

"Blinded Eyes"

2 Kings 6:18-23

Introduction: Last week in our study of Elisha's life we looked at the protection which God had placed around His servant.

Notice 2 Kings 6:16-17

When Elisha prayed God opened the eyes of the young man and he was then able to see the angelic host which surrounded he and Elisha. While the young man panicked, Elisha remained very calm for he knew the protection which God had provided for His people.

Proverbs 28:1

The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

Application:

This very same protection surrounds you and I also. Before we get to our text tonight I want to consider this heavenly protection a little more which God also provides for our lives and at the same time dive a little deeper into "angelology".

2 Kings 6:16-17

And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

I present these verses to you and I underlined and bolded the word **THEY** because I want you to understand that this is not some kind of "force field" that surrounded Elisha and his servant, and neither are we surrounded by a "force field" but they were surrounded by heavenly beings and so are we. Elisha said, "**THEY** that be with us are more than they that be with them."

Psalm 104:4

⁴ Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

Angels are often referred to as ministers of fire.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

⁷ And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

⁸ In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Now last week I showed you two verses in Hebrews that are very comforting to believers.

Hebrews 1:13-14

¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Here we see that angels are ministering spirits sent forth from God to minister to God's children when we are in need. Let me show you a scene in the life of Jesus.

Luke 22:39-43

³⁹ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

⁴⁰ And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

⁴¹ And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

⁴² Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

⁴³ And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

There was an angel sent from the Father to strengthen Jesus the night before he was crucified. This was at the time He was under Satanic attack.

Application:

It is very encouraging to know that angels are sent to strengthen us when we are under the attacks of the enemy. Last week I pointed out to you that Elisha did not panic because he knew God intimately and he knew God's ways. The young man panic, because he only knew ABOUT God. So, it is important that we come to know God in an intimate way so that we may better understand His ways and be able to disciple others instead of needing to be disciplined when the trials and the storms of life blow into our lives. One of God's ways is revealed in the life Jesus in the Garden and also here in 2 Kings. That is, there are many

times when it is His will that we go through the trial and not be removed from the trial. When that is His will we can be sure that He will provide the strength, we need, and it may possibly be through a ministering angel.

Now, while angels are ministering spirits to us who know Jesus Christ they are also soldiers involved in the spiritual war.

1 Kings 22:19

¹⁹ And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.

The word "HOST" here in this verse means "warrior" or "soldier". Therefore, we can know that angels are also warriors who stand and fight against Satan and his demonic spirits. Notice the words of the Psalmist.

Psalm 68:17

¹⁷ The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

The number of angels that God has is innumerable.

Revelation 5:11

¹¹ And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

Notice 2 Kings 6:18

Let us not miss the fearlessness of Elisha in the face of the approaching enemy. This again is the result of knowing God in an intimate way. Elisha could have quoted the words of the David when he was attacked by his own son Absalom.

Psalm 3:1-6

Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

² Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

³ But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

⁴ I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

⁵ I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

⁶ I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

Notice the words of Henry:

"The clearer sight we have of the sovereignty and power of heaven, the less we fear the calamities of this earth."

Many would look at the text before us and declare that if they could see the surrounding hosts of heaven they too would be able to stand as Elisha stood. But let us remember that we are called to walk by faith and not by sight. If we were to only walk by sight, then the words of John 20:29 would not be applicable to our lives.

John 20:29

²⁹ *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

Notice 2 Kings 6:18 again.

When I read this verse I must ask, "Why did Elisha not pray for God to destroy the Syrians?" Then as I meditate on this I can understand why. It was not Elisha's desire nor was it God's will that these men were to be destroyed.

Ezekiel 33:11

¹¹ *Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

Because Elisha had an intimate knowledge of God he too desired the very same thing and that was repentance. Let me show you how we can be sure this was Elisha's desire. Remember Elisha's conversation with Naaman after his leprosy was healed?

