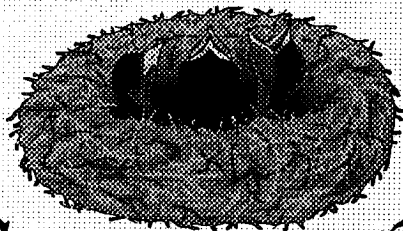
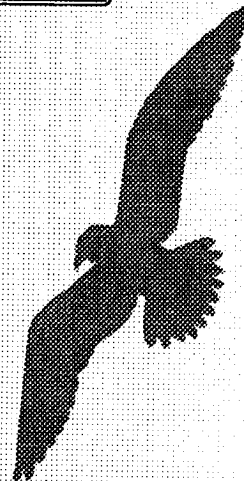


*"They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

*... with wings
as eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



AERY NUGGETS

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave-notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.

Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
—Clara H. Scott

Angels in the Mountains

2 Kings 6: 8-19

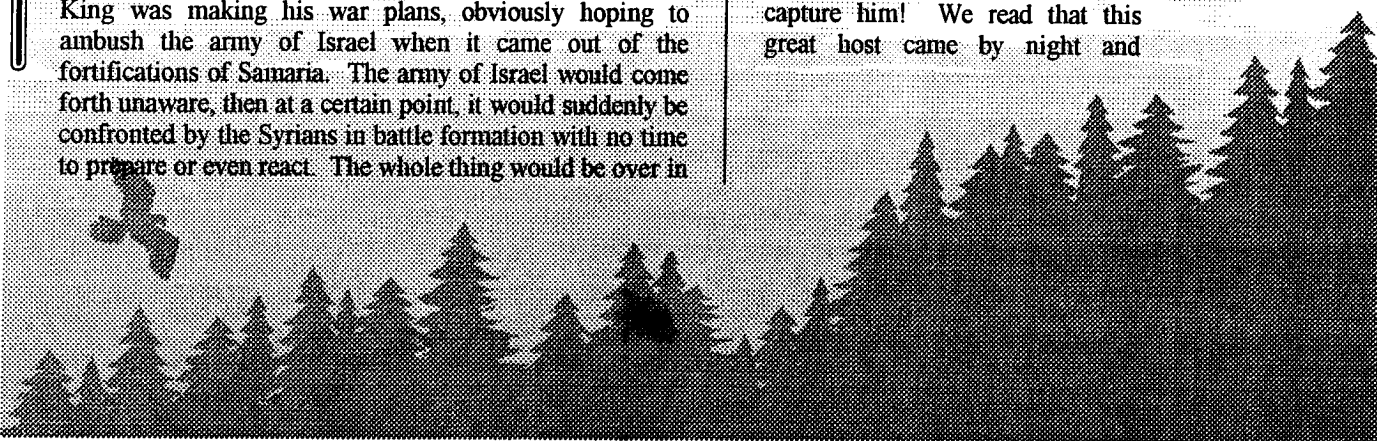
Steven J Faulkner

September 26, 2003

As this very interesting story opens, we find the king of Syria going to war against Israel. In verse 8, the Syrian King was making his war plans, obviously hoping to ambush the army of Israel when it came out of the fortifications of Samaria. The army of Israel would come forth unaware, then at a certain point, it would suddenly be confronted by the Syrians in battle formation with no time to prepare or even react. The whole thing would be over in

a matter of minutes! What a beautiful plan the Syrians had, and it should have worked. The only problem is that the Syrian king did not count on God's intervention!

God revealed to the prophet Elisha the plan of the Syrians so that each time the plan was attempted, Israel was forewarned and thus able to avoid disaster (verse 9,10). After missing several seemingly foolproof opportunities to surprise the army of Israel, the Syrian King began to strongly suspect that he had a traitor in his midst who was leaking his secret plans to Israel (verse 11). Surprisingly enough, it was one of the Syrian king's own servants (verse 12) who seemed to have the insight as to what was going on—this was not treason, it was God who had been revealing the king's plans to His prophet Elisha. Now, you might think that this would give the Syrian king pause to reflect since God was acting on the side of Israel to reveal the king's most secret plans to his enemies. However, this Syrian, instead of bowing to the obvious will of God, decided to respond the way that the people of this world often choose when confronted with the will of God—in verse 13, we find the king of Syria seeking to locate this prophet of God so that he might take him out of the picture and thus have his own way. In verse 14, after finding out from the servant that Elisha was in the city of Dothan, a town just a few miles north of Samaria, we find the Syrian king issuing orders for a great host with horses and chariots to go to Dothan to find the man of God—not to learn from him, but to capture him! We read that this great host came by night and



compassed the city of Dothan round about--the Syrian was taking no chances, or so he thought! How arrogant is the heart of sinful man! Is it any wonder that Satan often finds the people of this world to be such willing, if unaware, accomplices in his plans to oppose God and His people?

