

A reading from the Second Book of Kings

When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and

Elisha went over. **The Word of the Lord.**

Today's Psalm is Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20. We will read it responsively, breaking at the asterisk. It can be found on page 693 in the BCP, or on the screens behind me.

1 I will cry aloud to God; *

I will cry aloud, and he will hear me.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; *

my hands were stretched out by night and did not tire; I refused to be comforted.

11 I will remember the works of the Lord, *

and call to mind your wonders of old time.

12 I will meditate on all your acts *

and ponder your mighty deeds.

13 Your way, O God, is holy; *

who is so great a god as our God?

14 You are the God who works wonders *

and have declared your power among the peoples.

15 By your strength you have redeemed your people, *

the children of Jacob and Joseph.

16 The waters saw you, O God; the waters saw you and trembled; *

the very depths were shaken.

17 The clouds poured out water; the skies thundered; *

your arrows flashed to and fro;

18 The sound of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lit up the world; *

the earth trembled and shook.

19 Your way was in the sea, and your paths in the great waters, *

yet your footsteps were not seen.

20 You led your people like a flock *

by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Galatians

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.