2 Kings 5:14-16

¹⁴ *Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*

¹⁵ *And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.*

¹⁶ But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

Elisha would take nothing from Elisha for he wanted him to have the testimony when he returned home that the God of Israel would take nothing from him but his leprosy. Elisha desired that his testimony was one of GRACE.

So, if the Syrians missed Naaman's testimony Elisha was determined to show to them the grace of God again. The MOTIVATION behind the prayer of Elisha was that God would be glorified.

Application:

As we read this verse we can see that God answered the prayer of Elisha and He smote the Syrians with blindness.

All of this should cause us to look into our own prayer life to consider our MOTIVATION for why we pray as we do. How do you pray for those who are against you? How do you pray for those who rise up against you and cause stress and worry in your life? Reading our text here in 2 Kings I would suggest that we should pray that somehow God would allow us to be able to show grace to those who are set against us. I would suggest that our MOTIVATION should never be selfish MOTIVATION but our MOTIVATION as we pray for our enemies should be that somehow God would be glorified and that He would allow something to happen so that we could show God's grace to them so that they too had a testimony of grace. Many times, our MOTIVATION is selfish. We pray that God would afflict our enemies because that would bring personal satisfaction as we could watch them squirm under the heavy hand of God. But that is not the will of God and because we pray with the wrong MOTIVATION and we pray for something that is not the will of God we see no results of our prayers.

1 John 5:14-15

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Notice 2 Kings 6:19

Elisha would lead them to the man whom they originally sought and that was the king of Israel.

Notice 2 Kings 6:20-23

The king of Israel desired to kill each and every one of the Syrians, but Elisha stopped him. Instead of executing them Elisha commanded that Israel was to feed them and then send them back to their king.

This shows us the reason why Elisha prayed as he did. It was to lead the enemy into a situation where they were vulnerable and then show grace to them and send them back to their king with this testimony of grace.

Applications:

When I read this I cannot help but wonder what many believers today would do in this situation? What would they do if they had their enemies in a situation where they were extremely vulnerable? One word that comes to my mind would be "REVENGE". But revenge is not ours.

Romans 12:17-21

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Notice the words of **Barclay** on this text in Romans.

*"We are to keep ourselves from all thought of taking revenge. Paul gives three reasons for that. (a) Vengeance does not belong to us but to God. In the last analysis no human being has a right to judge any other; only God can do that. (b) To treat a man with kindness rather than vengeance is the way to move him. Vengeance may break his spirit; but kindness will break his heart. "If we are kind to our enemies," says Paul, "it will heap coals of fire on their heads." That means, not that it will store up further punishment for them, but that it will move them to burning shame. (c) To stoop to vengeance is to be ourselves conquered by evil. Evil can never be conquered by evil. If hatred is met with more hatred it is only increased; but if it is met with love, an antidote for the poison is found. As Booker Washington said: "I will not allow any man to make me lower myself by hating him." **The only real way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend.***

Let me show you what the Law says concerning how we are to treat our enemies.

Exodus 23:4-5

⁴ If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.

⁵ If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.

I am also reminded of the words of Proverbs.

Proverbs 25:21-22

²¹ If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

²² For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

Conclusion:

There is yet another picture within this text that we need to see. We can clearly see a beautiful picture of salvation here.

Elisha is a type of Jesus Christ. The Syrians represent all of mankind. The animosity of the Syrians pictures how all of us were enemies of God before salvation. We were set against God in everything we did. We too were like the Syrians in that we were blind to our true spiritual condition and so God in His amazing grace led us to a place where we were able to see the danger we were living in. He opened our eyes to our true spiritual condition. But instead of giving us death as we deserved, God, through His Son, extended His grace to us and instead of spending eternity in hell we are now able to eat at the King's table. There is set before us today GREAT PROVISIONS. Then there is the change in the Syrians as they did not come anymore on an evil mission on the land of Israel. This is a picture of the change in the heart of the TRUE believer.