

# Winning Over Our Enemies,

*With the LORD and Kindness!*

Saturday, 7/11/20 at 4:00 | Sunday, 7/12/20 at 9:00

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Since many seem to be living in fear due to ☹️COVID19, ☹️civil unrest, and ☹️political disunity, let us ➡️focus on our GREAT GOD, ➡️consider a unique account of His intervention against an enemy, and ➡️see how evil can be overcome with good!

- The LORD Knows Everything:** 2 Kings 6:8 Once when the king of Syria [a nation to the north] was warring against Israel, he [the king of Syria] took counsel with his servants, saying, “At such and such a place shall be my camp.”<sup>9</sup> But the man of God [that is, Elisha, the LORD’s servant] sent word to the king of Israel, “Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are going down there.” // How did Elisha know? The LORD, *who knows everything*, told Elisha; then Elisha told the king of Israel. The LORD ♦️sees what we do, ♦️hears what we say, and ♦️knows what we think: <sup>NAS</sup> 1 Chronicles 28:9 “...the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts.”
- The King of Syria Reacts:**
  - Who among us is against us? <sup>11</sup> And 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?” <sup>12</sup> 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 assumed a spy was among his men, *yet that was not true*. Think about the **“bedroom”** comment, *NO LOCATION is hidden from the LORD!*

- b. **Let’s seize Elisha:** <sup>13</sup> **And he said, “Go and see where he is, that I may send and seize him.”** It was told him, **“Behold, he is in Dothan [a city in the northern kingdom of Israel].”** <sup>14</sup> **So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army, and they came by night and surrounded the city.** <sup>15</sup> **When 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?”** // When an earthly ruler is powerful, he can send powerful forces to accomplish his will – *like seizing Elisha*. The king of Syria thought he was seizing an ordinary man, *but he was trying to seize God’s prophet*. **Did he think his gods were greater than our God?** People are so mixed up – *then and today!* Last week I posted: “We used to be a nation whose laws agreed with the Bible, but now we are standing against the Almighty God...” Then George commented: “Which god?” 😞😞😞

### 3. **The LORD Is Fully in Control:**

- a. **Reality is MORE than what is seen:** <sup>16</sup> **[Elisha] said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”** <sup>17</sup> **Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, please open his eyes [the eyes of my**

*servant]* **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. // What do we confess in the Nicene Creed? “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.” Therefore, let us remember that there are **awesome** and **terrifying** things that are real, but, for now, *we normally cannot see them.* So let us live with **the Bible** in one hand and **our eyes of faith** wide open to see God’s invisible realities and be at peace!

- b. The LORD listened to Elisha: <sup>18</sup> **And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, “Please strike this people with blindness.” So [the LORD] struck them with blindness in accordance with the prayer of Elisha.** <sup>19</sup> **And Elisha said to [the Syrians], “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 [the capital of Israel, which was about 10 miles south of Dothan].** <sup>20</sup> **As 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.** // Try to imagine what happened... Elisha prayed for blindness, *and the LORD answered!* Elisha talked to the soldiers, *and they listened to him and followed him right into the capital city of Israel!* And then try to imagine what those soldiers might have said when they opened their eyes: *“They could easily slaughter us!”*
- c. Kindness and victory: <sup>21</sup> **As soon as [Joram] the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I**

strike them down? Shall I strike them down?" [The king was excited!]<sup>22</sup> [Elisha] 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." [In other words, feed them and let them go.]<sup>23</sup> So 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. // Why not? As the Israelites followed the LORD's instructions, *which were given through the LORD's servant Elisha*, the evil of the Syrians was overcome with good! This is a key New Testament passage on the same topic: **Romans 12:17** "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone...<sup>19</sup> Never take your own revenge... for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord.<sup>20</sup> 'But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink....'<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." // Sometimes enemies must be put to death; however, sometimes, our response to them can ♦neutralize them or even ♦win them as our allies. When we were God's enemies, *He did not slaughter us – as we deserved, but He loved us and sent Jesus to take away our sins!*

**Let Us Pray:** Dear F, S, and HS, ♦grow our knowledge of Your Word, ♦open our eyes of faith, ♦remove our fear, and ♦help us to respond to our enemies according to Your will!

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