

“OPEN MY EYES LORD” (2 Kings 6:8-17) Good morning church. (*Introduce Kids Blitz video*). What an exciting time Kids Blitz will be so please be in prayer for the impact of that event. Of course this is Memorial Day weekend which brings to our remembrance those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. This weekend also officially kicks off the summer season. So, I pray wherever you are, you have an enjoyable and Christ-filled summer. And a special welcome to our visitors today. We are honored that you have joined us. And if you go by the welcome desk in the foyer, they have a gift bag just for you. We continue today with our TOR Series to refresh and rekindle our walk w/God. So today, please turn with me to the OT Book of 2 Kings chapter 6, where I’ll read in just a moment beginning in verse 8. Perhaps you’ve heard the story of the **(preacher/wife, married 50 years. Visit her sister, clean the garage. Found a box and inside was an egg carton with 10 eggs, large amount of cash money. I’ve been preaching and teaching God’s Word for many years....just talk about Jesus)**, and that’s my prayer in the message this morning. Our text today is a familiar account to many, but also one that is powerfully relevant to each of our lives and to our position in Christ Jesus. Let’s read beginning in 2 Kings 6:8 **(read/pray)** The title of the message this morning is **Open My Eyes Lord**. We are all often confronted with problems and circumstances in which we see no way out or through? I would like to use this OT story as a springboard to our lives. First, let me review this encounter. Elisha was the successor of Elijah, and he was God’s prophet to Israel. As our text reveals, he is often referred to simply *as the man God*. I wonder if people use that term, ‘a man of God, a woman of God’ to describe you and I? Apart from Jesus, only Moses exceeded Elisha in miracles. Elisha commanded an iron axe to float on water, he raised a boy from the dead, he multiplied bread and fed a multitude just as Jesus did. When a bunch of teenagers mocked Elisha because he was bald-headed, two bears came out of the woods and devoured them. Elisha was not to be trifled with. In our text, the King of Syria plans to invade Israel. So he calls his officers and perhaps points to a map and says, ‘here’s where we will set up an ambush of Israel’s army’. But God reveals his plans to Elisha who informs the King of Israel and they simply detour around that ambush site. *V10 says this happened more than once or twice*. As you can imagine, the pagan king assumes he has a spy in his midst. But his officers say **“No King but the prophet of God in Israel knows your secret plans”**. The king says, where is he? He’s in Dothan. So he sends a great army. Most commentaries agree this army may have numbered in the thousands. Imagine them being roused from their quarters at night and marched to Dothan to get one man. Perhaps they ask one another, who is this guy? Is he one of the Avengers, Captain America or Thor, no he’s the man of God in Israel. The army surrounds the city by night. Elisha’s servant goes out in the morning perhaps to gather wood or draw water and he sees this enemy army surrounding the city. He runs back inside...heart pounding, knees knocking and reports to Elisha saying, **“master what will we do, what will we do”**. And that’s the setting for our message but how does it relate to you and I today. Three things **ELISHA’S PRAYER FOR CLARITY, PAUL’S PLEA FOR CONVICTION, AND OUR POSITION OF CONFIDENCE**.

Notice first in your outline **ELISHA’S PRAYER FOR CLARITY**. I love the little proverb that says, **“two men look out through prison bars, one saw mud, the other saw stars”**. Life is often a matter of perspective is it not? Notice there are two options for handling life’s problems. First, notice **Option 1: The servant – ‘blinded’ sight**. Helen Keller was once asked by a journalist is there anything worse than having no sight. **She responded yes, it’s far worse to have sight but no vision**. Elisha’s servant wasn’t blind physically. He could see well enough to see the circumstances, the opposition, his lack of resources. He just couldn’t see what Elisha saw. His blinded sight led to anxiety, discouragement, and depression. I can relate to that can’t you. Where does this blinded sight come from? Well, it comes from many sources but one common to all of us is the enemy of our souls. Notice the verse please from 2 Cor. 4: **And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**. Did you see the language Paul uses? The god of this world, the devil, will blind not our eyes, but our minds. The devil doesn’t want us to see with spiritual eyes. He wants to keep us living apart from God’s purposes and God’s resources. When I’m living by blinded sight, I cannot see or experience the victorious life God has called me to in Christ. Oh, beware of Option 1, blinded sight.

