

Eyes of Faith, not Sight

2 Kings 6: 15-20

During this time Israel faced numerous attacks from the Syrians. Each time Syria's king planned an attack, the Lord gave Elisha insight to their plans and he was able to warn Israel. Knowing someone was sharing their plans with the Israelites, the king began to inquire about this perceived act of treason. One of the king's servants affirmed that none of the Syrians had betrayed the king, but Elisha the prophet had been warning Israel.

Enraged by Elisha's intelligence, the king sent his troops to find Elisha and bring him to Syria. It was reported that Elisha was in Dothan and the king sent a brigade of troops to bring Elisha in for questioning. Faithfulness to the Lord had angered the enemy, and now Elisha was surrounded. There appeared to be no escape, but God had another plan.

We are not engaged in secret, military missions, and yet we often find ourselves facing an attack from the enemy simply because of our faithfulness to the Lord. These attacks are unannounced and even unavoidable. Often we feel like Elisha, completely outnumbered and in need of supernatural help. While we can't see it with our physical eye, the Lord provides more assistance than we can imagine. We are never alone in the journey or forced to face the enemy within our own means. As we examine the [realities](#) of this situation, I want to consider: [Eyes of Faith, not Sight](#).

I. The Concern of the Servant (15) – [And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?](#) Elisha had a servant with him in Dothan, and he was not aware of the severity of the situation or the presence of the Lord. Notice:

A. His Discovery (15a) – [And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.](#) Rising early in the morning, likely to go about his duties for the day, the servant discovered the city had been compassed about by the enemy. This was not a few Syrians who had come for surveillance, a host of horses and chariots were there. The city was surrounded and the situation looked dire. He may not have been aware of the opposition to Elisha, but he quickly learned the enemy had come against them.

- Is that not how trouble and adversity usually come to us? There are times when we may have some advance warning, but often trouble comes suddenly. Surely we have all experienced times when it seems as if we were met by the enemy first thing in the morning. We all deal with inconveniences at times, but eventually we will face a situation we never imagined.

B. His Dismay (15b) – *And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?* Following his discovery, the servant ran to Elisha in complete dismay. No doubt his heart was filled with fear and uncertainty. As far as we know, there was no one else in the house with the servant but Elisha. There is no mention of any Israelite troops in Dothan. In his fear and dismay, he proclaimed – Look master! What are we going to do? In this moment of great need, the servant saw no possible means of escape. Fear gripped his heart as he contemplated the future.

- I can say with reasonable certainty that everyone in the sanctuary today has experienced these same emotions at one time or another. We have faced a situation that was desperate and we had no idea what we were going to do. The difficulty required more than we possessed. We lacked the wisdom, strength, and resources to bring about a suitable resolution. Our heart was gripped with fear as our mind began to run wild, playing out every possible scenario.

II. The Confidence of Elisha (16-17) – As the servant relayed his deep concern to Elisha, the man of God responded with unshakeable confidence. Notice:

A. His Assurance (16) – *And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.* We cannot get a sense of the emotion Elisha displayed, but it appears he responded with an attitude that revealed little, if any concern. Elisha assured the servant there was nothing to fear. Even though they appeared outnumbered, Elisha knew there were more with them than with the enemy. I can imagine how the servant may have felt. “More with us than with them! Have you looked out there? The entire city is surrounded, and I don’t see anyone but you and me in the house!” As we will discover, Elisha was looking through eyes of faith, seeing the impossible.

- This is often difficult to remember in our moments of desperation, but we have nothing to fear. Christ has already conquered every enemy we could possibly face as He rose again in triumphant life. We are more than conquerors in Christ. If God be for us, who can be against us? Greater is He within us than he that is in the world.

B. His Appeal (17a) – *And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.* The servant was looking through physical eyes, and Elisha sought the LORD to allow him to see through eyes of faith. The young man only saw the enemy and the apparent hopelessness of their situation. Elisha wanted him to see the hand of God at work in their midst.

