

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 2 KINGS 6

2 KINGS 6:1-7 - FLOATING AXE HEAD

V. 6-7 - IRON DOESN'T FLOAT.

THE LORD IS SO GREAT. ONE OF THE LESSONS WE'RE LEARNING FROM ELISHA'S MINISTRY THUS FAR IS THAT GOD CARES ABOUT BIG AND SMALL THINGS IN OUR LIVES AND THE WORLD. CHAPTER 4 SHOWED US RESURRECTION AND CARE FOR WIDOW'S DEBTS. CHAPTER 5 SHOWED US LEPERS BEING MADE CLEAN. AND NOW WE SEE THAT A MAN'S LOST AXE HEAD IS FOUND.

SO WHAT'S THE TAKEAWAY FROM THAT? I THINK IT TEACHES US THAT WE SHOULD PRAY AT ALL TIMES. I THINK IT TELLS US WE SHOULD ASK GOD FOR HELP IN EVERY SITUATION. WE SHOULD REPENT OF THINKING THERE ARE INSTANCES WHERE OUR SITUATION IS "TOO SMALL" FOR THE GREAT GOD TO GET INVOLVED. WE ALSO SHOULD NEVER LIMIT GOD'S POWER TO WORK IN THE "BIG" MOMENTS EITHER.

WHAT CAN OUR GOD NOT DO WHEN HIS PEOPLE SEEK HIM?!

2 KINGS 6:8-14 - ELISHA HELPS ISRAEL'S ARMY. ARAM IS NOT PLEASED

V. 8-10 - ELISHA TELLS THE KING OF ISRAEL EXACTLY WHERE THE SECRET CAMP OF THE ARAMEANS WAS. AS A RESULT ISRAEL AVOIDS THAT PLACE.

V. 11 - THE KING OF ARAM ASSUMES THERE IS A TRAITOR AMONGST HIS MEN!

V. 12-13 - ONE OF THE KING'S MEN TELLS HIM ABOUT ELISHA. THE KING MAKES PLANS TO "SEIZE" ELISHA (NLT). IT DOESN'T APPEAR THE KING WANTED TO KILL ELISHA, BUT TAKE HIM FOR HIS OWN USE. IT'S IRONIC FOR THE KING OF ARAM TO THINK THAT THAT THE ONE WHO KNOWS ALL HIS MOVES AGAINST THE ARMY OF ISRAEL WOULDN'T ALSO KNOW HIS SPECIFIC PLANS AGAINST HIM AS WELL!

V. 14 - THE GREAT ARMY OF ARAM HAS NOW ASSEMBLED TO CAPTURE ONE MAN! THEY ASSEMBLE AROUND THE CITY OF DOTHAN (V. 13) AT NIGHT.

"DOTHAN IS ONLY 10 MILES (16 KM) NORTH OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF SAMARIA, ILLUSTRATING THE EXTENT OF SYRIAN PENETRATION INTO ISRAEL AT THIS TIME." (ESV STUDY BIBLE, 2 KINGS 6:13)

2 KINGS 6:15-17 - ELISHA'S ARMY

V. 16 - IMAGINE THE CONFUSION OF ELISHA'S SERVANT. WHAT DO YOU MEAN THERE "MORE OF US THAN THEM"?

LOOK AT THE CONFIDENCE OF ELISHA. HE'S NOT TROUBLED OR AFRAID. THIS KIND OF CONFIDENCE DOES HAPPEN OVERNIGHT. THIS IS A CONFIDENCE THAT SPRINGS FORTH FROM A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. ELISHA KNEW GOD LOVED HIM, KNEW GOD CARED FOR HIM, KNEW GOD WAS HIS PROVIDER. HE HAD BEEN PRAYING TO GOD, HE HAD BEEN SERVING GOD, AND DOING HIS WILL. AS A RESULT, HE HAS CONFIDENCE WHEN FACING A REAL AND SEVERE THREAT, THAT GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM. GOD HAD PROVEN HIMSELF FAITHFUL TO ELISHA OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN. THE GOD OF THE AXE HEAD IS THE SAME GOD WHO RULES AND COMMANDS THE ARMIES OF HEAVEN.

2 KINGS 6:18-20 - ELISHA LEADS THE ARMY OF ARAM

IT'S HARD NOT TO CHUCKLE AT THIS INCIDENT. ELISHA ASKS THE LORD TO BLIND THE ARMY OF ARAM. ONCE THEY HAVE LOST THEIR SIGHT, HE APPROACHES THEM, AND OFFERS TO LEAD THEM TO "THE MAN WHO THEY SEEK" (V. 19). HE THEN LEADS THEM TO THE CENTER OF SAMARIA, THE CAPITAL CITY OF ISRAEL. AND THEN THEIR EYES OPEN.