But there is another option, which is **Option 2: Elisha – ‘believing’ sight**. Elisha had a believing sight. He says to his servant, *don’t be afraid, relax, calm down*. There are more with us than are with them. I’m sure his servant looks around and does the math and it doesn’t add up. Perhaps he thought, **“My master is crazy, he’s lost his mind, bless his heart**.” Have you ever noticed that you can say anything you want about someone as long as you tack on the words ‘bless their heart’. Elisha’s dumb as a rock, bless his heart. But Elisha sees what his servant doesn’t. Notice Elisha

doesn't pray for the heavenly host to come. He knows they're already there. He can see them with the eye of faith. So, he prays for clarity for his servant. O God, open his eyes that he may see. He is praying that God take the servant from blinded sight to believing sight. And the Lord opens his eyes and he sees horses and chariots of fire and the heavenly host covering the mountainside, positioned between them and the pagan army. But it took the Lord to open his eyes. You perhaps recall in Acts that when the persecutor Saul was confronted by Christ on the road to Damascus that he was blinded. And God sent a man named Ananias to pray for him. Notice the verse from Acts 9:17-18 **So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."** **18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight.** When Ananias prayed, the blindfold was removed Saul (who became Paul) went from a blinded sight to a believing sight. But like Elisha's servant and Paul, it takes God to open our eyes. Listen to what Charles Spurgeon says of this experience **(quote)** Let me give a simple illustration. Years ago, some of you remember, hidden 3D pictures were popular. For example, there would be a very busy image (like this one) that seems to depict nothing but if you looked hard and focused just right, a hidden image would pop out. At our house we had an entire book of them called The Magic Eye. I confess I could look hard, burn a laser through the page, move to the right or left, stand on my head...and never see those hidden images. But our daughter Hannah could see them as fast as you could turn the page. She'd say, oh there's a race car, a sailboat, a dolphin. We noticed Hannah would process things differently than other folks, so we had her tested. Some of you know this, but most people function primarily out of the left or right side of their brain. One side is dominant. The left brained person is logical, methodical and analytical. A right brained person is creative and spontaneous. But when we tested Hannah she fell into a rare group that are whole brained. She could see and process things differently than other folks. Now that doesn't make her smarter. She just thinks differently. Most of us go through life with blinded sight and can't see the forest for the trees, but those who have believing sight see and reason and process in a way that others do not. And Elisha prayer for clarity, God open his eyes that he may see. Friends, we should pray for that daily.

So, let's go from Elisha's prayer for clarity to **PAUL'S PLEA FOR CONVICTION.** Listen carefully to these verses from Ephesians 1:18-19. **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.** Doesn't that sound like Elisha's prayer. Paul is praying, not for our physical sight, but for the eyes of our heart to be opened. There's a sense of urgency in Paul's prayer. He's praying wake up man of God, woman of God, wake up church. He's praying for conviction, for a knowing, a certainty deep in your being. Paul prays that our eyes are opened to three things. And if you and I begin to see life through the lens of these three things, God can transform your life. Let's look at the quickly.

First, He prays that our eyes are opened and we **AWAKE TO GOD'S PURPOSE.** He refers to **the hope of His calling.** His plea is for us to wake up to God's purpose and God's calling for our lives. Do you recall the occasion when Jesus was being confronted by the Pharisees and Jesus says, **I know where I have come from and I know where I am going.** Jesus lived the most secure and overcoming life ever lived because He had a sense of the Father's purpose and mission, and He was never intimidated or moved from that purpose. A news story recently reported a man at an airline ticket counter in Charlotte. There was a long line and this man felt like he was too important to wait in line so he cuts up to the front of the line and demands to be waited on. The ticket agent said ***sir I'm happy to wait on your but you'll have to wait your turn in line.*** The man was rude and demanding and said, ***young lady do you know who I am.*** She said no sir, but wait one moment. She calmly picked up the intercom and said, **ladies and gentlemen, we have a man here who doesn't know who he is, if someone can help please come forward.** Most of us inside and outside the church wander around in a fog with no direction or purpose because there is no sense of identity and purpose in our lives. Our eyes haven't been opened to the **hope of His calling.** May I define God's calling and purpose for your life in the simplest of terms. Notice the verse please: **God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I Cor. 1:9** During my college years I changed my major multiple times. I was struggling with my quote/unquote calling in life. I was in a rut. You know what a rut is don't you....it's just a grave with both ends kicked out. And then one day, this verse became a life verse from me. It was like a voice from heaven. My calling is fellowship w/Christ. Every calling in your life (the mate you choose, the vocation you choose, where you go to church) is critical, but secondary to your primary calling in life which is to know Christ and make Him known. Your purpose and calling is not defined by your performance, possession or position as we discussed last week. You were created and called for

fellowship w/Christ. The kind of fellowship so that the world can see Jesus in you. We've complicated life far beyond God's intent. **Example: Rolex watch illustration.**

Here's the 2nd part of Paul's plea. That our eyes are opened and are **AWARE OF God's provision.** Specifically Paul wants us **to know the wealth of His glorious inheritance in the saints.** Don't let that word 'wealth' deceive you....this isn't a 'wealth doctrine'. The disciples had the shirts on their backs and no more. This is having our eyes opened to having a God who in every circumstance of life, is more than enough. **St. Louis Cardinals baseball shirt story.** God is your source. Elisha knew what his servant did not. He had a resource beyond what the physical eye can see. And Paul prays our eyes are opened to our inheritance in the saints. Notice this familiar verse from Rom. 8. **The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow (joint) heirs with Christ.** That term fellow heir, or joint heir is a legal term. What we see most often in the world is co or equal heirship. 50/50 Ken and I....but fellow or joint heirship is different. It is 100/100. And you are a joint heir with Christ. All that we have is to be his, and all that He has is ours. And since there's much more to Him than there is to us, that's a great deal. His victory-your victory, His peace your peace, His joy your joy. The blindfold of the devil would have us living like paupers and all the while we are joint heirs with Christ. Oh God, open our eyes that we might see.

