



## ELISHA FOLLOWS IN ELIJAH'S FOOTSTEPS

### AN AXHEAD FLOATS

**2 Kings 6:1-7** The company of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we meet with you is too small for us. <sup>2</sup> Let us go to the Jordan, where each of us can get a pole; and let us build a place there for us to live." And he said, "Go." <sup>3</sup> Then one of them said, "Won't you please come with your servants?" "I will," Elisha replied. <sup>4</sup> And he went with them. They went to the Jordan and began to cut down trees. <sup>5</sup> As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axhead fell into the water. "Oh, my lord," he cried out, "it was borrowed!" <sup>6</sup> The man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it there, and made the iron float. <sup>7</sup> "Lift it out," he said. Then the man reached out his hand and took it.

- 1.) What "problem" did Elisha and the prophets have? Imagine what a depressed Elijah would have thought.
- 2.) What guidance does God's Word give us about borrowing?

**Psalms 37:21** The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously.

**Deuteronomy 24:12-13** If the man is poor, do not go to sleep with his pledge in your possession. Return his cloak to him by sunset so that he may sleep in it. Then he will thank you, and it will be regarded as a righteous act in the sight of the LORD your God.

**Luke 6:34-36** "And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

**Exodus 22:14** "If a man borrows an animal from his neighbor and it is injured or dies while the owner is not present, he must make restitution."

### ELISHA SHOWS COMPASSION TO BLIND ARAMEANS

**2 Kings 6:8-23** Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place." <sup>9</sup> The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." <sup>10</sup> So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. <sup>11</sup> This

enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?" <sup>12</sup> "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." <sup>13</sup> "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." <sup>14</sup> Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

<sup>15</sup> 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, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. <sup>16</sup> "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." <sup>17</sup> And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so 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.

<sup>18</sup> As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike these people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them, my father? Shall I kill them?" <sup>22</sup> "Do not kill them," he answered. "Would you kill men 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." <sup>23</sup> 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.

1.) How should God's people respond to bodily danger? (cf. 10) Give some noteworthy Biblical examples. Share any of your own rescues.

**Psalm 34:4, 7** I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. ...<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

**Psalm 91:11-12** For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; <sup>12</sup> they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

**Matthew 10:23** "When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another."

2.) What is the best way to overcome hostility in the long-term?

**Luke 6:27-31** "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. <sup>29</sup> If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you."

**Romans 12:21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Romans 5:10b** When we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son.

## SAMARIA BESEIGED

**2 Kings 5:24-7:2** Some time later, Ben-Hadad king of Aram mobilized his entire army and marched up and laid siege to Samaria. <sup>25</sup> There was a great famine in the city; the siege lasted so long that a donkey's head sold for eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a cab of seed pods for five shekels. <sup>26</sup> As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, "Help me, my lord the king!"

<sup>27</sup> The king replied, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I get help for you? From the threshing floor? From the winepress?" <sup>28</sup> 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.' <sup>29</sup> 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." <sup>30</sup> When the king heard the woman's words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and there, underneath, he had sackcloth on his body. <sup>31</sup> 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!"

<sup>32</sup> 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?" <sup>33</sup> While he was still talking to them, the messenger came down to him. And the king said, "This disaster is from the LORD. Why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

<sup>7:1</sup> Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the LORD says: About this time tomorrow, a seah of flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria." <sup>2</sup> The officer on whose arm the king was leaning said to the man of God, "Look, even if the LORD should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?" "You will see it with your own eyes," answered Elisha, "but you will not eat any of it!"

1.) Given the events of preceding chapters, what was the LORD trying to teach the king of Israel? Was he getting the message? How might WE react in a similar situation?

**Proverbs 3:5** Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

**Psalms 9:9-10** The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. <sup>10</sup> Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.

**2 Kings 7:3-20** Now there were four men with leprosy at the entrance of the city gate. They said to each other, "Why stay here until we die? <sup>4</sup> If we say, 'We'll go into the city'—the famine is there, and we will die. And if we stay here, we will die. So let's go over to the camp of the Arameans and surrender. If they spare us, we live; if they kill us, then we die."

<sup>5</sup> At dusk they got up and went to the camp of the Arameans. When they reached the edge of the camp, not a man was there, <sup>6</sup> 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!" <sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> The men who had leprosy reached the edge of the camp and entered one of the tents. They ate and drank, and carried away silver, gold and clothes, and went off and hid them. They returned and entered another tent and took some things from it and hid them also. <sup>9</sup> Then they said to each other, "We're not doing right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let's go at once and report this to the royal palace."

<sup>10</sup> So they went and called out to the city gatekeepers and told them, "We went into the Aramean camp and not a man was there—not a sound of anyone—only tethered horses and donkeys, and the tents left just as they were." <sup>11</sup> The gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported within the palace. <sup>12</sup> The king got up in the night and said to his officers, "I will tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know we are starving; so

they have left the camp to hide in the countryside, thinking, 'They will surely come out, and then we will take them alive and get into the city.' "

<sup>13</sup> One of his officers answered, "Have some men take five of the horses that are left in the city. Their plight will be like that of all the Israelites left here—yes, they will only be like all these Israelites who are doomed. So let us send them to find out what happened." <sup>14</sup> So they selected two chariots with their horses, and the king sent them after the Aramean army. He commanded the drivers, "Go and find out what has happened." <sup>15</sup> They followed them as far as the Jordan, and they found the whole road strewn with the clothing and equipment the Arameans had thrown away in their headlong flight. So the messengers returned and reported to the king. <sup>16</sup> Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a seah of flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley sold for a shekel, as the LORD had said.

<sup>17</sup> Now the king had put the officer on whose arm he leaned in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died, just as the man of God had foretold when the king came down to his house. <sup>18</sup> It happened as the man of God had said to the king: "About this time tomorrow, a seah of flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria."

<sup>19</sup> The officer had said to the man of God, "Look, even if the LORD should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?" The man of God had replied, "You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it!" <sup>20</sup> And that is exactly what happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died.

1.) Yet another miraculous rescue of the Northern Kingdom! Why is doubting God's Word and power so dangerous? Any notable Scriptural examples?

**Psalm 78:19-22** They spoke against God, saying, "Can God spread a table in the desert? <sup>20</sup> When he struck the rock, water gushed out, and streams flowed abundantly. But can he also give us food? Can he supply meat for his people?" <sup>21</sup> When the LORD heard them, he was very angry; his fire broke out against Jacob, and his wrath rose against Israel, <sup>22</sup> for they did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.

**Psalm 138:2-3** I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word. <sup>3</sup> When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted.

## PRAYER