

Theme: The Lord blesses his people with protection and favor that they might bless the nations with his grace in Christ.

Background and Introduction

I. Israel’s Enemy (8-11)

- A. New entity – Syria, not the Philistines
- B. Same old tactics – More guerrilla warfare, not open warfare
- C. With no success – Suspecting treason in Syria’s ranks? (11)

II. Israel’s Advantage (12-14)

- A. The prophet of the Lord
 - 1. No treason, just Elisha
 - 2. He must be removed (13,14)
- B. The promise of the Lord
 - 1. For the sake of his promise

NOTE: We enjoy his protection because of his love for us in Christ. But, of course, his covenant people are *all* established in the saving, redeeming work of Christ.

 - 2. Faithful protection
 - Time after time, the raids are thwarted

APPLICATION: God’s help is there, even when we don’t ask

III. Israel’s Strength

- A. Seeing with the natural eye
 - 1. An army against one man
 - 2. The servant’s *fear* – “What shall we do?” (15)
NOTE: The world is a scary place!
- B. Through the eyes of faith (16-17)
 - 1. Elisha’s sight
 - Don’t be afraid! Why?? “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them!” (16)

NOTE: Spiritual forces at work! Engaged in Spiritual warfare! Ephesians 6
 - 2. Elisha’s prayer (the 1st) – Open his eyes, Lord! (17)
NOTE: Prayer is the key to spiritual realities.
 - 3. Seeing the “Chariots of Fire”
 - Flame/Fire representing the presence of the Lord
 - Arrayed between Elisha and the Syrians
 - 4. Engaged in spiritual warfare
 - We have the hosts of heaven on our side!
 - Whether we see them or not

NOTE: We are not always delivered from the enemy (Hebrews 11:29ff) but we are always protected.

NOTE: God's people in exile were being reminded of God's hand on them.

IV. Israel's Protection

A. Elisha and his servant

1. Elisha prays (the 2nd) – Close their eyes! (18)
2. Elisha leads them – Follow me! (19)
- Marched into captivity!

QUESTION: How many of the people of this world are in that same condition right now, following their enemy blindly into captivity?

3. Elisha prays (the 3rd)
 - a. Eyes are opened
 - b. Behold! Their doom!

B. All Israel

1. The king
 - a. Saved not by his military strength but by the Word of the prophet
 - b. Ready for vengeance
2. The nation
 - a. The Lord's arm is great – The enemy is conquered by the Word
 - b. Israel as God's servant – A light to the nations

Protection extended to...

C. Syria!

1. Facing death – offered dinner
2. Grace is offered – When Judgment was warranted

V. Israel's (and Our) Peace

A. Loving our enemies?

1. Elisha's obeys the word (Romans 12:20)
2. In keeping with Christ's command (Matthew 5:44,45)

B. Loved when we were enemies

C. Invited to His table

- In the Lord's Supper and at the Great Banquet in heaven

CONCLUSION:

1. God is at work to direct, defend, and deliver his people – even when we don't *see* the flaming chariots and horses.
2. Like Israel, we are called to be a light to the nations. We can shine brightly because we know the "those who are with us are more than those who are with them!"

Next week: 2 Kings 6:24-7:20