

## 2 Kings 6 – Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

1 And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. 2 Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell." So he answered, "Go." 3 Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go."

- If you've been with us over the last few weeks, you are probably noticing that it's been one miracle after another with Elisha.
- We're about to see yet another one in this chapter as the prophets had outgrown their current facility and needed a larger one.
- While this is a good problem to have, it's still a problem none-the-less, which is why they seek out Elisha to help them with this.

- I find it interesting that God was still blessing the prophets of Israel in spite of the apostasy and idolatry-taking place in Israel.
- This is very encouraging in the sense that it demonstrates that it's still possible to live a righteous life in an unrighteous world.
- I think of Noah, the preacher of righteousness in a world steeped in wickedness, yet he was himself a man of God in spite of it.

G. Campbell Morgan - "The chief value of the story lies in its revelation of the influence Elisha was exerting in the nation. The growth of the school of the prophets was most remarkable."

4 So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. 5 But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, master! For it was borrowed." 6 So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place. So he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float. 7 Therefore he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.

- Couple of thoughts here on this miracle, the first of which has to do with Elisha caring enough about this man's borrowed axe.
- It's important to understand that bronze was more common than was iron and as such iron was considerably more expensive.
- The point being is God cares about matters of importance to us, even when they may be as inconsequential as a borrowed tool.

- The second thought has to do with the miracle itself, such that, Elisha true to form, once again, allows someone else to do it.
- Notice how that he tells this man in verse seven to "Pick it up for yourself," which we're told he did by reaching out his hand.
- This speaks to faith on the part of this man who if you really think about it was in a fiery trial that God would deliver him from.

Charles Spurgeon - "Yes, and God can still make iron swim; things impossible to us are possible to Him. Out of every difficulty Omnipotence can bring us, only let us in childlike confidence cast our burden upon the Lord. Whatever our family trial may be, the Lord will help us through it."

- There's one more thing I would like to point out before we move on and it has to do with the typology of using a wood handle.
- More specifically, the wood is a picture of the wooden cross of Christ, which was used to retrieve the axe head from the water.
- Just as the wood was used to retrieve the axe head, so too was the finished work of the cross was used to redeem mankind.

John 5:39-40 - 39 You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

8 Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." 9 And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." 10 Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice. 11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" 12 And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." 13 So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan."

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is the king of Syria actually thinks that Elisha can be caught.
- This is sheer folly in that God supernaturally revealed all this to Elisha, and it would stand to reason that this would be as well.
- I would suggest that this is what God does for us, such that He reveals in His word that which the enemy planned against us.

14 Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. 15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

- I have to confess this is one of my favorite passages in all of the Bible, and it has been a lifeline of sorts for me over the years.
- So much so, that I find that I'm praying in this way for the teaching of God's Word, in order that our eyes would be opened.
- It's only when like Elisha's servant, our spiritual eyes are open to see, by faith that which God has for us in the spiritual realm.

G. Campbell Morgan - "Faith is never the imagining of unreal things. It is the grip of things which cannot be demonstrated to the senses, but which are real. The chariots of horses and fire were actually there."

F. B. Meyer - "If our eyes were opened, we should see the angel-hosts as an encircling fence of fire; but whether we see them or not, they are certainly there."

18 So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. 19 Now Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." But he led them to Samaria. 20 So it was, when they had come to Samaria, that Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and there they were, inside Samaria! 21 Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" 22 But he answered, "You shall not kill them. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." 23 Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So the bands of Syrian raiders came no more into the land of Israel.

- What Elisha does here has led some to suggest he's being dishonest and lying to the Syrians so they wouldn't know it was him.  
- I personally don't share in that suggestion by virtue of the fact that he does actually lead them to where he is when they arrive.  
- However, instead of having them killed as the enemy, he shows them kindness by not repaying them with evil for their evil.

Romans 12:17–21 (NIV) — 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Proverbs 20:22 (NKJV) — 22 Do not say, "I will recompense evil"; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.

Proverbs 25:21–22 (NKJV) — 21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; 22 For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

24 And it happened after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver. 26 Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" 27 And he said, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" 28 Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son."

- It seems some time has passed between verses twenty-three and twenty-four, however, we don't know exactly how long it was.  
- Regardless of how long it was, here we're told that the Syrian's had successfully besieged Samaria by starving the population.  
- The reason God allowed it to happen was because of Deuteronomy 28, as it relates to Israel disobeying the commands of God.

Deuteronomy 28:53–57 (NKJV) — 53 You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, 55 so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. 56 The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

30 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body. 31 Then he said, "God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today!" 32 But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And the king sent a man ahead of him, but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent someone to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" 33 And while he was still talking with them, there was the messenger, coming down to him; and then the king said, "Surely this calamity is from the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

- To me the way the chapter ends is textbook in the sense that those who do not know God are the ones who always blame God.  
- Not only do the wicked and ungodly blame God, they blame God's people as Jehoram, the son of Ahab and Jezebel does here.  
- The reason I mention this is because I believe we are living in a day that is eerily similar to this wicked period in Israel's history.