

ANOTHER LOOK

“Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. (2 Kings 6:15, NIV)

ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN. That’s about as far as we can go in describing the comeback of one especially notable former number one player in the world. The next time Tiger Woods tees it up will be the next time he tees it up. If we think we can foresee his return with any more clarity than that, we’re kidding ourselves.

In a much farther reaching context, we can view the numbers and names that capture current world attention and get to thinking we’ve got a clear vision of what is happening. Except that the numbers from this camp are the dead opposite of those presented by the other camp—and oh by the way, the markets will change tomorrow. Except that the names keep changing, by death and by democracy.

When we fall into looking at the world in the way the world looks at the world, our best hope is that we can cheer with the masses for a few happy hours. But when we see the assembly of circumstances marching across the land and hear the cacophony of voices who all insist they have the answer, we likely fold up like Elisha’s servant and say to whomever might be listening, “Oh, what shall we do?”

It’s important to note that “my lord” in the servant’s fearful question is not capitalized. He is asking this not of God, but of his master. This is our own tendency, is it not—to witness the armies coming on the horizon and react with only horizontal reference?

The next two verses are deeply revealing.

“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6:16-17)

Elisha’s LORD was all caps—the name of God alone. Elisha’s view was vertical, and he prayed that his servant could see the pending trouble in the same way. There are many worldly ways to see the world, but there is only one God who allows us to see it as he does. We must pray every prayer and make every effort to gain this second look.

Opening questions To what degree do you allow current events to capture your attention and shape your perspective? How does this affect your relationships with friends and family? with God?

READING 2 Kings 6:8-23; Jeremiah 10:1-16

Troubles well-met (2 Kings 6)

What was Elisha’s prayer with regard to the daunting Aramean army (v. 18)? How did Elisha direct the king of Israel to treat the captured men? How might these actions of Elisha direct our own response to the frightening conditions of the world around us?

God and the gods of men (Jeremiah 10)

How did Jeremiah display the ways of people set against the ways of God? What is it about God that makes lesser pursuits look foolish?

What do “the ways of nations” (including your own) look like today? How might we keep these from turning our eyes from God?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International.