

2 Kings 6

Power of the Spirit of God

I. Floating Ax Head: Coming Back to Our First Love

1 And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is **too small for us.**"

- **Sons of the Prophets:** Seminary with Elisha as Dean. Painting of Elijah up on wall
- **Our Church is too small:** Not a bad problem to have

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.**"

- **We want to start a church building project**
 1. **Note:** Went to Lord first; asked Prophet Elisha
 2. Students ask Elisha Dean of School to join project he agrees!

4 So [Elisha] 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.**"

- **Cutting trees by Jordan:** Ax head flies off
- **Student now swinging stick**
 1. Daily tree quota significantly diminished
 2. Alas Master it was Borrowed: Poor Seminary Student
 3. Seems little overdramatic? Just ax head...

1 Samuel 13:19 Now there was **no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel**

- Lack of Iron made it expensive
- It was borrowed: Alas Master...help

6 So the man of God said, "**Where did it fall?**" And he showed him the place.

- **Where was the place that the ax head fell?**
 1. Where is the place the good work stopped?
 2. Where is the place you lost your sharpness?
 3. Where is the place you started fumbling around with only a stick?

Where was the place that it all fell apart?

Revelation 2:1 [Read] "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He

who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

- **Jesus commendation...**

1. Work, Labor, Patience in laboring in/for the Lord
2. Your doctrine was impeccable:
3. Vetted those who say they were believers
4. Made sure they were who they said they were
5. Persevered through pain/Patience in/through testing
6. **Labored for Me and not grown weary...**

**...but your missing one thing, the main thing. Me.
Working hard but not accomplishing anything. Why?**

...4 [continued] Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works

- **Left first Love: Jesus**

1. Become dull and ineffective...working hard but nothing getting done
2. Using an ax handle without ax head, lost cutting edge
3. Disconnected from what makes it all work...the head

Colossians 1:18 [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church

- **Disconnected from the Head:** Picture of trying to do God's work...without God

1. **Apart from Me you can do nothing:** Slapping trees with a stick
2. **Abide in Me:** Abide in My love and produce fruit/build up not tear down
3. **Wood Handle:** Picture of flesh trying to do the work on its own

**God's work without God? How does that happen?
Drift away from shore till you can't see it anymore...**

- Moved from saving souls to social justice
- Moved from talking about cross to talking politics
- Moved from eternal perspective to consumed with cares of world
- Moves from a life of integrity to just talking about it when in actuality...

Left first Love, Jesus. Repent and go back to the place you started

- **Dull? Things not working? Fall back love with Jesus...**always works

1. This is where the thing flew off the handle.
2. This is where I lost my sharpness.
3. This is where I was smacking trees and beating the air...

1 Corinthians 9:26 Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.

- **Purpose is found:** Connected to Jesus with sharpness/insight of Holy Spirit
Elisha: Where did it all fall apart? Where did that ax head land in the water?
- **And the student showed him the place:** I remember exactly the time and place

6b...So [Elisha] cut off a stick, and threw it in there

- **Elisha loves throwing things into the mix...**
 1. Salt into water
 2. Oil into the vessel
 3. Flour into pot
 4. Stick into the Jordan
- **Cut off a stick and threw it in:** Picture of Cross
- Threw it at place the ax head landed...

6c...and he [Elisha] made the iron float.

**When what you need is not found by natural methods...
 Introduce the Cross and watch God work Supernaturally**

Exodus 15:23 [children of Israel]... came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter...And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" So he **cried out to the Lord**, and the Lord showed him a tree. **When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.**

- Moses casts the tree into bitter water and it became sweet
- Elisha casts the tree at a lost cause and the ax head floats

God's supernatural intervention when we introduce the cross

- God reveals where to find the answer...**leaves it up to him to grab it**

7 Therefore [Elisha] said, "Pick it up for yourself."

- **When God shows you what to do...Move out in faith**
 1. **Stop sulking:** It was borrowed. Woe is me. Eeyore
 2. **Start moving:**
 - Get alone with the Lord
 - Remember His goodness
 - Open the Word
 - Get into a study
 - Start witnessing
 - Get back to your first love

**Elisha was not going to do it for him.
 No one is going to do what God gives us to do except us...**

7b... So he reached out his hand **and took it.**

God showed the young man the answer
He had to reach out his hand and take it

II. Seeing the Unseen Plan of God

- **Time:** 850 BC
 1. 150 Years after reign of David and Solomon
 2. Kingdom split: Solomon's sin
 3. Southern Kingdom Judah few good kings
 4. Northern Kingdom Israel no good kings
- **Elisha:** Draws short straw...
 1. Prophet to Kings/people of Idolatrous **Northern Kingdom**
 2. Given Double-Portion of Elijah's Spirit
 3. 2x more miracles than Elijah
 4. Healing of Syrian commander Naaman. Syria is back in play...

