

Sermon: We Have Them Outnumbered; Delivered by: Dr. Philip Ryken,
president, Wheaton College; *Date: May 27 2018*

Bible text explored: 2 Kings 6: 8-23

⁸Once when the king of Syria was warring against Israel, he took counsel with his servants, saying, “At such and such a place shall be my camp.” ⁹But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, “Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are going down there.” ¹⁰And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God told him. Thus he used to warn him, so that he saved himself there more than once or twice.

¹¹And the mind of the king of Syria was greatly troubled because of this thing, and he called his servants and said to them, “Will you not show me who of us is for the king of Israel?” ¹²And 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.” ¹³And he said, “Go and see where he is, that I may send and seize him.” It was told him, “Behold, he is in Dothan.” ¹⁴So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” ¹⁶He said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” ¹⁷Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see.” So 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. ¹⁸And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, “Please strike this people with blindness.” So he struck them with blindness in accordance with the prayer of Elisha. ¹⁹And Elisha said to them, “This is not the way, and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.” And he led them to Samaria.

²⁰As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, “O LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see.” So the LORD opened their eyes and they saw, and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. ²¹As soon as the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I strike them down? Shall I strike them down?” ²²He answered, “You shall not strike them down. Would you strike down those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.” ²³So he prepared for them a great feast, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the Syrians did not come again on raids into the land of Israel. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. Name a couple of recent developments that could tempt us who are loyal to God to think we are not on the winning side?
2. In today’s narrative (vv. 8-14), which nation was in the stronger position from a physical power perspective?
But what getaways by Israelite forces caused the Syrian king to suspect a traitor?
What unseen realities did his officers correctly identify?

3. Was the danger that Elisha's servant discovered (v. 15) real or imagined?
What hostile "schemes of the devil" are arrayed against us today?
(See *Eph. 6:12-13*)
4. What reason (vv. 16-17) did Elisha give his servant for not panicking?
What invisible protection was revealed to his spiritual eyes?
To help open your eyes, read aloud from the following *Psalms*: 34:7;
68:17; 91:9-12.
5. What is the principle way (vv. 18-20) the spiritual battle is joined?
Are angelic forces, "dressed for battle," for real? (See *Matt. 18:10*; *26:53*.)
How are we engaged in this battle for our families, church, and
community? (See *2 Cor. 10:3-5*.)
6. Is our tendency, like that of Israel's king (vv. 21-23), to want to get even
with those who've opposed us?
What is the biblical recipe for how to treat our opponents?
(See *Matt. 5:44-45*; *Rom. 12:17-21*.)
What solid basis is there for maintaining this kind of compassion?
(See *Rom. 5:10*.)