



October 2006

# PASTOR'S

## Perspective

Anthony M. Alford, Sr., Pastor

“

*And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee; the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.*

”

— II Kings 2:19

The stories of Elisha’s prophecy and ministry demonstrate God at work in the life of Judah and her people. These stories recount what God was doing in the lives of the people and how they had abandoned God. In fact much of Elisha’s ministry was aimed at getting the people to come back to the God who had delivered them and their ancestors so many times. Elisha had received his ministry and the prophetic call from God after Elijah was taken up into Heaven in a whirlwind. Suddenly Elisha, who had been Elijah’s understudy, was now thrust into the fore front of leadership.

Butler Street CME Church  
23 Jesse Hill, Jr., Drive, SE  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone 404.659.8745  
FAX 404.581.0145

[www.butlerstreetcmechurch.org](http://www.butlerstreetcmechurch.org)

The call to serve and stand for God is no easy task. But for Elisha he seemed to enjoy and exhibit great passion as the prophet of God. This role of prophet gets highlighted as a group of men from Jericho come to Elisha with an unusual request. Their request is that Elisha do something or at least help them do something about a problem with polluted water in their city. What is unique about this problem is that the leadership for the resolution for the problem came from men. “And the men of the city said unto Elisha.” It was a group of committed men who came to the prophet seeking correction for a problem that plagued their city. These men had given great consideration to their city and all of its valuable assets. They no doubt considered the city’s infrastructure. No doubt they looked at and reviewed the educational system of the city for Jericho was, after all, the seat of the school for prophets. They gave consideration to the beautiful gardens and the plush greenery and flora found in abundance in Jericho. They gave consideration to the health system of Jericho, as it was of that day. But then they concluded “the situation of this city is pleasant but the water is naught and the ground barren.” Here were men taking the leadership for a problem in their community. Not only scoping out their city but also taking leadership for correction of the problem in their city. What an amazing show of leadership!

The Bible is replete with examples of people coming before Jesus in the New Testament and before the prophets or priests of God in the Old Testament with problems that need fixing. In every case the agency of God at work through His Son Jesus

Christ or as in the case of Elisha the prophet of God, always give cure or correction to the request brought to God to fix. The men of the city were acting on behalf of their city and in doing so assumed their rightful place of leadership.

As we approach the seminal occasion of “**100 Men In Black**” here at Butler Street it is important that men assume their positions of leadership and stand decisively as men under the authority of God. God has given authority and leadership to men not to “lord or dominate” over women, children, or their homes but instead God has called men to lead! This leadership extends to the church, the home and the community. When men stand up and lead things happen. In Jericho it was water being cleaned up. In Atlanta and this community, perhaps it is these “**100 Men In Black**” mentoring young boys. Perhaps it is teaching our daughters the beauty and respect that God has crowned them with. In the church it becomes men who are steeped in the way of the Lord and not just steeped in the way of the Lord but who act on that way and lead through example. Ultimately it is men who have found personal relationship with Jesus Christ and lead their families and all they know to that same loving and grace filled relationship.

There are some pleasant situations all around us but there is still plenty of bad water. Men how about standing up to the challenge and becoming the men that God is calling us to be? When this happens we will be able to claim that we too, know the life changing power of God at work in our homes, church and community. Stand up men!