

# FAITH LESSONS IN A DYNAMITE GOD



Author atop Pulpit Rock in Ipswich, MA where George Whitefield preached

## E. A. JOHNSTON

**FAITH LESSONS**

IN A

**DYNAMITE**

**GOD**

**“FOUR DAYS ON THE MOUNTAIN”**

By

**E. A. JOHNSTON**

*Faith Lessons in a Dynamite God*

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By Dr. E. A. Johnston

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**ISBN: 979-8-9896619-5-4**

Printed in the United States of America  
January 2024

Formatting and Publishing by  
The Old Paths Publications, Inc  
4439 Rockrose Green Way  
Gainesville, GA 30504  
TOP@theoldpathspublications.com  
www.theoldpathspublications.com

**COVER PHOTO:**

“Author atop Pulpit Rock in Ipswich,  
MA where George Whitefield preached

# DEDICATION

The following chapters on the “faith life” are hereby dedicated to:

**David Ford, Evangelist**

One of the most genuine men of faith I know!

E. A. Johnston  
February 2024

SAMPLE PAGES

## PREFACE

Vance Havner once said:

“If we serve such a dynamite God, then how come so many of us are living firecracker lives?”

If that is the case, why aren't we doing greater things for God and making a “bang” in the world for Christ and the Gospel? Is it because we have “firecracker faith”? Or do we have a “big faith” in a big dynamite God? When Jesus was here in His earthly ministry, He asked the searching question: “...*Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:8)?

A book on faith is needed when we need revival; a book on faith is needed when the people of God are discouraged; a book on faith is needed when the Church is weak and powerless. This book is the result of a lifetime of trial and testing, adversity and learning regarding a life of faith. Hopefully, its lessons will strengthen your faith, stretch your faith, and grow your faith. God is looking for faith.

*“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (II Chronicles 16:9).*

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# CHAPTER ONE

## HALFHEARTEDNESS

“God will not accept a divided heart.”

Stephen F. Olford

**FAITH LESSON:** Halfheartedness to God

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** II Kings 13:14-19

In II Kings, chapter thirteen, we find the prophet Elisha on his death bed. King Joash, of Israel, comes to pay his last respects. We see this in the following:

*“Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof” (verse 14).*

Pictured here is the dying prophet of God and a rotten king, of whom it is said, *“And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD”* (II Chronicles 13:11). Yet, the

man of God wants to impart a blessing to this king so he can defeat the Syrian army. We take up the striking narrative in the following passage of Scripture:

*“And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king’s hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD’s deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them” (15-17).*

What the prophet of God is doing here is illustrating to King Joash that the victory over the Syrian army is symbolized by the arrows of deliverance that he just used as

an object lesson. These arrows represent deliverance from the enemies of Israel.

The next two verses are critical to the passage. They represent our Faith Lesson today. Remember the Faith Lesson is Halfheartedness and how we must avoid it at all costs. Pay close attention to the object lesson of faith that Elisha is trying to teach to King Joash:

*“And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice”*  
(18-19).

The great faith lesson here is seen in the number of times that the king of Israel ‘should have’ struck the ground with the representative handful of arrows. His faith was weak. And because of his weak faith

the result ends up as a lost opportunity for God to do more for the people of God in these battles with the Syrian army. We see this truth clearly illustrated in the Gospels about Jesus being hindered by the people's unbelief. *"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief"* (Matthew 13:58).

What our text from II Kings is saying to us is, our faith in a dynamite God is determined by our actions based on that faith! If we step out on faith and believe God and demonstrate that belief by our actions, then God can do big things for us and through us. If we hold back because of unbelief, then God is hindered by that unbelief and lack of faith.

Perhaps some of us are living "firecracker lives" because we would only strike the ground three times, instead of having a bigger faith and striking it six! God wants us to strike it until our arms are worn out! He wants to see our faith in action! Halfheartedness is a result of a lack of faith. And we cannot please God by serving Him

with a divided heart! He must have all our whole heart's affections and devotion.

Elisha the man of God was mightily used of God in a dynamite life of faith for God! He did more miracles than his mentor, Elijah! How big is our faith? Given the same circumstances, how many times would we strike the ground with the prophet's arrows? Three? Five? Six?

SAMPLE PAGES

## CHAPTER TWO

# STEPPING OUT ON FAITH

“God is looking for the believer who is willing to go out on a limb for Him, to risk everything for Christ and the Gospel.”

E. A. Johnston

**FAITH LESSON:** Stepping out on Faith

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Matthew 14:22-31

Our Faith Lesson today is about exercising our faith through the action of stepping out on faith. Whether it is a call to the mission field; a call to full time ministry; a new out of town pastorate; or any challenge that will require you to “step out on faith.” My homiletical mentor, Dr. Stephen F. Olford, would always tell me: “What costs counts, and what counts costs!” And that is true whether it is pursuing higher education or learning a new craft or trade. A sacrifice will be involved of time and money and commitment!

Stepping out on faith is a commitment, once made, it must be acted upon and



carried out! Our text today is a challenging one, for it demonstrates there is a certain degree of risk involved in stepping out in faith. Here now is our passage of Scripture from Matthew's Gospel in chapter fourteen and in verses twenty two to thirty one:

*“And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away. And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone” (22-23).*

I will pause here to say, Jesus had just been thronged with a crowd of people whom He had just performed a miracle of feeding the five thousand with two fishes and five loaves. He wanted to get alone with the Father to pray and communicate with Him. So up the mountain he climbs until he reaches a spot that gives Him the serenity he needs, plus provide a vantage point of where He can keep His eye on His disciples