

## Elisha ~ Part 17

In my last post, we continued to explore the ministry of **Elisha** by looking at **2 Kings 6:1-7** where we learned that **Elisha Restores a Student Ministry**. In this post, we continue with **2 Kings 6:15-23** where we learn about the **God Who Shows Mercy**.

*"<sup>15</sup> The servant of the man of God got up early in the morning; on going outside, he saw an army with horses and chariots surrounding the city. His servant said to him, 'Oh, my master, this is terrible! What are we going to do?' <sup>16</sup> He answered, 'Don't be afraid — those who are with us outnumber those who are with them!' <sup>17</sup> Elisha prayed, 'Adonai, I ask you to open his eyes so that he can see.' Then Adonai opened the young man's eyes, and he saw: there before him, all around Elisha, the mountain was covered with horses and fiery chariots. <sup>18</sup> When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to Adonai, 'Please strike these people blind'; and he struck them blind, as Elisha had asked. <sup>19</sup> Next, Elisha told them, 'You've lost your way, and this isn't even the right city. Follow me, and I'll take you to the man you're looking for.' Then he led them to Shomron. <sup>20</sup> On their arrival in Shomron, Elisha said, 'Adonai, open the eyes of these men so that they can see.' Adonai opened their eyes, and they saw: there they were, in the middle of Shomron. <sup>21</sup> When the king of Isra'el saw them, he asked Elisha, 'My father, should I attack them? Should I attack them?' <sup>22</sup> He answered, 'Don't attack them! You wouldn't even attack prisoners you had captured with your own sword and bow, would you? So, give them food to eat and water to drink, and let them return to their master.' <sup>23</sup> So he provided well for them; and after they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away; and they returned to their master. After that, no more raiding parties entered the land of Isra'el from Aram.'" ~ 2 Kings 6:15-23 (CJB)*

**Elisha** didn't trouble himself about the army; his first concern was for his frightened servant. If he were going to walk with **Elisha** and serve God, the young man would face many difficult and dangerous situations, and he had to learn to trust the Lord. We probably would have prayed that the Lord would give peace to the lad's heart or calmness to his mind, but **Elisha** prayed for God to open his eyes. The servant was living by sight and not by faith and couldn't see the vast angelic army of the Lord surrounding the city.

Faith enables us to see God's invisible army and trust Him to give us the victory. *"The angel of Adonai, who encamps around those who fear him, delivers them."* ~ Psalm 34:7 (CJB) The angels are servants to God's people, and until we get to heaven, we will never fully know how much they have helped us.

### The God Who Shows Mercy

**Elisha** didn't ask the Lord to command the angelic army to destroy the king of **Aram's** feeble troops. As with nations today, defeat only promotes retaliation, and the king would have sent another company of soldiers. God gave **Elisha** a much better plan. He had just prayed that the Lord would open his servant's eyes, but now he prayed that God would cloud the eyes of the king's soldiers. The soldiers weren't made completely blind; otherwise, they couldn't have followed **Elisha**, but their sight was clouded in such a way that they were able to see but not comprehend. They were under the delusion that they were being led to the house of **Elisha**, but **Elisha** was leading them to the city of **Shamron**!

When **Elisha** went out to meet the king's troops, did he lie to them in verse 19? No, because he was no longer in the city of **Dotan** and was going to **Shamron**. The prophet was saving their lives, for if **King Yoram** had been in charge, he would have killed them (v. 21). **Elisha** did bring the troops to the man they wanted. When the army arrived at **Shamron**, the guards must have been shocked to see the prophet leading the troops, but they obediently opened the gates, and then God opened their eyes. Imagine their surprise when they found themselves at the heart of the capital city and the mercy of the Israelites.

The king graciously called **Elisha** "*my father,*" a term used by servants for their master, but later, we learn he wanted to take off **Elisha's** head (vv. 32)! Like his wicked father, **Achav**, he could murder the innocent one day and then "walk softly" before the Lord the next day (1 Kings 21). As James declares, ***double-minded people are unstable*** (James 1:8).

**Elisha's** reply took the matter entirely out of the king's hands. **King Yoram** wanted to kill the **Syrians**, but **Elisha** "killed them with kindness." By eating together, they made a covenant of peace, and the **Syrian** bands would no longer raid the borders of Israel.

Would this approach avert conflicts today? We must remember that Israel is a covenant nation and that the Lord fought their battles. No other nation can claim these privileges. But if kindness replaced long-standing and deeply rooted ethnic and religious differences among peoples, as well as national pride and international greed, there would no doubt be fewer wars and bombings, the same principle applies to ending divorce and abuse in families, riots and lootings in neighborhoods, uproars on campuses, and division and conflict in our communities. As Yeshua instructs us:

***"How blessed are those who show mercy! for they will be shown mercy."***  
~ Matthew 5:7 (CJB)

In my next post, we continue to explore the life of **Elisha**. In this post, we will pick up the story of **Elisha** in **2 Kings 6:24-33** where we see **The God Who Keeps His Covenant**.