

# GOD'S RESCUE PATTERN

## II Kings 6:8-18

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### NARRATIVE

The narrative begins, with the king of Syria warring against Israel. Part of the purpose of his war strategy is to ambush Israelite soldiers, and capture the king of Israel.

His strategy fails not just one or twice. He was frustrated. He thought there was a spy in his kingdom, working for Israel, until he was informed that *(by virtue of God's revelation)* Elisha was aware of his schemes.

Elisha passed on this information to the king of Israel who acted on the information. This occurred too many times to be mere coincidence.

Then one of the servants of the king of Syria told him that Elisha knew of his most private of thoughts and words (*Ecclesiastes 10:20*).

You and I need to remember that whatever we do, whatever we say, whatever we think, nothing is hidden from the Lord. (*Hebrews 4:13*). This statement made by Henry Blunt is too often true: *we say that God is all eye, all ear, all knowledge, and we live as if He were absolutely blind, and deaf, and ignorant.*

The king decided that his most pressing military objective was not the defeat of Israelite soldiers or even the capture of the king but he would have to neutralize the prophet before he could carry out further military manoeuvres.

He sent spies to know where Elisha dwells and they returned with the report that Elisha is in Dothan.

The king increased the size of the army and resources to ensure Elisha was captured. The king probably did not care if the soldiers brought him back dead or alive.

One has to wonder at the king's reasoning powers. If Elisha knew all his military plans, why would he not be aware of this plan? If Elisha knew even the words

he spoke in his bedroom, how could the king hope to entrap him?

It was a plan doomed to failure from the beginning. Nevertheless, from a human standpoint, the strategy seemed sound. The army timed its arrival at Dothan for the middle of the night so Elisha would not see the soldiers coming and slip out of town. Quickly, they surrounded the city. There appeared to be no escape for the prophet.

The next morning, Elisha's servant rose early and went out - whatever his reason for going out, what he saw terrified him. As far as he could see to the north, the east, the south, and the west - the city was completely surrounded.

The servant, who surely knew of Elisha's communication with the king of Israel, rightly concluded that the army was there for them. He ran back into the house and cried out to Elisha, *alas, my master! What shall we do? (v. 15c).*

His exclamation meant all is lost - it is over - we are doomed already! We will be captured and probably killed! His question indicated that there is nothing we can do! We have no hope!

We can all identify with Elisha's servant. There have been occasions, in which we felt overwhelmed by circumstances, events, challenges, situations? Situation where everything seem hopeless. We at times have cried out *what shall we do?*

Did such cries ever change the situation? Were we over-reactors then? Elisha's servant must have forgotten WHO gave Elisha information about the schemes of the king of Syria. Same applies to us.

Let's consider certain questions in this narrative.

***Why did God not inform Elisha about the king's new plan?***

***Why did God allow the plan to surround Elisha's location, go through?***

***Did Elisha not hear about the noise of the army and chariots?***

Elisha almost certainly knew what was happening, but it did not disturb his sleep. His confidence was in Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps (*see Psalm 121:4*).

## **GOD'S PATTERN**

Our expectation would be that God using Elisha would focus on the problem.

Instead the focus was placed on the fearful servant.

Elisha tried to calm his trembling assistant: ***do not fear (v. 16a)***.

In ***Matthew 8:23-27***, the apostles cried hopelessly for intervention when the boat was covered with waves and they said we are perishing, ***yet Christ was asleep – as if there was no storm***.

Christ first response was not to the storm but to the apostles who were fearful.

Why should we not fear? Why should the apostles not fear?

Why was the servant not to fear? Elisha continued, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them (***2 Kings 6:16b; see 2 Chronicles 32:7***). I can imagine the servant running outside and counting the soldiers around the city.

Then I see him running back inside and counting...

What does he mean, *those who are with us are more than those who are with them?*

This is not answer I expected. He was still not satisfied. He was still anxious.

Elisha knew that the intervention would make no sense to the servant if he is not calm enough to allow God do His work.

Most times, out of impatience and disappointment at God's pattern of help, we have sought for other help, which were temporary and brought adverse consequences later in our lives.

Elisha keenly aware of the spiritual reality; he knew that God would protect him. Rather, he prayed for his frightened helper.

Elisha went further with focus on the fearful servant. He prayed: ***oh LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see (6:17a)***.

His servant had been seeing with the eyes of the flesh; he needed to see with the eyes of faith (***2 Corinthians 5:7***).

Burton Coffman called verse 17 one of the most inspiring texts in the [Old Testament].

And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire (***v. 17b***).

Elisha's message still speaks to us today: ***do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them (v. 16)***.

One of our great needs is to have our eyes opened to spiritual realities. If we see only with the eyes of the flesh, we will find ourselves constantly disappointed and discouraged. If we can learn to see with the eyes of faith (see Hebrews 11:27), we will be refreshed and revitalized.

Elisha prayed, O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see (2 Kings 6:17a). The next time we are filled with fear and despair, we may want to pray, O Lord, open our eyes and help us to know that You love us and care for us!

When the servant became calm and ready to allow God operate, Elisha now shifted focus to the battle ***verse 18***.

Same thing Jesus did in ***Matthew 8:23-27***.

Have you ever wondered why some of our prayers have not been answered?

Maybe we are yet to be calm and let faith replace our emotions and sentiments.

Have you ever wondered why the storms still rage despite our cry in hopelessness?

Have you wondered what God is telling us in the midst of storms? To see the breakthrough in challenges even it does not seem obvious.

***Isaiah 55:8-9*** confirms that our ways, expectations cannot be compared God's pattern of action.

He knows best when to act and how to act.

Let's go in faith this week and be blessed in Jesus Christ Name, amen.