

A Servant Sees A Fiery Army

2 Kings 6:8-23

MEMORY VERSE

2 KINGS 6:17

“...Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Construction paper, enough copies of the “Coat of Arms” template for each child in your class, scissors, and markers.

A paper plate for each child, popcorn (popped before class), and three buckets or large bowls.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Who Am I?

In today’s lesson we will see an army of angels sent by God and ready to defend His children, Israel. Angels are ministers from the Lord who have helped God’s people in many different ways in the Bible. This game, “Who Am I?” is a game of guessing who the angel helped and where it is in the Bible.

See if the children can guess where the event is in the Bible and how the angel was used. The following are some examples:

I am a guard.

My weapon is a flaming sword.

Watching over a tree,

Who am I?

Answer: Genesis 3:24, the angel standing guard over the tree of life.

We came to a city.
To rescue a family.
Lost one to salt.
Who am I?

Answer: Genesis 19:1-26, the story of Lot and his family.

We had a parade.
Going up and down a ladder.
It was like a dream.
Who are we?

Answer: Genesis 28:12, Jacob and the ladder.

We came at night to a prison.
Picked a few locks.
Set a great man free.
Who am I?

Answer: Acts 5:19, Peter in prison is set free

Think of some additional examples to read. *God is always at work in our lives and protects us!*

LESSON TIME!

Israel was at war again! Remember, the children of Israel did not obey God fully when Joshua brought the people of Israel to the Promised Land. God told them to destroy all of the other nations, but they did not. As a result, they were constantly at war with the different people groups that still lived in the land.

In today's lesson, the Syrians are coming to destroy Israel. Although Israel had been disobedient, God loved His people and will move to take action.

2 KINGS 6:8-12

Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place."

And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there."

Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice.

Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."

The king of Syria was at war with Israel. He was in constant consultation with his captains and commanders, making plans to capture the armies of Israel and do damage to the nation of Israel.

Elisha, the man of God, warned the King of Israel many times, about where the King of Syria was going to strike next. The King of Syria was enraged. Since the King of Israel seemed to be aware of their every move, he thought for sure a spy was working in his camp.

His men knew it was not any of them; they were completely loyal to their king! They blamed “the prophet,” Elijah! “...the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.”

There is nothing done in secret that God does not know about. He even knows our thoughts and the plans of our hearts. God knows everything about us, even how many hairs are on our heads! He knew what the King of Syria was planning, and God desired to protect His people. **God protects His children.**

2 KINGS 6:13-18

So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan."

Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

The King of Syria thought he could solve this problem. He made plans to trap Elisha! He surrounded Elisha's hometown with a great force of soldiers. Elisha's servant went out that morning and saw the situation—he was petrified! He saw himself surrounded with no way out! He must have thought, "We've had it now Elisha!" In contrast to his servant, Elisha was not concerned. He saw something his servant did not see—the army of horses and chariots of fire that belonged to God. He knew that God was going to take care of him, for he saw the "unseen." **God protects His children.**

We do not know for sure if this army of God was an army of angels, but it would seem so. The Bible has much to say about angels—what they are like and what their purposes are in God's plan. Here are some things from the Bible that we know about angels:

Angels are created beings (Colossians 1:16) who can speak audibly (Job 4) and can appear as men (Hebrews 13:2).

They worship God (Revelation 5); and they are ministers of God (Psalm 103).

They are ready and willing to do His bidding (Matthew 26:53).

They execute God's judgment (1 Chronicles 21).

They protect God's children (this passage, Psalm 91:11,12; Psalm 34:7).

Elisha prayed that God would open his servant's eyes so that his faith would be strengthened; and he, too, saw the army of God.

Coat of Arms

A coat of arms was kind of like a shield or crest used by families to show others a little bit about themselves. Since we are in the family of God, there are many ways that God has shown His faithfulness in our lives. He provides for us, protects us, loves us and has given us eternal life through Jesus. These are just to name a few.

This craft, a coat of arms, can show different ways that God has been faithful in your life. You will need construction paper, copies of the enclosed template (enough for each child in your class), scissors and markers. Take one sheet of construction paper and cut into a shape of a shield, or crest. Next, divide the shield into four sections. In one section, have the child write their name. In the other three sections, have the children choose from the template three things that represent God's faithfulness in their lives (or they can make up their own).

The heart for example can represent God's love, the dove can represent the Holy Spirit, the cross represents Jesus dying for us to give us eternal life, and the Bible represents how God speaks to us today. Encourage the children to come up with their own ideas and perhaps share together how the Lord has protected them.

2 KINGS 6:19-23

Now Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, nor is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." But he led them to Samaria.

So it was, when they had come to Samaria, that Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and there they were, inside Samaria!

Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

But he answered, "You shall not kill them. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master."

Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So the bands of Syrian raiders came no more into the land of Israel.

Struck with blindness, those men must have been awfully nervous. They were separated from the main force of the Syrian army with no backup. They followed willingly when the man of God said, "I'll lead you to the man you are looking for." They knew they were vulnerable, but what else could they do? Elisha led the men to Samaria.

When Elisha prayed again, the men could see. What a surprise awaited them. They found themselves inside Samaria, a walled city surrounded by forces of the enemy Israelites! Again, the King of Israel looked to Elisha for wisdom in the situation. He knew only God could have brought this about! It would have been easy for him to put those prisoners to death; after all, it was wartime. Conquest was now made easy. But, God had a different kind of conquest in mind. He desired to conquer their hearts—to show them the glory and grace of the God of Israel.

His counsel was to give a great feast! How would you feel if you were set down at a feast; fed as a guest of honor; given back your weapon, and sent back to your commander?! The Bible does not say they sent the soldiers back with a message. But they had a “big” one! What story could these soldiers tell about what happened?

‘I was blind, but now I see.’

‘I was hungry, they fed me. I was thirsty, they gave me water.’

‘I was a prisoner, they freed me. I was sent back to you.’

God’s goodness was great! They faced death and were spared. They were shown compassion and mercy by their enemies, the Israelites. The king of Syria was affected deeply by these experiences. “So the bands from Syria stopped raiding Israel’s territory.” Jesus taught us to love our enemies. He loved and helped those who cursed Him and were against Him. It is the goodness of God that leads one to repentance.

Let us remember to show compassion and mercy, just as God did to the blinded Syrian army. And, the next time we are overwhelmed and frightened with the circumstances that surround us, let us remember Elisha’s servant when he was surrounded by the Syrian army. What was seen was much less powerful than what was not seen—the mighty army of God! Though we may not see the means and way in which God intends to help us; through the eyes of faith, we can be confident He is present and able to deliver. **God protects His children.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving that the Lord is always present and able to protect them. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

Template - Coat of Arms

