

SERMON OUTLINE

STUDIES IN THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ELISHA

'Elisha: the messenger of salvation' - 8

2 Kings 6 v1 - 23

'The sovereignty of God in the little things of life as well as the big things of life'

'I do not intend to spend any time at all proving to you the general truth that God is sovereign in His world. There is no need; for I know that, if you are a Christian, you believe this already. How do I know that? Because I know that, if you are a Christian, you pray; and the recognition of God's sovereignty is the basis of your prayers. In prayer, you ask for things and give thanks for things. Why? Because you recognize that God is the author and source of all the good that you have had already, and all the good that you hope for in the future. This is the fundamental philosophy of Christian prayer. The prayer of a Christian is not an attempt to force God's hand, but a humble acknowledgment of helplessness and dependence. When we are on our knees, we know that it is not we who control the world; it is not in our power, therefore, to supply our needs by our own independent efforts; every good thing that we desire for ourselves and for others must be sought from God, and will come, if it comes at all, as a gift from His hands. If this is true even of our daily bread (and the Lord's Prayer teaches us that it is), much more is it true of spiritual benefits. This is all luminously clear to us when we are actually praying, whatever we may be betrayed into saying in argument afterwards. In effect, therefore, what we do every time we pray is to confess our own impotence and God's sovereignty. The very fact that a Christian prays is thus proof positive that he believes in the Lordship of his God.'

James Packer - 'Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God', IVP, page 11

1. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN THE LITTLE THINGS OF LIFE

(v1 - 6)

Note - Don't rationalise this story! Don't allegorise this story! Don't moralise this story! Take it as it is - it was a miracle!

Key Lesson - Even our smallest concerns are big enough and important enough for God to be interested in. See - Matt 10 v30

*'Not one concern of ours is small
if we belong to him;
to teach us this, the Lord of all,
once made the iron to swim.'*

John Newton

2. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN THE BIG THINGS OF LIFE

(v7 - 23)

Key Verse - v16 & 1 Jn 4 v4.

Context - In the building up and extending of the kingdom of God there is an enemy who is set against us. See - 1 Pet 5 v8. Key Question - What is it, when we're under attack, that's going to give us the sort of peace and poise that we see here in Elisha? The answer is - the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. We see this here....

A. GOD'S SOVEREIGN KNOWLEDGE OF THE ENEMY

See - v8 - 12.

B. GOD'S SOVEREIGN POWER OVER THE ENEMY

See - v13 - 20.

Note - **(i) The situation as it seemed to be** - v15

(ii) The situation as it really was - v16 - 17

This is all about spiritual perception - seeing not just with the physical eye but with the spiritual eye. It's seeing with the eye of faith!

God's servants were protected - and God's enemies were overpowered. See - v18.

C. GOD'S SOVEREIGN MERCY TO THE ENEMY

See - v21 - 23. Elisha refused to kill the captures enemy - and yet, he did! He killed them with kindness. See - Matt 5 v43 - 44.