



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – March 18, 2023

The Lord be with you.

Recently, a wise friend reminded me, Tim, what we're facing in our country right now and in our lives, it's really a spiritual battle, because we are at a struggle against unseen forces of spiritual darkness. Now, as soon as my friend said that, I knew she was right. What we're facing today is what the Apostle Paul calls a struggle, not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against spiritual forces of evil. And as I prayed about what my friend told me, I thought of the powerful scene from the Bible that encourages me in the struggle and I'm gonna share it with you today, and I hope that it encourages you as well.

I'm in the Old Testament Book of Second Kings Chapter 6. Where we read about Elisha, who is a prophet proclaiming God's Word to the northern kingdom of Israel. And as Elisha goes about his prophetic ministry, he has stirred up the anger of the King of Aram to the north, such that the King of Aram sends horses and chariots and a great army, who come by night and they surround the city of Dothan, that's on a mountain where Elisha is. So, I wanna pick up reading here in 2 Kings Chapter 6, Verse 15, "When an attendant of the man of God rose early." Well, the, of course, the man of God, here is Elisha. "When an attendant of the man of God rose early in the morning and let out, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city, and Elisha's servant said to him, alas Master, what shall we do? And Elisha replied, do not be afraid for there are more with us than there are with them." Now, you know how people are always saying that seeing is believing? Well, for Elisha, it's really the other way around, as for Elisha, believing is seeing as through the eyes of faith, Elisha sees something that his servant cannot see. Elisha can see an unseen army. Elisha sees God's angelic army well in control of the situation, so Elisha praise in verse 17, "O Lord, please open my servant's eyes that he may see." See what? It says, "So the Lord opened the eyes of the servant and he saw the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." So suddenly the eyes of Elisha's servant are open to the unseen spiritual world. Elisha's prayer opens his servant's eyes to the spiritual reality. That the mountain where Elisha is... It's filled with God's army of horses and chariots of fire. Now, note that Elisha's prayer is not that God's spiritual army come because that spiritual army is already there. Rather Elisha's prayer is that his servant's eyes might be open to see God's protection that is with them. Yes. The army of Aram has surrounded Elisha on all sides, but God has stationed an invisible guard to encompass and protect him.



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Now, it's sometimes easy for me to look at what is going on in our country and some of the problems that I face, and to feel the fear that Elisha's servant had, but believing is seeing that God's invisible army surrounds His people. Now less you think that angels are just showing up in the Old Testament, or that angels were just there for ancient Israel, we see that the New Testament is filled with angels that are caring for and ministering to God's people. Listen to the New Testament Book of Hebrews, chapter 1, verse 14, I read, "Are not all angels spirits in the divine service sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation." Note the present tense here, "Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve, to care for, to protect, to bring us safely to our home in heaven." As angels cared for Jesus and ministered to our Lord Jesus in the wilderness in Gethsemane, and many times more so, angels care for and minister to us, and Jesus promises that when we finish our life journey that it will be angels who will take us, who will escort us to be with Him. And you know when I was a chaplain for hospice, it was my privilege to be with many who as they were dying, told me of angels coming around them, and my own son saw two angels the night that my dad passed away. They are all angels. Spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation. Now, of course, we don't worship angels, we worship on God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but angels are God's creatures and by God on a mission for serving us all the way through our journey, and just as God appoints parents to help children on their journey and appoints many others along the way to help us on our way, so God appoints mighty angels, spirits to care for and protect us in our struggle against spirits of darkness.

So, Lord, in these difficult times, please do open our eyes so that we will not be afraid as with faith, we see that there are more with us than those who are against us. For believing is truly seeing.

I'm Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.