- It is easy to focus solely on our adversity. We tend to focus more on the storms we face instead of the One who can either calm our storm or come to us walking on the storm. It is difficult at times to look through eyes of faith, but we must trust the Lord when we don’t understand.

C. His Awareness (17b) – [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.](#) Although the servant was unaware, Elisha already knew he was surrounded by the host of heaven, a number far greater and mightier than anything the enemy could bring against them. Now the servant was able to see what Elisha already saw. He now looked through eyes of faith, not sight. There is no record of the servant's response, but I am sure it brought peace and comfort to his fearful heart.

- As we face difficulty and despair, fear is the natural response. We are limited in our abilities, and often unable to do anything about our situation. When attacked by the enemy, we tend to believe that defeat is imminent, but we have a source of strength and provision the enemy cannot match. While we may not be aware, the Lord is always near to us, and provides for us according to His divine will. [Psalm 34:7 – The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.](#)

- John Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands. One night hostile natives surrounded the mission station, intent on burning out the Patons and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see their attackers leave.

A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Christ. Remembering what had happened, Paton asked the chief what had kept him from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, "Who were all those men with you there?" Paton knew no men were present--but the chief said he was afraid to attack because he had seen hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords circling the mission station. ⁱ

III. The Conquest over the Enemy (18-20) – God had not sent Elisha to Dothan to perish. He delivered him through His mighty hand and brought great victory for Israel. Consider:

A. The Supplication of Elisha (18) – [And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.](#) While I believe Elisha's prayers were prompted by the Lord, he prayed for the Syrian army to be struck with blindness. That may have appeared to be a bold prayer to some, but the Lord had already provided a host of horses and chariots of fire to protect Elisha. If God could provide such a heavenly host in their defense, Elisha had no problem believing God could answer this humble prayer.

- We talk of faith and our confidence in the power of God, but we fail to exercise such faith when we pray. The enemy would have us believe our situation is hopeless and that God doesn't

care. We must have the boldness and confidence of Elisha as we pray. He gave Himself on the cross of Calvary for our sin. He is preparing a home in heaven for us to spend eternity with Him. He has secured victory for every believer. Surely He cares about our daily needs and burdens, and is more than able to provide for us! We trust Him with our eternal destiny. Why not trust Him for our current needs?

B. The Confusion of the Enemy (19) – *And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.* God was faithful and answered Elisha's prayer. He struck the enemy with blindness and brought confusion among them. The man they sought came out and convinced them they were in the wrong place. If they would follow him, he would take them to the man they sought. Miraculously, they followed Elisha to Samaria, the capital of Israel.

- Satan has power, but he doesn't have all power. He is no match for the Lord. He likes to bring destruction and defeat to our lives, but we serve One who can enable us to overcome. God has a plan for our lives and Satan can do nothing to prevent the sovereign will of God.

C. The Provision of the Lord (20) – *And it came to pass, when they were come into 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, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.* Following their journey of approximately eleven miles, leading them into Samaria, Elisha prayed, and God opened the eyes of the Syrians. What appeared to be well laid plans for a brigade of soldiers to bring in one man had ended in defeat and surrender to the enemy. The Syrian king had a well thought out strategy, but he failed to plan on the power of God. The Lord provided protection for Elisha and blessing for Israel.

- Your situation may seem hopeless today. You may feel as if you will never survive, being completely surrounded by the enemy. If you were completely alone, I might agree, but those in Christ are never alone. He is there to guard and guide our lives through the Holy Spirit. We are kept safely in the hand of our Lord. Whatever need you may have, He is able to provide!

Conclusion: Are you struggling today, fearful about an uncertain future? Are you wondering how you will survive the battle that rages around you? Looking through physical eyes, you will never see victory, but by faith in Christ you can. He stands ready to meet your need, more than able to provide. If you are yet unsaved, yet to respond to the invitation for salvation, I urge you to come to Christ today in faith and repentance of sin. He is able and willing to save!

ⁱ <https://www.sermoncentral.com/illustrations/sermon-illustration-paul-wallace-stories-69480>