8 Now the **king of Syria** was making war against Israel...

- **King of Syria**
 1. Not converted
 2. Still enemy of Israel

8b... and [the King of Syria] 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.**"

- **King of Syria:** Sends raiders toward Israel camp along way
- **Prophet Elisha:** Informs King of Israel where raiders are before they get there

Don't go that way...danger

Isaiah 30:21 [Holy Spirit directs/protects] Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand Or whenever you turn to the left.

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.

- King sends men to wait for raiders before they even set up camp

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?"

- **Greatly troubled:** Bad day to be in king's cabinet...

Which one of you is a spy for 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."

- God tells Elisha and Elisha tells the king...He knows your most intimate secrets

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

- **God who sees. God who hears** all prayers/praises and grumbling/foolishness

Matthew 12:36 ...I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will **give account of it in the day of judgment.**

13 So [the King of Syria] said, "Go and see where [Elisha] is, that I may send and get him." And it was told [the King], saying, "Surely [Elisha] is in **Dothan.**" 14 Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

- **Dothan:**
 1. Where Joseph went to find brothers
 2. Where they threw in pit
 3. Where he was taken as slave

Where God unfolded His unseen plan to make Joseph ruler and save family

- God had a bigger unseen plan that no one could imagine.
- Joseph did not know the plan/could not see plan...but trusted in God anyway

Genesis 50:20 [Joseph forgave his brothers] ...as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

- **Horses/Chariots and great army surround Elisha in valley of Dothan**
 1. Elisha is surrounded by vicious enemies
 2. Everything he sees w/physical eyes looks like defeat

God has an unseen plan

2 Corinthians 5:5 [God prepares us for eternity and...] has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For **we walk by faith, not by sight.**

We are not to be moved/shaken by circumstances

- We walk by faith in what God has done, is doing and what He will do

- Logically Elisha could have/should have been shaking in boots

Psalm 18:1 I will love You, O Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is **my rock and my fortress** and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

Psalm 62:5 My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him. 6 He only is **my rock and my salvation**; He is **my defense**; I shall not be moved. 7 In **God is my salvation and my glory**; The **rock of my strength**, And **my refuge, is in God.**

- Trusting in a God he cannot see rather than what is seen...

Psalm 20:7 [NIV] Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

- **Syrian army surrounding Elisha and servant**

1. King of Syria is trusting in his military might
2. Elisha is trusting in a Mighty God
3. Servant...not so much

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?"**

Alas...what shall we do? All is lost.

- **Alas:** heb. 'Ahahh. Exclamatory word expressing imminent pain [we have many]
- **What are we going to do?**

Oh, if we had but faith to look to that [all-powerful] arm that is moving among us, and to that great and wise heart that is thinking of us, and **then trust our case with him.**

16 So he answered, **"Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."**

- When everything in you says to fear...**Trust**
- When the most appropriate response is terror...**Trust**
- When everything surrounding you demands your attention/your cowering down to...

Stand unmoved on the Rock ...Trust in the unseen plan of God.

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, **open his eyes that he may see.**"

- **Our prayer for unbelievers:** Blind in faith

Open their eyes Lord that they may see You...know You

- **FACT:** We either know the Lord or do not
- **NOTE:** We can know about the Lord without knowing the Lord

1 Samuel 2:12 Now the sons of Eli [priests] were corrupt; they **did not know the Lord.**

1 Samuel 3:7 [Little boy in Tabernacle of Lord] Now Samuel did **not yet know the Lord:** The word of the Lord had **not yet been revealed to him.**

- **Open his eyes:** Satan blinds eyes of non-believers

2 Corinthians 4:3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

- **Lord open his/her eyes to your...**
 1. God's unseen plan of Salvation
 2. God's unseen plan of Sanctification
 3. God's unseen plan of Glorification

We pray with Elisha...Open their eyes Lord!

17b...Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw.

- The LORD opened his eyes...**and he saw**
- Didn't he already see? Saw physically now Spiritually
 1. **Salvation:** Light turned on; blind but now I see... True Life from Dead

John 8:12 "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." [Death/Life, Darkness/Light] Saved from sin/hell. Positionally Righteous

2. **Sanctification:** Dimmer switch turned up in our earthly existence... Abundant purposeful Life here on earth

Ephesians 1:17 [Read] [Paul's Prayer for believers to become more like Jesus] ...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the **eyes of your understanding** [heart] **being enlightened** [Practically Righteous; know Him more and become more like Him. Grow in grace/knowledge of Jesus]

3. **Glorification:** No more darkness ever. Both positionally/[practically] righteous forever! Eternal Life new bodies, new heaven/earth. Ability to approach the God of inapproachable Light!

