



1 Kings 19:19-21: Break

(v 21) 21 So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.

You've made the decision. You've taken the right-hand turn off the main road and are heading in a new direction. You might have not originally planned to do this – things were perfectly fine going down the road you were on, and nothing indicated that a change was needed. But now you have made a move, and things will be different. The question is – have you completely taken the turn? How will you know you have really made the change?

Elisha was faced with this situation, in real-life technicolor. It is doubtful that he anticipated when he woke up that morning the total paradigm shift that occurred when, while plowing his fields and minding his own business, the somewhat weather-beaten prophet of God Elijah came from out of nowhere and threw his cloak on Elisha's shoulders and walked away without saying a word.

In that moment, Elisha was challenged with a cataclysmic life-altering decision that would have far-reaching consequences. What should he do next – drop the (likely) well-worn cloak on the ground and keep plowing, or leave everything he had ever known to follow the outcast Elijah to who knows where and who knows what adventures? In that moment, he made his decision – and sealed it by a total break with his past.

He chopped up the plowshare & used it as fuel to cook his former livelihood and share it with his friends in a bon voyage feast. He kissed his parents good-bye, packed his extra sandals and his recently-obtained used cloak and set off to follow Elijah into the great unknown. Think of the picture of faith this was for him: killing his beloved oxen, destroying his means of employment, saying goodbye to friends and family, and following someone he likely knew only by reputation. Like James notes in chapter 2, verse 22 of his letter, Elisha's faith "was made complete by what he did."

When the Lord calls us to a life with Him, we need to make the same kind of break with our past. He may or may not call us to sacrifice relationships, habits, even employment so we can truly follow Him in the adventures He has for us.

After our Lord watched a disappointed rich young man leave following His challenge to similarly leave everything and follow Him, Peter confronted Him. "We've left everything to follow You? What's in it for us?!" Jesus turned, fixed His gaze on him, and told him that anyone and everyone who leaves what they knew behind for what He has ahead of them, they would gain a hundred times as much in the kingdom to come. The question is: Will we make a break with what we knew for what we don't know?