

God _____ gets us involved. Elisha did not just give the widow money and say "you are all set". He got her involved. Naaman had to go 40 miles and wash himself in a river... A school of prophets needed a bigger building, it didn't providentially appear...

God and prayer:

"It was not the angelic army that brought deliverance to Elisha or to Israel; it was answered prayer. Elisha prayed, and the eyes of his servant were opened. His fears were relieved. Elisha prayed again, and the eyes of his enemies were closed. It was not angelic intervention, but divine intervention through prayer which brought about the deliverance we see in our text. And it also brought about the cessation of hostilities between Syria and Israel, at least for a time.

It is easy for us to fix our attention on the large-scale deliverance of 2 Kings 6:8-23, but let us not forget the story of the recovered axe head in verses 1-7. God is a great God, and He does bring about deliverance on a large scale, such as that of Elisha and Israel in verses 8-23. But He also is the God of the minute.

And He is not too busy to come to our aid in such matters. God can deal with large armies or with lost axe heads. What a great and gracious God He is." Deffinbaugh

In our lives: So, if the situation is hopeless, where should our focus go? To close and extended, earnest, and surrendered communication with God.

[Two men went down to a lake one morning to do some trout fishing, and they stayed there all day. But one man had a strange habit. Every time he would catch a trout he would pull out a little ruler and measure it. If the trout measured larger than the ruler he would throw it back. So strangely enough he kept all of the little trout that he caught, but he threw back all the big ones.

Well his partner watched that all day long, and as they prepared to leave he looked at him and said, "I can't stand this any longer. I have never seen a man fish like you in my life." He said, "You've kept all of the small trout and thrown back all of the big ones." The man said, "Sure did." He said, "Why did you do that?" The man said, "Because I only have an eight-inch frying pan."

Now think about that. Rather than get a bigger skillet, he was settling for smaller fish.]

So often God wants to give us twelve-inch blessings, but all we have is eight-inch faith.

Series: Biblical Gen. Ed.

Title: Elisha

Topic: ?

2 Kings 6: *The company of the prophets said to Elisha,*

- Because teachers and disciplers were called "father" by their students and disciples, it is commonly thought that this term referred to men who were being schooled or disciplined under the prophets of God.
- It is very likely that Samuel initiated these schools, since there were almost no prophets at all during the days of the Judges, and because before Saul became king, there was a group of these prophets in affiliation with Samuel (1Sam. 10).
- By the time of the early days of the reign of Ahab, there were hundreds, if not thousands, of these prophets. But Ahab's wife Jezebel had them put to death - only a hundred of them were spared, when Obadiah hid them in caves (1Kings 18:4).
- One scholar thinks the best way to envision the sons of the prophets might be to think of them as Bible college or School of Ministry students.
- They themselves moved in the gift of prophecy, for they told Elisha that Elijah would no longer be over him (literally, "over your head"), but that the Lord was taking him away.

About Elisha:

2 Kings 2: (3, 5, 7, 15)

- Elijah struck the water, and it parted, so they could walk on dry ground going across the Jordan. Elisha did the same on the return trip by himself.
- Elisha changes bad water into good.
- Elisha is called a "baldhead" by a gang of youths. He calls down a curse on them, and 42 are mauled by two bears.

2 Kings 3:

- Elisha and the King of Israel do not get along. But the king asks Elisha to help.
- The next morning water flows to fill ditches (men/animals drink)- and the Moabites were then defeated.

2 Kings 4: (1, 38)

- A widow from one of the men in the company of prophets is poor and in great debt. Per Elisha's request she and her son gather up many containers and fill them from the small flask of oil she had.
- A Shunammite couple makes a guest room for Elisha to stay in for when he was in town. In gratitude he tells her she will have a son. When son was a few years old he died and was revived by Elisha.
- There was some poisoned stew that was made edible by Elisha.
- Elisha feeds one hundred men with a small amount of food.

2 Kings 5:

- Naaman — from last week — healed after following instructions from Elisha.
- Elisha's servant gets greedy and is stricken with Naaman's leprosy forever.

2 Kings 6: An axe head _____.

2 Kings 6:8-14 Military plans are _____ by Elisha.

Not just once, but *time and again*, Elisha is able to warn the king of Israel just how to avoid the army of Syria...

- a. How did Elisha "know" where the Syrians were going to be?
- b. How did a Syrian officer "know" it because of Elisha?
- c. What is significant about Dothan?

Verses 15-17: A servant is allowed to _____.

The Lord has allowed Elisha to see (or "know") where the enemies were going be. Now He allows a servant to see His invisible "army".

Verses 18-21: An entire army is prevented from _____.

Elisha leads the Syrian army about 12 miles to Samaria.
Notice how the king of Israel addresses Elisha.

Verses 22-23: Supper in Samaria for Syrians.

A quick aside: The quick in-and-out guerilla-type raids stopped...but major attacks do not stop (verse 24...). All of this by the same King of Syria that sent Naaman to get healed in Samaria!

"We have come to a new era in terms of the relations between Syria and Israel. I do not mean to say that there is no war, because Syria does attempt to engage Israel in battle on several occasions. But in chapters 5-7, even though there is military confrontation between Israel and Syria, we see virtually no bloodshed. Wars are commenced, but they are supernaturally terminated in a way that prevents the loss of human life." Deffinbaugh
(He goes on to wonder if Naaman's faith in God caused him to temper military situations.)

Are there commonalities throughout these miracles of Elisha in chapters 2-6? What might we say all of this is here for?

Summary of the biblical accounts with Elisha:

- A woman with no husband or income and a lot of debt.
- A woman had her dreams exceeded by the birth of a son, only to see him die.
- A couple of situations with inedible water and food.
- An army without water and none in sight.
- Naaman with an incurable disease and an eternity away from God in his future.
- A student lost an expensive, borrowed tool that could not be replaced.
- A servant who is surrounded by an army.

Did we see these people in situations that seemed hopeless to them? In these accounts, the people turned to Elisha for help. In doing so, who were they ultimately turning to?

Wrap-up: When a situation seems hopeless, we know several things about God.

God _____ our problems. None of what we read about today...nothing we encounter is a surprise to God.