Revelation 21:23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

1 Corinthians 13:12 [To see perfectly clearly] For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

- Only Fraction of the what will be known about God is found in Scripture...
- Only what we need for life and godliness in this life.

**So much more that that is unseen that one day we will see clearly
The Lord opened his eyes and the young man saw into the Spiritual Realm**

17c...And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

More of these horses of fire than there were horses of flesh, more of these chariots of flame than there were chariots of iron. [Spurgeon]

- **Angelic beings surrounding Elisha man of God**

1. Powerful created beings
2. Guardians of God's people
3. Servants/ministers of Living God

- **Minsters to children:** Guardian Angels

Matthew 18:10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven **their angels** always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

- Ministers to Jesus

Psalms 91:11 [God]... shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

- Ministered to Peter

Acts 12:15 [Peter is free from jail!] "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "**It is his angel.**"

- Ministered to Paul

Acts 27:23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid

- Ministered to Daniel

Daniel 6:22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me... [Also, Gabriel]

- Protectors of God's people

...mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

- God give servant a taste...Horses/Chariots of Fire

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.

- Syrian army now in valley wandering blind/helpless

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!**

Here Elisha told a technical truth but certainly intended to deceive. He did in fact bring them to the man they sought (when their eyes were opened, Elisha was there with them). However, he led them back to Samaria – the capital city of the Kingdom of Israel and an unfriendly place for a group of Syrian soldiers. [Guzik]

... I grant you it seems [like a trick] Elisha spoke *neither more nor less than the truth*; Dothan was not his city, Samaria was the city where the man of God dwelt. He was then outside Dothan, and he said, I will bring you to the man whom ye seek, He did lead them to him [self], took them to his own home, to the very place where he lived. *I think I see him leading all these blind men; they had come to catch him, and he had caught them, and he led them to Samaria.*

- Syrian raiders now in Capital of their enemies...**Israel**

21 Now when the king of Israel saw [blind Syrian army], he said to Elisha, "My father, **shall I kill them?** Shall I kill them?" 22 But [Elisha] 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."

- It is not your practice to kill captured prisoners of war?
- **Let them eat, drink...and go home**

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...

Did Elisha's kindness pay off?

23b... So the **bands of Syrian raiders** came no more into the land of Israel.

- Raiders; i.e. Syrian Special Ops came no more into Israel

Will God's kindness to you pay off?

Romans 2:4 [It is the...] goodness [kindness] of God [that should] lead you to repentance?

This is the way of carrying on war, the best way in all the world; to conquer by grace, to conquer by kindness.... No, they could not come any more to vex a people who had treated them so generously, and thus the man of God was master of the situation, his noble spirit was put to the front, and God was glorified. [Spurgeon]

SUMMARY Seeing the Unseen: God's unseen plan, protection, provision for the good of His people.

- Raiders; i.e. Syrian Special Ops came no more into Israel
- King of Syria however is still at war with Israel

III. Samaria Besieged

24 And it happened after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his

army, and went up and besieged Samaria.

- Surrounded for purpose of starving out the Capital City of Israel

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.

"When Hannibal besieged Casiline, one mouse was sold for two hundred pence. Puddings made of dogs' guts were [coveted and] bought at the siege of Scodra." [Trapp]

- God's People? Boiling donkeys' heads/ Eating dove dropping [months wages] worse...

Idolatry caused this. Man's sin caused this. Don't blame God...

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."

- **Curse of Disobedience:** Siege
 1. Did not give glory to Living God for Syrian Raiders victory
 2. Continued in Idolatry

Deuteronomy 28:53 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. [Sin has consequences/taking God's kindness for granted has a high cost]

- Only God's mercy is holding this judgment back our country. Pray for **Supreme Court**
- Women are eating their own sons/daughters...

30 Now it happened, when the king [of Israel] 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!"

Kill me if I do not kill Elisha for causing this famine

- Killing the messenger? God is the one sending the message

32 But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him.

- Pagan King of Israel set to kill Elisha...**but Elisha was sitting** in his house
 1. God is not taken by surprise
 2. God is not anxious because of little man
 3. Doesn't ring hands when man pukes out "I'll tell Him a thing or two"

God sits enthroned at the flood...God laughs as man raises his fist [Psalm 29 and 2]

- **Elisha sits**...knitting/talking with friends

32b... And the king sent a man ahead of him, but before the messenger came to him, [Elisha] 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

- **King of Israel following his messenger to Elisha's house**
 1. Elisha instructs Elders to hold door shut
 2. Messenger arrives and then King who yell through door crack

33b...and then the king said, "**Surely this calamity is from the Lord; why should I wait for the Lord any longer?**"

King thought that waiting on Lord was what was needed
In reality...repentance from God's people what was the Lord was waiting for

SUMMARY Samaria Besieged