

# Elisha's Prayer

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## Elisha's Prayer – 2 Kings 6:8-23

<sup>2KI 6:8</sup> Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel; and he counseled with his servants saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp."  
<sup>2KI 6:9</sup> The man of God sent *word* to the king of Israel saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there."  
<sup>2KI 6:10</sup> The king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him; thus he warned him, so that he guarded himself there, more than once or twice.  
<sup>2KI 6:11</sup> Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?"  
<sup>2KI 6:12</sup> One of his servants said, "No, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."  
<sup>2KI 6:13</sup> So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and take him." And it was told him, saying, "Behold, he is in Dothan."  
<sup>2KI 6:14</sup> He sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.  
<sup>2KI 6:15</sup> Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"  
<sup>2KI 6:16</sup> So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."  
<sup>2KI 6:17</sup> Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.  
<sup>2KI 6:18</sup> When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Strike this people with blindness, I pray." So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.  
<sup>2KI 6:19</sup> Then Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he brought them to Samaria.  
<sup>2KI 6:20</sup> When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see." So the LORD opened their eyes and they saw; and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.  
<sup>2KI 6:21</sup> Then the king of Israel when he saw them, said to Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"  
<sup>2KI 6:22</sup> He answered, "You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them that they may eat and drink and go to their master."  
<sup>2KI 6:23</sup> So he prepared a great feast for them; and when they had eaten and drunk he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel.

What is going on in this text? What do you see?

Observations:

1. How theology can influence what you see in Scripture.
  - a. The text indicates that Elisha was "hearing" what the King of Aram was speaking in his bedroom. What does this mean?
  - b. Some theologians would argue that Elisha somehow had access 'physically' into the King's private council. That Elisha knew what was being said because he was physically there. Is that the message of this passage?
  - c. Other theologians would argue that rather than Elisha being there physically, that God had supernaturally revealed to Elisha what was transpiring through an Angelic messenger who was eavesdropping on the King.
  - d. The question is whether the disclosure was natural... or supernatural. What clues does the text provide? A major clue is revealed in the text when Elisha's servant's eyes were "opened" and then the servant saw what Elisha already knew – that God's Spiritual army was present and

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there was no need to fear. This would seem to indicate that Elisha was “seeing” through Spiritual eyes... a form of discernment.

### 2. Note the prayer – “open his eyes that he may see” – what is being asked?

#### a. Other verses that influence this passage:

- i. <sup>DT 29:4</sup> “Yet to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.
- ii. <sup>EZE 12:2</sup> “Son of man, you live in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house.
- iii. <sup>Jn 8:43</sup> Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.
- iv. <sup>RO 11:8</sup> just as it is written, “GOD GAVE THEM [OVER TO] A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.”
- v. <sup>MT 26:53</sup> “Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

#### b. ‘Eyes to see’ and ‘ears to hear’ speak to perception – but there is more to this... to see and hear implies the ability to know and understand. Perception and understanding are intrinsically linked. Further, if you perceive correctly, as well as know and understand... you are expected to act accordingly. The axiomatic formula of “Perception→Knowing→Understanding→acting” is a consistent Scriptural thematic development. Jesus repeatedly berated the Jewish leaders because they should have known who He was and what He was doing because they knew the Scriptures which pointed authoritatively to Jesus as Messiah. Jesus expected them therefore to act accordingly in love and obedience. Jesus spoke of their lack of perception being due to their hardness of heart – what does this mean?

- i. Eyes and ears are the 2 major ‘gates of perception’ – and they speak to the link of perception to the experiential element of knowing.
- ii. It is important that our minds be informed by Scripture [knowing & understanding], and our behavior conformed by Scripture [obedience] – but the point that personal transformation occurs is relational dependent part which the key element in an integrated spiritual life.
- iii. The transformational aspect of knowing in this context has to do with the expectation of relational intimacy with the ‘Person’ [God] behind the action.
- iv. When you ‘know’ someone to be good, kind, and loving you expect to observe these traits flowing through the entirety of their life... where the walk and the talk come into alignment. Where there is inconsistency we know something is wrong.
- v. A child knows their parents are loving because they ‘abide’ in their love. When a parent fails to consistently express love – through their own brokenness and sin... then the message to the child gets confused. Children and adults of abuse are an example of this problem... where the person who should be committed to their well-being fails to act accordingly. This often leads to a distorted understanding of God as well.
- vi. The Greek word for abide is – μένω v. G3531 (3-118) to stay, remain, live, dwell, abide; to be in a state that begins and continues, yet may or may not end or stop. “To abide in Christ” is to follow his example of a life obedient to the will of God.

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- vii. The transformational component is knowing God is Good and trusting in His goodness. Corollaries are knowing God to be Just, Merciful, Kind, Loving... etc., and expecting Him to act accordingly.
- c. Jesus spoke that His "Words were Life and Truth."
  - i. This suggests that the main problem that segregated Jesus' true followers from those who merely observed Him had to do with a proper understanding and intentional relational dependence in obedience:

Jn 12:43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.  
Jn 12:44 Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.  
Jn 12:45 When he looks at me, he sees [not just me but] the one who sent me.  
Jn 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.  
Jn 12:47 "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them [obedience], I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.  
Jn 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.  
Jn 12:49 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.  
Jn 12:50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."
  - ii. Jesus claimed that He was God. Not merely a teacher or Rabbi, or even a prophet. He was God in the flesh. Only God can give Life, and only God is the source of Truth.
- 3. If we as disciples claimed the impartation of Elisha's prayer that our eyes would be opened so we could see the Spiritual reality that surrounds everything, how would our lives be changed? Do you dare enter such a world? Know that we live there already, it is only a matter of perception→Knowing→Understanding→acting.