Finally Paul prays that our eyes are opened to **ATTUNE WITH God's Power.** He prays we wake up to the **greatness of His power.** Elisha was convinced of God's power. Are you and I? Throughout Scripture we are given the promises of God's indwelling power manifest in His people, for example Phil 4:13. But notice this verse in Col. 1:19. **For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.** Paul is saying I'm striving, my utmost for His highness but I'm striving in His strength. Oh listen dear friends, whenever our eyes are opened to the reality of One who indwells us and His mighty power, it will change our lives. That's what Paul says in Col 1...Christ in you, the hope of glory. Let me give you a sports analogy. Michael Jordan, of the Chicago Bulls, is considered by many the greatest basketball player of all time. He could perform feats that were beyond belief. But few of us are familiar with name Stacey King, who was a bench player for Bulls. In March 1990, against the Cleveland Cavaliers, Michael Jordan scored 69 points, can you believe it. That same game, Stacey King came off the bench, shot 1 free throw and scored 1 point. Stacey King was asked in a locker room interview after the game, what he would most remember about this night. He said, I will always remember this as the night when Michael and I combined to score 70 points. Well, that's true but Stacey King was merely a participant in Michael Jordan's greatness. Jesus said that apart from Me you can do nothing. You and I are never the source of our strength, but rather Christ in you, and His strength is more than enough. So like Elisha, Paul prays our eyes are opened to a conviction regarding God's purpose, God's provision and God's power. Oh don't you want to have you eyes opened to those things. I do!

Let me begin to close with us considering **OUR POSITION OF CONFIDENCE.** In spite of the opposition about him, Elisha had a position of confidence. We could say the same about the shepherd boy David standing before a 9 ft giant, or the Hebrew teens thrown into a fiery furnace or Daniel in a lion's den, or Paul & Silas in a Philippian jail. When you are convinced of God's purpose, God's provision and God's power, there is a resulting position of confidence. If we read on through Ephesians 1 verse 20 that **God has raised Jesus up from the dead and He seated Jesus at His right hand in the heavens and He has put all things under Jesus feet.** But don't stop there, if we read on in Ephesians chapter 2, Paul says this...in verse 5, **you were dead and have been made alive in Christ and that you have been raised up and seated w/Christ.** So let's apply some sanctified logic. If Jesus has been raised from the dead and you to have been made alive in Christ. If Jesus is seated in the heavens and you are seated there with Him. And all things are under Jesus feet....**what's under your feet? ALL THINGS.** And that my friends is a position of confidence. But it's not a confidence based on our meager resources, but God's greatness. Notice this verse from the Hebrews. **He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?". Hebrews 13:5-6** Because of the abundance of God's grace and your position in Christ, you and I can confidently say.....'the Lord is my helper, what can man do to me? Do you and I have the confidence of an Elisha or a Paul? We can when the eyes of our heart have been opened. And then, in any circumstance in life you can be not a victim but a victor in Christ.

Since our T-Kids are with us this morning, let me close with something for the children in us all. In the Disney classic the Lion King, the young lion Simba was son of the great King Mufasa, who was killed. Simba flees to a foreign land

From 'The Lion King': " see.....He lives in you!"



where he's living with a wart hog and meercat. He's living a life far beneath his calling as a son of the King. One day, an old prophet baboon seeks Simba out. He asks Simba, who are you! Simba says....I don't know who I am? The prophet says...I know who you are? You're Mufasa's boy. Simba says, Mufasa's dead! The prophet says, no He isn't, follow me and I'll show him to you. He talks Simba to a nearby pool and instructs him to look in the water. Here's a picture of the scene. Simba looks in the water and sees his own face and says it's just my reflection. The prophet says look harder, and he stirs the water with his staff. Simba looks again and see the clear reflection of His father, the Lion King. And then the prophet says, see He lives in YOU!! And that's what has happened to every redeemed child of the King. Col 1 says Christ in your, the hope of Glory. He lives in YOU! So my prayer this morning is that God will open our eyes....to the purpose of our calling, and the provision of His inheritance, and the power of His greatness. This is our King....do you know Him? I invite you to this morning.