

# Chariots Of Fire

**Introduction.** In 2 Kings 6:8-18 Israel was in jeopardy of being vanquished by her powerful neighbor, Syria. Ben-hadad was the king of this wicked and potent foe of God's people. But, all of Ben-hadad's strategies failed because the Holy Spirit revealed the king's top-secret plans to the prophet Elisha. So Ben-hadad sent a large force to kill the prophet. Facing a seemingly inescapable plight, Elisha's servant cried out, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" Elisha answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Who was Elisha talking about? "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." All the protection needed was there, but it was beyond the reach and capabilities of the human senses.

What can we learn from this? Romans 15:4 guarantees that God's word remains relevant to new situations. In the midst of loss, hurt, and turmoil, God and His mercy issues forth to His people. That being the case, there are three faith-building points to learn from Elisha and his servant.

## ***I. We Are Surrounded By The Enemy***

- A. We live in a world compromised by sin which came ultimately from Satan. He's known in various ways. The first reference to him as Satan is in 1 Chronicles 21:1. He's also known as the devil (Matthew 4:1), evil one (Matthew 5:37, NKJV), god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), prince of the powers of the air (Ephesians 2:2), ruler of the darkness of this age (Ephesians 6:12), tempter (1 Thessalonians 3:5), adversary (1 Peter 5:8), old dragon (Revelation 12:9), and accuser of our brethren (Revelation 12:10).
- B. Because of Satan, the world is filled with evil, problems, difficulties, and death. We ask the question, "Alas ... what shall we do?"
  - 1. There's only one answer — Christ, the Great Physician (Mark 2:17). Salvation is only in Him (Acts 4:12).
  - 2. We have to do what God requires to put on Christ (Galatians 3:26-27), to take up our cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23), and to always abide in Him (John 15:4-7). We are always obedient to Christ for He is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9).
  - 3. We show our love to Him by keeping His commandments (John 14:15; 1 John 2:3-5), and by laying "aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1-2).
  - 4. We put on the armor of God which helps us against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11-18).

## ***II. God Is Greater Than The Enemy***

- A. Elisha's servant was dismayed at the odds because he didn't include God! Even though the odds appear insurmountable, we can overcome if we are in Christ, for "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

- B. Also, there is more to the material universe than what we see, touch, smell, or hear (2 Corinthians 4:18). We can't always see God's providence with our physical senses, but we have His assurance it's provided if we "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:25-34).
  - 1. God will help us handle every situation if we walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7; Philippians 4:13), but this doesn't mean that pain, suffering, or death will go away. Job was a godly man but still suffered terribly (Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 42:7-8).
  - 2. If we keep the faith He assures us that "we have a building from God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; 1 Peter 1:4).

### **III. God Will Deliver Us**

- A. God delivered Elisha by striking the Syrians with blindness. However, the Lord showed them mercy by telling Elisha to provide for them and sending them home. The Lord knew how His people should act to end the threat.
- B. In a similar way, God will deliver us through problematic times, but only as we, like Elisha, follow three steps:
  - 1. Prayer.
    - a) Elisha immediately prayed to God for help, and God hears our prayers if we ask according to and do His will (1 Peter 3:12; 1 John 5:14; cp. 1 Chronicles 28:9).
    - b) It's incredibly uplifting and moving that God "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20).
  - 2. Faith.
    - a) We can't please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is built on His divine revelation becoming implanted in our hearts (Romans 10:17; James 1:21).
    - b) Job did not, like his wife counseled, curse God and die (Job 2:9). Instead, though he spoke hastily at times, manifested great faith (13:15; 19:25).
    - c) By faith, like Stephen in Acts 7:56, we can envision God's throne and appreciate the heavenly city where we'll join the Lord one day if our names are written in the book of life (Revelation 17:8; 20:11-15; 21:27).
  - 3. Obedience.
    - a) It is only by faithful obedience (James 2:18-26) that we build our spiritual house on the rock (Matthew 7:24-27).
    - b) Jesus has given us bountiful spiritual blessings, but they are only available to those who obey Him (2 Corinthians 10:5).

**Conclusion.** Our congregation has been through difficult times, and those times will continue, as they will for every congregation. But our faith is always in God (Psalm 27:9). May He continue to be with us and may we continue to look to Him.

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