

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Elisha

No 12

Angels of Fire

Second Kings 6:8-23

In this passage we see that the Lord God whom we serve is aware of all the things that are happening in our world today. Whilst today we see the nations in turmoil as human and natural systems stress, there is no call for the child of God to join this humanist panic, because He, God, has His finger upon the pulse, and knows just what to do. He is working all things according to His own plan and will bring all things to His intended end. An end there will certainly be: but in His time and in His way. Meanwhile He holds His own within His keeping. We do not know exactly how it will all turn out, but we do know Him to whom we have given our trust, and therefore we can be at peace and content to be about His business.

The Lord is Our Shield Psalm 28:7. He was to Israel, He was to David. He is to us today. He has not changed. Times change; situations change; purposes change, but God has not changed. He is the same and His word is the same. There are some significant Hebrew words in this passage which help us understand it. Note first:

v8. 'Warred,' an ongoing war.

The Syrian 'took counsel 3289', same as in 2 Chron. 20:21, a counsel of war.

'In such and such 6423+492' an Hebrew expression concealing identity of the person or place of reference.

'My camp 8466' plural - encampments.

The Syrian was not hiding the information from his captains, but the Israelites. This feeling of secrecy is incorporated into the story. He was setting an ambush.

God revealed to Elisha what was being planned, and he warned the Israelites. v9. 'Take care 8104' - be on alert, watch out. 'Such 2088' - this or that.

'Place 4725' the place determined but not specifically identified to the reader.

'Coming down 5185' descending - as from Syria. A troop movement.

This is secret cloak and dagger stuff of military espionage.

v10 'sent to 7971+413' means to send something towards, like the shooting of an arrow, in this instance presumably a contingent of troops, for "he guarded himself there more than once or twice." the same word is also used in vv13&14. v11 'Enraged 5590 is 'to rush upon and toss, a tempest or whirlwind, he was storm-tossed. "...which of us is for the king of Israel?" Who is the mole? who is the traitor?

The Lord is our Shield, and the shield needs the arm of faith for effective defence. The providence of God and the cooperation and obedience of His servant go together. Thus the emergency was met. The prayer room and the proclamation of the Gospel and so the task done.

Opening Our Eyes.

Alas, master, What shall we do?

v15 'Alas 162', lit. *ahahh* a groan, an exclamation of pain, 'Oh!' or 'Ah!'

'what 349' can be "what" or as the AV has it "how". It makes a difference to our responses. What is going to happen to us? Or, what action can we take?

'Do 6213' In the creation narrative of Genesis 1 'do' stands beside 'create' to describe the things God did, and more generally indicates an action to be initiated.

How do we respond to our problems? If we understand our problem we usually have the problem half solved. Now the city of Dothan was then but a few acres in size. It was located in the hills some 12 miles (20 km) N-E of Samaria.

Until the servant left the shelter of the home he was not aware of his problem. An army with cavalry and chariot armour was waging a war of fear and intimidation on the inhabitants.

The problem was more spiritual than physical, as many international and personal problems are today.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of

wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12.

Behind the powers that be spiritual warfare is being waged. It is God's conflict with the forces of evil, and the battle, first and foremost is the Lords. We are but His soldiers.

Elisha's Cure for His Servant Care.

1. Fear not v16. David later wrote:

I was crying to the LORD with my voice, and He answered me from His holy mountain. Selah.

I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me round about. Psalm 3:4-6

Fear not! How many times has this encouragement fallen from the Saviour's lips!

2. He opened his eyes to reality v17.

The 'of' in this verse is a translator's insert, the text reads *'the mountains 2022pn full 4390v; horses 5483pn and chariots 7393pn fire 784sn all around 4539a Elisha.'* We could translate it, *'all the mountains were filled with horses and chariots; fire all around Elisha.'* Horses many, chariots many, hills all of them, but only one fire - Gods. To me there is a message in this. There are many angels sent as the ministers of the heirs of salvation Hebrews 1:14. They are winds (or

spirits) and they are in attendance to God's children. He makes His angels a flame of fire Hebrews 1.7. They are His to command. How many angels did Jesus say were at His command? Elisha's own eyes had once been opened. See 2:9-12. (for interest, there the text reads *'chariot fire, horses fire.'*)

This was a wonderful lesson for the servant of the Lord. We do not know what the future holds for any of us, but we do know who holds the future. Such knowledge gives us confidence in the time of difficulty.

Elisha did not need to call on horsemen, or the chariots, or the fire of the angels of the Lord. He was perfectly capable of dealing with the situation.

There were at least two options open to Elisha that we know about:

First he could, like Elijah, in whose spirit he lived and worked, call fire down from heaven to consume them when king Ahaziah sent his fifties to capture him. See chapter 1.

Second, he could blind their eyes, lead them away, give them a meal and send them home.

There was no crisis for Elisha. A crisis only occurs for those who have not met it in advance: for us, in the place of personal prayer and communion with our God.

Bible quotations in this study are from the NASB. *12 legions, or 6,000x12=72,000 angels tended Jesus. Are you also a child of God? Numbers with words are Strong's: and significant terms of grammar are suffixed to some of them: n=noun, v=verb, a=adverb, s=singular, p=plural, To expand your study you can use Strongs Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words - Nelson, or log on to www.blueletterbible.org/search.cfm#strongs

Welcome Glen Park Gospel Church
Lower Road, Eltham North
Sundays 10.30 am

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