



Time to Assume the Reins of the Future

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"Elisha turned around, grabbed the yoke of oxen and offered them in sacrifice, took the tools to cook the meat and invited his people, then got up, went after Elijah and put himself at their service." 1 Kings 19:21

As a peasant, Elisha depended on his oxen to plow the land. They walked to the front; he followed them behind. As a metaphor for our present, walking behind oxen could be to see what is wrong in the world as a normal thing, as something that we can't change because the world is as it is. It can be to continue living in a country where it is normal for the police to kill a young black person, or to continue wasting natural resources as if they were endless and our actions won't affect the natural balance of the Earth. Or it can be to grow fed up and disconnected with the lies of mass media as they target specific countries because they have an agenda that could affect the interests of wealthy societies.

But the everlasting God called Elisha to the prophetic vocation. He would no longer follow the oxen to plow and forge the furrow. Now Elisha would follow Elijah, opening the heart of the earth, not by planting the seed of injustice but by sowing the powerful and transforming word of God.

I could hear that voice of God challenging me into this new place of fullness of life when Rosalina Tuyuc, a *Maya K'at'ich'el* leader, Candidate for the Nobel Prize and Coordinator of the National Confederation of Widows in Guatemala (CONAVIGUA), talked to me recently about the need to discover a deeper sense of awareness and urgency in nature. Referring to the recent eruption of "*Volcán del Fuego*" in Guatemala, she looked into my eyes as she offered her words of wisdom:

"We need to return to the earth, to the soil, to the water, and the air. We are called to enter into an era of protection and awareness. Humanity needs to understand that we are part of the overall energy, we come from that energy, and we need to turn our eyes toward our natural self. We can't survive pretending to be artificial beings. We are water; we are matter, we are air, we are energy. Our ancestors were very clear about this upcoming era. Either we enter into full communion with the elements of nature or nature itself will continue its way towards balance."

Elisha had to leave the oxen. He had to break with his past and be obedient to the future. And there is the challenge for you and me. This is the same invitation that Rosalina is addressing to us. Are we willing to break into a past of shadows and sadness, still plowing the land with the same oxen or will you and I be willing to listen to the voices of the Earth, the voices of the prophets, the ones that anticipate a future of hope and well-being for the world?

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