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#570
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A Strong Delusion

In **2 Kings 6** we see an illustrative story, one that those of us know our Bible will readily recognize. Allow me to set the table for it. The king of Aram wanted to attack Israel, but every time he sent his army to Israel to do it, Israel's king was warned ahead of time by the prophet Elisha and he moved his army. The king was upset and wanted to know who the mole was in his midst. Someone in the army spoke up and told him that Elisha heard from God and even heard the king's plans even in the privacy of his bedroom. Predictably, rather than try to listen to his gods or gather his spiritual advisors, King Aram went right for the jugular and sent a large army to take out just one man. At this moment we join the narrative:

"Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." 14 Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

15 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked. (2 Kings 6:13-15, NIV)

In the physical the servant was correct. The odds were not in their favor. But the servant knew to see what Elisha would say. And the servant surely expected him to agree with his assessment that all was lost. However, Elisha saw things much differently:

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

17 And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

18 As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Strike this army with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked. (2 Kings 6:16-18, NIV)

And God answered his prayers.

The Tables Were Turned

Instead of the King's army arresting Elisha, it was Elisha who arrested the army:

Elisha told them, "This is not the road and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man you are looking for." And he led them to Samaria.

20 After they entered the city, Elisha said, "Lord, open the eyes of these men so they can see." Then the Lord opened their eyes and they looked, and there they were, inside Samaria.

21 When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them, my father? Shall I kill them?"

22 "Do not kill them," he answered. "Would you kill those you have captured with your own sword or bow? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink and then go back to their master." 23 So he prepared a great feast for them, and after they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away, and they returned to their master. So the bands from Aram stopped raiding Israel's territory. (2 Kings 6:19-23, NIV)

Instead of arresting Elisha, the army was led right into the hands of Israel's army with nary a hair on Israel's people's heads being touched. And you would think that King Aram would leave Israel alone in light of God's miraculous power. For a time they did, but King Aram just couldn't get over his defeat and he attacked again:

Some time later, Ben-Hadad king of Aram mobilized his entire army and marched up and laid siege to Samaria. 25 There was a great famine in the city; the siege lasted so long that a donkey's head sold for eighty shekels[a] of silver; and a quarter of a cab[b] of seed pods for five shekels. 26 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, "Help me, my lord the king!"

27 The king replied, "If the Lord does not help you, where can I get help for you? From the threshing floor? From the winepress?" 28 Then he asked her, "What's the matter?"

She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son so we may eat him today, and tomorrow we'll eat my son.' 29 So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son so we may eat him,' but she had hidden him."

30 When the king heard the woman's words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and they saw that, under his robes, he had sackcloth on his body. 31 He said, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today!"

32 Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a messenger ahead, but before he arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "Don't you see how this murderer is sending someone to cut off my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and hold it shut against him. Is not the sound of his master's footsteps behind him?" 33 While he was still talking to them, the messenger came down to him. The king said, "This disaster is from the Lord. Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" (2 Kings 6:24-33, NIV)

The king of Israel saw how bad things were and decided it was because of Elisha.

A Bad Break

No, not the story, but the chapter break assigned in the Bible between chapter 6 and 7. You see the story should be read connected to both what happened in chapter 6 and the start of chapter 7 as King Aram and Elisha were both right in the middle of the events. And in both stories, people were not seeing things correctly. As Elisha was threatened by the King of Israel, Elisha scolded him and then told him how God would actually do things. The prophet told the king's servant at the gate of the city that everything would change overnight, but that he wouldn't see it. There's that vision thing again. And sure enough, during the night the Aramean army left in fear because God made them think they were being attacked:

At dusk they got up and went to the camp of the Arameans. When they reached the edge of the camp, no one was there, 6 for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!" 7 So they got up and fled in the dusk and abandoned their tents and their horses and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives. (2 Kings 7:5-7, NIV)

Four lepers figured they would have a better chance of surviving by surrendering to the Aramaeans but what they saw was totally unexpected. Rather than be selfish they went back to tell of the good news. But no one believed them, they had to see it for themselves, which really isn't a total lack of faith under the circumstances. But when they saw it was true the whole city rushed to get what they so desperately needed, however the doubting servant at the gate died as he was run over by the crowds. He didn't see it exactly as Elisha predicted. There are a lot of good lessons to be learned here but I want us to notice how the vision of people made all the difference in the world. And it does with us right now, too.

Doubters Abound Again

Regardless of the words from the prophets over the last 4 years, still people are living in disbelief. They see word after word fulfilled and yet they don't think the big words won't happen. Even though God has told us that He is listening to the enemies plans in secret, or in their bedrooms and then He uses prophets to tell us what they are planning, many simply reject it because like Elisha's servant, all they see is the earthly army aligned against us. Or they look around and are starving and can't see God moving. In a less than ghastly example, believers are cannibalizing each other in fear and desperation. And rather than look to God they are wanting the heads of the prophets. But God will have the last laugh as He always does. Already, those who want to continue to demoralize, demonize, and destroy Christians are hearing the sounds of Hittites and Egyptians in their ears and seeing that God will come through as He's said through His servants, the prophets. So they are resorting to diversions, distractions, and delusions. They are trying to make us see illusions of how dominant they are now after telling us for almost 4 years that the resident of the White House was in perfect health. And then a candidate that was so unpopular that they wanted to cast her aside suddenly is the best thing since sliced bread. Smoke and mirrors. And then they are resorting to using Artificial Intelligence to doctor photos of crowds to make people believe they are more popular than they really are. Folks, we're experiencing a massive vision problem. The good news is that Great Physician has a good set of glasses for us with the perfect prescription.

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Let me assure you that things are not as dire as you are being led to believe. Even now, things are being exposed as one Democrat after another is weighing in on how their campaigns have been sabotaged. Elisha had to correct his servant's vision before he blinded the enemy's vision to what was really going on. We have the host of Heaven all around us and all we see is the enemy's camp. I believe that those against His will are blind to what is happening and will be led captive in defeat soon. And it looks like we are going to perish because once again, the enemy is restricting us from leaving their death camps, but just as Elisha said that things would turn around in one day, so we must see that outcome as well. We have people who have been in the DC gulag for over 500 days who will be vindicated soon. Their prayers are rising up to the halls of Heaven and will not be ignored. The innocents will not be stranded much longer. There are cracks in the enemies wall of lies and they are trying to patch the holes with fake news and the plaster paris of those still in power. Neither will hold against the flood of righteousness supported by the prayers of the saints that is coming. However, which side do you want to be on? The Aramean army that is sleeping while God puts fear in their minds? Or the side of the doubting king of Israel who is calling for the lives of the prophets or standing at the gates of the city

watching victory trample you under? The only side I want to be on is the one that sees the armies of Heaven surrounding us, the one who blinds our enemies to their impending capture, and the one that sees that things will still change in one day. What is done in the dark will be brought into the light for all to see. But we can see it now and pray and prepare for it. And one last thing to glean from these stories is how we treat the blinded army. As Elisha counseled the King of Israel, leave the judging to God and treat them nicely as hard as that may be. Be kind and perhaps they will stop attacking God's children for a time. Just as the Aramean army was sent packing in fear later, let God take care of them in His way and in His timing.