

Come Follow Me
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Week 28
2 Kings 2-7

The stories and miracles of Elisha. As you recall Elisha is the successor of Elijah. They met back in 1 Kings chapter 19 when the Lord told Elijah were to get this new protege. Now we will study about how Elijah moves to his next calling not through death but through translation. An event similar to Moses's translation. This week there are a ton of amazing stories and miracles with great principles to study, but as usual we will focus on just one principle that I hope would have a great impact on your life and help you draw a little closer to God this week.

This event takes place in 2 Kings chapter 6 just after Elisha makes the head of an Ax float. I'd like to make an observation before we dive into this story. Through the two books of Kings we see 2 prophets Elijah and Elisha that don't do much preaching. They both perform lots of miracles and move God's work forward in astonishing ways but these 2 prophets at least in writing don't teach much. This makes the study of their lives a little more interesting, and finding the principles and a bit more fun applying it to our lives.

In verse 8 of chapter 6 we find out that the King of Syria is in a war against the children of Israel. There seems to be some confusion where the Kings will be camping during this battle and the King of Syria begins to think that he has a spy among him because the Isrealite army always knows his next move. When he starts to interrogate his servant to try and find the deceiver, one of his servants points out that the Isrealites have a prophet that is on their side and tells the King in verse 12:

“And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that *is* in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.”

So the King tells his servants to find this Elisha and bring him. So they send many horses and chariots after Eliisha.

“and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?”

We don't know for sure if this is the same servant that was with Elisha in the previous chapter when Naaman was healed of his leprosy, I think we could safely assume that he is. Which brings up an interesting question of how many miracles has this servant seen Elisha perform? And why would this be any different. Well, the answer is pretty simple. Miracles don't change our faith. The natural eyes can see something incredible but unless there is a witness of the Holy Ghost, a burning of fire in your soul there will be no lasting testimony to strengthen or lift you. It is simply an event that the mortal mind cant comprehend and so it files it in with the strange unordinary things that are quickly forgets about. This is why God will rarely use events in your life that will help you increase your faith. We expect it one way but God's process is usually the opposite. He expects us to have faith and a testimony first and then will come the witness of our faith. When an event or a visitation or miracle will not change our faith then is

when those things start to take place in our lives. The principle is that God will not take away your agency. That is one of his most precious gifts. If he were to show you miraculous things before you are ready and before you have a testimony of such things, that would hinder your eternal progression. Instead he willingly gives those things to those that already have accepted those things as real and normal so that when they come their belief system is not disturbed but rather solidified because those things are already understood and accepted.

This is what we see with this story of Elisha's servant. He has seen the prophet do many marvelous things but he didn't understand them, it didn't change him. So he wakes up and sees an army surrounding them and fear is his dominating emotion. Elisha on the other hand has a solid testimony that God is present in his life and that he will be protected, so fear never even crosses his mind. In verse 16 he says to his servant:

“Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.”

That is Elisha's truth. He knows that because he accepts God's will. If God were to have Elisha and his servant killed at that moment Elisha knows that God would have told him. And that also he would have accepted willingly. But, God didn't tell him so he slept soundly that night having trust in the Lord.

But, I'm sure that the servant was still freaking out. He wasn't ready to die. Then we see the Grace of God in verse 17.

“And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his [eyes](#), that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and [chariots](#) of fire round about Elisha.”

The servant probably didn't deserve this merciful act, and perhaps we aren't ready when we see certain things in our lives, the key though is what we do with them. Can we take some merciful act from God and use that to strengthen our testimony or our trust in Him? Let me put it this way: Suppose next general conference our prophets got up and pronounced a similar blessing. He prays; God open their eyes, that they may see all the angelic help that I have sent to each of them. Then for a brief moment you were able to see the hosts of angels around you that are with you every day? I'm sure church attendance would spike for a few months maybe a year then slowly it would return to what it normally is. But, what about you? How would it change you? That is the most important question we can ponder this week. If you don't believe those things are true, that angels are with you everyday, ancestors that have an eternal interest in your salvation then this event would have no bearing on your life and you would quickly forget and brush aside its influence. But on the other hand; If you did have faith in these things and you really understood and accepted these truths. When they do happen your faith is then turned to knowledge and your testimony is solidified into an unbreakable principle of righteousness that will guide and direct your path back to God in an unspeakable way.

We don't know what the result was for this young man in this story. But, we do know what the result can be for us.

The armys on Syria then come down to take Elisha and he prays that they be cursed with blindness and they all end up fighting and destroying themselves.

It's an incredible account of God's mercy and grace for both Elisha and his servant. But where does that leave you and me? Now that the principle is clear and we understand it, how are we to grow and improve? I'm sure all of us have a desire to see more miracles in our lives. Perhaps even visions, revelations, visitations. But these things won't come unless we are ready and able to receive them.

In John Pontius's fictional book "Angels of Fire" the character Samuel Mahoy has an encounter with an ancient relative who appears at times in his life to make sure he is staying on the path. When he has an opportunity to ask him why he was seeing him and why at certain times are they able to communicate. This special visitor says this "you have much to learn, and I'm here to teach you" and then this important principle when he asks why now he is getting these great experiences, "Sam, much more importantly, you have faith- great faith actually, and your eternal progression is neither hindered, nor helped by what you see. It didn't affect your agency by allowing you to see me. It is really as simple as that. Your faith is what makes all this possible."

Faith really is the key. I believe that faith has 4 major parts to it and I'd like to share them with you in conclusion. The first part is an unwavering belief that something is true. Second; It must be an eternal truth- For example; To know for assurity that God lives, that Jesus Christ is His only begotten son. That Jesus Christ died for you and me and was resurrected to break the bonds of death opening the gates for all of us to also be resurrected and obtain an immortal body. Belief in the Law of Tithing, the word of wisdom, or any other eternal law. These two are the beginning steps in the progression of faith. The third and fourth are what separates belief from faith. Number three is that it has to be according to God's will. This is probably the most important part. You can want with all your heart for some miracle to happen, you can believe and hope and pray and plead with God; but, if it is not his will it wont be manifest. And the fourth part of faith is that it must be for a wise purpose. What I mean by that is: Let's say that you want to learn some important principle. And it is God's will that you learn that principle. And you believe that God can teach you this principle. Your desire is that God send you an angel to teach you this important principle. However, God has prompted you to read a book that contains the teachings of this principle but you refuse to read it because you would prefer to have an angel teach you. I know that it sounds a little silly, but oftentimes we get caught in this trap of wanting what we want, when we want it, how we want it. This is not the way of the gospel. It is rather; humility, submissiveness, and faith. These will lead you to the knowledge which you seek.

One last thought before you leave you for a week: If you have learned all that this world has to offer. Every scripture has been studied, all the best books have been read. Conference talks have been pondered. All that God has freely gifted us has been feasted upon. Perhaps then God will have no other choice but to send his wise angels to open our eyes to more of His wisdom, of truths not contained or written in this mortal realm. We see this as we read accounts from many prophets that heard incredible things from visitors that they were forbidden to write because these things were too sacred to record. Those are the things that we should seek after we have learned all that God has given us so graciously. For I know that those marvelous truths God truly wants us to know.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.