ONE MIGHT ASK, "HOW CAN THEY STILL BE LEAD IF THEY ARE BLIND?" HERE IS THE ESV STUDY BIBLE'S NOTE ON THIS RECORD:

"PROBABLY NOT A LOSS OF PHYSICAL SIGHT (SINCE THE SYRIANS WOULD NOT DOUBT THEIR LOCATION JUST BECAUSE THEY COULD NO LONGER PHYSICALLY SEE IT), BUT RATHER A DAZED MENTAL CONDITION IN WHICH THEY ARE OPEN TO SUGGESTION AND MANIPULATION BUT STILL ABLE TO FOLLOW THE PROPHET TO SAMARIA. THE SYRIANS ARE "BEDAZZLED" AND DO NOT "SEE" THINGS CLEARLY, WHEREAS ELISHA'S SERVANT HAS BEEN GIVEN PERFECT CLARITY OF "SIGHT" ABOUT REALITY."

2 KINGS 6:21-23 - A CURIOUS WAY TO TREAT YOUR ENEMIES

V. 21 - "SHALL I KILL THEM?" - THE KING OF ISRAEL, LEADER OF THE ARMY AND KING OF THE NATION, ASKS ELISHA WHAT TO DO. HE REFERENCES HIM AS "FATHER". AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, THE KING RECOGNIZES AND HONORS ELISHA'S OFFICE.

V. 22-23 - ELISHA TELLS THE KING TO GIVE THEM FOOD AND WATER INSTEAD. THE KING PREPARES A "GREAT FEAST" (V. 23) FOR THEM. AND AS A RESULT THE "MARAUDING BANDS OF ARAMEANS DID NOT COME AGAIN INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL. (V. 23)"

SOMETIMES THE BEST STRATEGY IN DEALING WITH SOMEONE WHO YOU HAVE A CONFLICT WITH IS THROUGH KINDNESS, LOVE AND HOSPITALITY. WHILE THIS WAY OF BEHAVING IS DISTINCTIVE OF ALL DISCIPLES OF JESUS, WE DO NOT HAVE A TON OF GLIMPSES OF THIS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MINIMIZE THE POWER OF ENEMY-LOVE TO STOP EVIL FROM CONTINUING AND IN SOME CASES, END CONFLICTS ALL TOGETHER. THIS INSTANCE IS REMARKABLE IN THE MIDST OF THE ISRAELITE-ARAMEAN WAR.

LET'S PAUSE TO REMEMBER THE LESSONS OF 2 KINGS 6. AGAIN THE FOCUS IS NOT HOW GREAT ELISHA IS, BUT HOW GREAT THE GOD OF ELISHA IS. HE IS THE ONE WHO MAKES STEEL FLOAT LIKE A STICK. HE IS THE ONE LISTENING IN ON THE PLANS MADE IN THE KING OF ARAM'S BEDROOM. HE IS ONE COMMANDING THE CHARIOTS OF FIRE.

WE LEARN AGAIN THAT GOD CARES OF LITTLE THINGS, LIKE BORROWED AXE HEADS AND WHAT THE LOSS OF ONE MIGHT DO TO A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MAN WHO BORROWED AND THE MAN WHO LENT IT. WE LEARN THAT GOD IS AWARE OF THE BIG PICTURE AND THE PLANS OF OTHERS AND WILL INTERVENE TO CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE. WE LEARN THAT GOD IS THE DEFENDER OF THOSE WHO ARE HIS, IF WE BUT HAVE EYES TO SEE THAT HIS ARMY IS THERE AND READY TO FIGHT ON HIS BEHALF. WE LEARN THAT GOD'S WISDOM IS PERFECT. HE KNOWS WHEN JUDGMENT SHOULD COME DOWN OR WHEN YOUR ENEMY JUST NEEDS A SANDWICH.

I THINK THE BLESSING OF 2 KINGS 6 FOR US TODAY IS TO REMIND US TO OPEN OUR EYES TO THE WAYS GOD IS WORKING IN OUR LIVES AND IN OUR WORLDS. THERE IS MUCH GOING ON "BEHIND THE SCENES" IN OUR DAILY COMINGS AND GOINGS AND INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE. THERE IS SOMETHING BEYOND WHAT WE SEE IN THE FACES BEFORE US. THERE IS MORE TO BEHOLD, AND BEFORE WE BEHOLD, WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT THERE IS A WHOLE SPIRITUAL WORLD AROUND US IN WHICH GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER AND WORKING IN. REMEMBER THIS. AND THEN BEHOLD THIS. REMEMBER THESE TRUTHS. AND THEN ASK GOD TO OPEN THE EYES OF YOUR HEART, TO SEE NOT JUST WHAT YOU CAN SEE BEFORE YOU, BUT SEE THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON AROUND YOU AND HOW HE IS AT WORK TO LEAD, GUIDE, LOVE AND PROTECT THOSE HE LOVES.

ONCE OUR EYES ARE OPEN TO THESE TRUTHS, WE MAY NOT SEE CHARIOTS OF FIRE SURROUNDING OUR HOMES, BUT WE WILL BE AWAKENED TO THE TRUTH THAT GOD'S CARE FOR AND CLOSENESS TO US ARE JUST AS TRUE AND REAL AND PRESENT.