

[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for Lent 5 Midweek

March 25, 2026

Angels of the Passion: Just One Little Word

2 Kings 6:8-23; Matthew 26:47-56

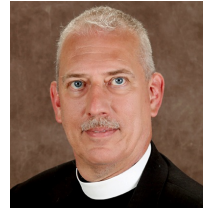
In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

You humans are always panicking! It seems like you're always upset or in a tizzy about something. Don't you know there's nothing in your world that is greater than our Father? Don't you know there's nothing in your world that our Father can't handle? Oh, I know you know that. Up here [pointing to head], but maybe not always down here [pointing to heart]. You know what the Scriptures say, but your sinful nature makes it hard for you to believe. So you panic.

Like Elisha's servant did. You heard that story tonight. Our Father was protecting Israel from the Syrian army. Every time they came out to strike Israel, our Father would tell Elisha, and Elisha would tell the king, and the king would avoid where the Syrian army was. But *the one time* when the Syrian army comes out in force and surrounds the city where Elisha is, his servant panics! What are we gonna do? Look at all the horses and chariots and how many soldiers are around us!

But Elisha didn't panic. He knew we were there. We, the army of angels that our Father always uses to protect you. Just because you can't see us doesn't mean we're not there! And then our Father opened the eyes of the servant *and let him see us* - that while the Syrian army was large and had the city surrounded, we were an even larger force and had them surrounded! They were nothing compared to us. All our Father had to do is speak **just one little word** and we would have swooped down and wiped them out faster than you could say boo-yah! We're always ready to fight. We're warriors, after all.

But our Father didn't need us to. He did something *even more wonderful* than that. He had Elisha makes friends with the Syrian army! He got them into the city of Samaria and instead of destroying them, slaughtering them, he fed them a great feast. And they stopped raiding Israel. Our Father knows exactly what to do! And what is best. And



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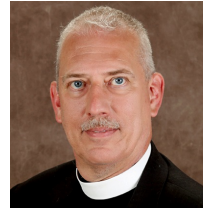
though I wasn't there at the end because our Father had already reassigned me, I'll bet Elisha turned to his servant and asked, *Why were you so afraid?*

Which is the same question I would have asked Peter when he panicked and started swinging his sword all over the place when Judas came out with the soldiers and officers to arrest Jesus. It was kind of the same situation that Elisha and his servant had been in. This **great crowd with swords and clubs** came out to the Garden of Gethsemane and surrounded Jesus and the eleven disciples. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, and then the soldiers **laid hands on Jesus and seized him**. *And Peter panicked*. Now, the words you heard tonight from Matthew didn't finger the disciple who did that as Peter, but John (who was there) says in his Gospel that it was Peter. And he drew blood, **cutting off the ear of the servant of the high priest**.

But then Jesus said: **STOP!** And for two reasons. **First**, because just like in the days of Elisha, there may have been a great crowd with swords and clubs surrounding Jesus and His disciples, but there was an even greater army of angels surrounding them! Jesus knew it. And all He had to do was say *just one little word* . . .

But He wouldn't. And this is the **second** reason, kind of in three parts. He didn't call on us because He didn't want to destroy that great crowd that came out to arrest Him, *He came to save them*. He loved them, even if they didn't love Him. And He didn't call on us because He came to fulfill the Scriptures, which said it must go down like this. That Jesus would be treated as a criminal and crucified. But most of all, and what Peter didn't understand, was that He didn't call on us because if any blood was going to be shed this night, *it was going to be Jesus' blood*. For that's the blood that needed to be shed, for the life of the world. So Jesus tells Peter to put his puny little sword away, and then Jesus healed the servant's ear (Luke wrote about that).

Now, I'll admit, I didn't like standing by and watching this happen. Me and twelve legions of my brother angels, filling the area all around Gethsemane! But just like at the time of Elisha, our Father always knows exactly what to do and what is best. And as you all know, He had something *even more wonderful* in mind than wiping out that crowd. It might not have seemed like it at the time, having His Son arrested, abused, and then crucified! But how else would He defeat sin and death? How else would you be saved from sin and death? It had to be. Because as you heard tonight from the Scriptures, **without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins**.



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And not just *any* blood. The blood of God. The death of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

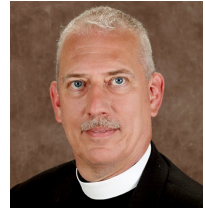
For that's what that phrase, ***the shedding of blood***, really means. It doesn't mean just bleeding, like Jesus could have cut himself open, bled a bit, and then healed back up. *The wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). There has to be death to pay for sin. **A death for every sin**. And Jesus came to do that. **His death for every sin**. Only He *could* do that.

Under the Old Covenant, there was the blood of goats and calves and bulls and lambs - sometimes thousands at a time! Oh, the Tabernacle and the Temple were bloody places! But *it never ended*. There were always more sins, so always more sacrifices. And it was only in mercy that our Father allowed all those goats and calves and bulls and lambs to be substitutes for the people. They were the ones that *should* have died! But as one of the prophets said, our Father *has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live* (Ezekiel 33:11). So He provided these substitutes.

But they were only temporary! They weren't the real thing. **Jesus was**. He had to shed His blood and die to fulfill the Old Covenant, to fulfill what all those goats and calves and bulls and lambs couldn't do, and to bring into effect, to inaugurate, the New Testament, with His blood. And with His blood there is ***an eternal redemption*** - the price paid for all eternity; and so also ***an eternal inheritance*** - Jesus giving His kingdom and life and sonship *to you*.

It's pretty remarkable! That the eternal Son of God would do that for you, and for you, and for you - for *all* of you! And it's what made the traitor, my evil *former* brother, so mad! God shouldn't do that for you *dirtlings!* (Pardon my French! But remember, that's what he calls you.) He thinks you're not worth it. You're just . . . *dirt!* And, I sadly have to admit, from what I've seen, you often act like it! But still, he's wrong, my evil *former* brother. You are worth it to our Father. He loves you so much! He loves all that He has created, but *especially* you because you are the crown of His creation.

So we were there, at the ready, all twelve legions of us, and more! But Jesus wouldn't ask for us. Wouldn't say *just one little word*. He would do this. He would fulfill the Scriptures, He would save these lost people who came out against Him, and He would die. So the Son of God allows Himself to be arrested. You think they could have if He



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didn't let them? Right! And He allows them to beat Him, and mock Him, and spit on Him, and put *Him* on trial, and then abuse Him, whip Him, and crucify Him. And then remember what He said on the cross? He wouldn't utter *just one little word* to help Himself, but He would for you! *Father, forgive them* (Luke 23:34) is what He said. And that "them" includes you. Really! *That's Jesus*.

So whatever is going on in your life, if it seems like *devils all the world should fill, scowling at you, and all eager to devour you* (LSB #656) - tremble not, *don't panic*. Your victory has been won! You belong to our Father. You have been redeemed by the Son. And He has given you His Spirit. Your life is eternal, and so is your inheritance. The cross is your reality now, and from what I've seen, it can get pretty heavy! But the day of resurrection is coming. The glory is coming. So don't lose hope and don't give in! The days got pretty dark for the disciples, too. That Friday night, Jesus dead and buried. That looong Saturday, sad, hiding, wondering, second-guessing, guilt-ridden, afraid. But then Sunday came . . . and, well, you know! Everything changed! You're going to celebrate that soon, I know. So, I'll be back to talk to you then, *for I was there!* It was awesome.

So until then, don't panic. You're in good hands. Nail-pierced hands. The hands of God, your Saviour.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.