It is as the sun rises on Dothan the next morning that we observe the seeming hopelessness of the situation. The servant of Elisha steps out of the house early in the morning to the terrifying sight of spear tips and shields flashing in the morning sunlight all around the village (verse 15): "And when the servant of the man of God was risen early and gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, 'alas, my master, how shall we do?'" Can you sense the despair in this young man? This servant was young, but the gravity of the situation was not lost on him--they were surrounded by men of war, and there appeared to be no way out! Can you imagine it? Such a sight was enough to strike terror into this young heart.

Have you ever experienced such fear? Maybe you never woke up to find a host of armed men surrounding your town, but perhaps you have encountered situations that seemed to you just as hopeless. These may have had to do with the illness of a loved one, or reversals in business, or perhaps the development of a life changing disability. Sometimes, the things we encounter in this world appear to pose an insurmountable threat. Satan, the enemy of our souls, will try to use such sights and situations to discourage Christians, and if possible, throw into despair and retreat. It is at times like these that we need to lay hold of the comforting promises of God. Do we know a brother or a sister in the Lord who is struggling with such fear and despair? Might we not give them hope with godly encouragement such as Heb. 13:5, "...for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" or 1 John 4:4, "We are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

At this moment of our story, Elisha answers with such words of godly comfort in verse 16, "**Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.**" Elisha had gone on with the Lord many years and knew by experience His ways--he was not at all frightened by those things revealed by the eye of flesh, for he knew the power and care of God for His own. But, the young man did not yet see with the eyes of faith, rather he noted only what he could see before him, and he trembled at the forces arrayed against him. It was at this point that the man of God looked upon his servant with compassion, desiring to comfort his heart and build up his faith. Did you notice that? This is my favorite part of the whole story! Elisha knew that he and his servant were in God's hands, and come what may, he was not troubled by what he saw before him. However, his poor servant trembled with fear, and Elisha was not content to let his servant suffer in this way. We read next that Elisha followed up and prayed that this man's eyes might be opened so that he might see the surpassing power of the living God. Elisha did not pray for himself, but the faith of his servant! Oh Christian, would that we should have such concern for one another in the church! Elisha had compassion on his friend--he could not bear to leave him as he was, but wanted him to know the peace afforded by the knowledge of God's surpassing power. So, in verse 17 we read, "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."

What a sight that must have been! How real and terrible the host of men surrounding the town had seemed a few minutes before with their banners furling in the morning breeze, and their swords and lances poised and ready. But now how insignificant was this show of the rage of mere man against the awesome power of God, which was arrayed to defend His own! Elisha prayed that God might reveal to this doubting and trembling servant the surpassing power that was already present to protect from all ill. Seeing this heavenly array, who could fear? But the servant had not been able to see it, because the eyes of his faith must be opened. How caring an act that this man of God should pray for his young servant; and because he prayed for his servant on this day, this young man was permitted to see the glory of the Lord as He delivered Israel. It was a sight that I expect the servant never forgot!

How Christ-like was this loving concern of Elisha for his trembling servant? Recall that when the Lord Jesus walked in this earth, He tenderly cared for His disciples and comforted them in their fears. In those closing days of His earthly walk, He spoke words of comfort and peace, and instructed regarding things that were about to happen, so that when He was risen from the dead, they would remember and believe. He was often in prayer for His disciples (see Luke 6:12). Is He not the same today, though ascended and sitting on the right hand of the Father? Does He not still come to His own in our time of need, meeting us where we are and comforting us with His work? Just as when He prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, does He not continue to intercede for us? He is the same Lord-- "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever," (Heb.13:8). What wonderful truths we have to stand on!

We read in the final verses of this story that as the angels came down to Elisha, that he prayed, and the great enemy host was struck with blindness. What had been so fearsome an opposition, was soon reduced to a stumbling mass, which was easily lead to capture in Samaria. What a lopsided victory for God and His own!

Oh Christian! Do you see the angels in the mountains? "If God be for us, who can be against us," (Rom.8:31). As Christians walking through this wilderness world, we are beset with trials and fearsome sights on every side, set there by the enemy of our souls in an attempt to frighten and confuse us. Let us be ever in God's word and in prayer, abiding in Christ, that we may have on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand such attacks (Eph.6:10-18). Let us see with the eyes of faith, and not rely on our eyes of flesh, for we have the promises of God to rely on. We who are His own need never despair, but let us remind one another of the surpassing power of God toward his own and thereby lift up those who may be struggling. Let us be constantly in prayer to strengthen the faith of our brothers and sisters in Christ that they too might see the angels in the mountains!

"Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
Through eternal ages let His praises ring;
Glory in the highest I will shout and sing,
Standing on the promises of God!"

For address correction or free new name addition,

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