vine, a wide dress):
—garment, glory, goodly, mantle, robe.

Further study of this word reveals these three working definitions:
A wide-branching vine
A prophet's cloak
Glory, magnificence, splendor

I don't know about you, but I see Jesus seeping through and spilling out all over this!

*"I am the vine, you are the branches.
He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;
for without Me you can do nothing.
If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you,
you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.
By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit;
so you will be My disciples."
John 15:5, 7-8*

Jesus is the wide-branching Vine to whom we cling;
He is the Cloak that wraps us tightly as we abide in Him and He in us;
He is glorified, and His magnificent splendor radiates from us,
as we obey Him and bear much fruit as His disciples.

It's no accident that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River.
The daunting, seemingly impossible-to-cross rivers of life we face today
are the very places where Jesus Himself stands.

In all His glory and splendor.

Please remember, these water-parting stories aren't just about four individual people and their exciting experiences documented in the Bible. **There was a lot at stake back then, and there's just as much at stake today** as we face our modern-day Red Seas and Jordan Rivers. The outcome of each struggle we face depends on our decision to obey or disobey God, to walk by His Spirit or to walk by our flesh. And we aren't the only ones affected by that choice.

- For every person called to be a Moses, there's a group of Israelites in need of God's deliverance.
- For everyone named as a priest of the Lord (followers of Christ), there's a generation ready to enter into the abundant promises of God.
- For every believer willing to step forth as Elijah, there's an Elisha ready to be discipled and taught in the ways of the Lord.
- For every Elisha, there's a group of people watching and waiting to witness the God of the Bible through our courage and obedience.

So take the rod of God and lift up your **hand**, oh Moses!
Step forward by faith and get your **feet** wet, priests of the Lord!
Roll up your **mantle** and strike the river in front of you, Elijah!
Faithfully take the **mantle** given to you and lead others to Jesus, Elisha,
knowing that the Lord will keep His word as the "One Who Divides Our
Waters."

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I've been working hard to publish podcasts, and over 50 episodes are now available (with 10 more almost done and on the way).

Thank you to so many of you who have suggested this and encouraged me to do it.

I pray the Lord moves mightily through this as He continues to do so through these monthly writings. May He be glorified.

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