

Articles by Hamilton Smith

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The Sons of the Prophets

2 Kings 2:15

The blessed effects of Elisha's training are now made manifest to others. He becomes a witness before the world of the one (Elijah) that has gone to heaven. The sons of the prophets take note of his new character; for, looking upon Elisha, they say, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha." They look at a man on earth, and they see the spirit and character of a man in heaven.

Has this no voice for us in this Christian day? Does this not set forth in picture our highest privilege and responsibility as Christians? For are we not left on earth to represent the Man in the glory? Paul could speak of the Corinthian saints as being "Christ's epistle" known and read of all men (2 Cor. 3:1-3). The Spirit had written Christ in their hearts, and, in the measure in which the Spirit read Christ in their hearts, the world read Christ in their lives.

Alas! are we not too often like the sons of the prophets, who could appreciate the spirit of Elijah in another, though exhibiting little of this spirit in themselves? They had a measure of knowledge, for they knew when the moment had come for Elijah to be rapt to heaven, but they had no heart to follow in that last journey. They stood to view "afar off"; they watched the prophet go down to Jordan, they never, like Elisha, went through Jordan. They never walked and talked with Elijah beyond Jordan. They never beheld the chariot of fire, and horses of fire, nor did they see the prophet rapt to heaven by a whirlwind.

Nevertheless they recognize, with a measure of appreciation, the blessed effects upon the man that has seen these wonders. They bow themselves to the ground before him, and thus show that they see, in Elisha, one who moves on a higher spiritual level than themselves. They are willing to take the place of servants to one whom they recognize as a servant of the Lord.

Are we not oftentimes like these men? We see that Christ has died for us; we are slow to accept His death as our death. We know perhaps little of a walk in communion with Him on resurrection ground, and what it is to behold Him as a living Man in the glory. Yet we can appreciate in others the effect of this personal intimacy with Christ. For there is no gainsaying the man who is characterized by the spirit of the Man who has gone to heaven. The world could take knowledge of Peter and John "that they had been with Jesus"; and looking upon Stephen they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel," and "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 4:13; 6:10,15).