

Chariots of Fire

TEXT II Kings 6:8-23

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to substantiate the truth that God will use His supernatural power to protect those who serve Him, using the story of God's protection of Elisha and his servant by the chariots of fire.

MEMORY VERSE The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. — Psalm 34:7

MEMORY VERSE SONG

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about, en-campeth round about them that
fear him; the angel of the LORD encampeth round about and de liv'reth
them.

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THE ANGEL — With hands at shoulder height pointing out, flutter like wings.

OF THE LORD — Point up.

ENCAMPETH ROUND ABOUT THEM — Draw large circle pointing toward ground.

THAT FEAR HIM — Praying hands (*fear* does not mean "afraid of," rather it means "those that pray to, honor, etc.>").

AND DELIVERETH THEM — Brush off the back of left hand with side of right hand.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Cut apart the angel, encircling banner and center piece on the heavy black lines. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Put up the angel and then the succeeding pieces as the students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Take a paper shield to class. Show your students the shield, saying how we know that shields are used for protection. Then tell them that today they

are going to hear how God provided a special kind of protection for one of His helpers.

1. The king of Syria made plans against Israel, but his plans were found out repeatedly. He was angry and demanded to know who the traitor was.

2. One servant told him that it was Elisha who was revealing the secret plans.

3. The king learned that Elisha was in Dothan, and sent out his chariots and horses to surround the city and capture the prophet.

4. Elisha's servant was frightened when he saw the host surrounding them.

Climax: When Elisha prayed that the servant's eyes would be opened, he saw horses and chariots of fire sent by God to protect them. The enemy was smitten with blindness and delivered into Israel's hand. They were treated kindly and returned to Syria.

Conclusion: God will never fail to take care of the person whose trust is in Him.

Response: The students will be able to tell how God protected Elisha, and will be able to describe how His power will protect the believer today.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the time of Elisha's ministry in Israel, the Syrians went to war against the Israelites. (The Syrians lived to the north of Israel and should not be confused with the Assyrians, another powerful nation.) God often revealed to Elisha the whereabouts of the Syrian army, and this angered the king of Syria, who purposed to capture the prophet by surrounding the city of Dothan where he was staying.

Artists often depict angels as gentle and docile creatures, wearing long white robes and playing sweet music on their golden harps. But many times the Lord calls His angels to be agents of His protection. While Scripture does not say angels accompanied the chariots and horses of fire, it is possible that heavenly beings guided those instruments of God's protection.

This story suggests that all around us, supernatural events are happening which are invisible to the human eye. At times, God "opens" the eyes of certain people and lets them witness these remarkable incidents.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Have each child put his hands over his eyes to experience what it would feel like if he were blind. If you have room, lead them around the class or room showing how Elisha led the Syrian army to the Israelite army.

Give each child a copy of the picture of Dothan with the stapled-on portion of the city covering the chariots of fire (see Patterns). Have them fold up the top at the appropriate time in the telling of the story.

Make a paper chain of angels (see Patterns) for each student. Let them use this to encircle a doll or cut-out figure, to show how the angels encamp around those that serve the Lord.

QUESTIONS

What two countries were at war? Are those countries on our maps today?

How did Elisha help the king of Israel? Where did he obtain his knowledge?

Do you know who in the Bible said, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets"? Daniel 2:28

When things went against the king of Syria, who did he think was to blame?

What did his servants tell him? How do you suppose they knew more than their king?

The king of Syria sent an army to capture one man — Elisha. Were they successful? Why or why not?

What did Elisha mean when he told his servant, "They that be with us are more than they that be with them"?

What happened to the men who came to capture Elisha? What did the king of Israel want to do to these men once they were in his power?

What did Elisha tell him to do? Compare the attitude of the king of Israel to that of Elisha? What does this tell you about a get-even spirit?

PRE-SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Use cone angels made from a half circle of paper, with a circle face and wings attached, for guardian angels.

Show pictures of a mommy or daddy with a child. They want to protect their child. In the same way, Jesus wants to protect us too.

Show the children the well-known picture of a guardian angel watching two children as they cross a broken bridge. There are also a number of pre-school books about how Jesus cares for us.

REVIEW IDEAS

This lesson would adapt well to an overhead story. Use overlays and darkness as you review the story with the children.

Use examples of things that help to protect us, i.e., crash helmet, seat belts, gloves, steel-toed boots, umbrella, etc.

Visualize some instances when God protected you or someone of your acquaintance for your review. In the center of a large flannel board, put a figure to represent yourself or the person you have selected. As you tell of times you were protected, write a brief statement on a paper angel-shape and mount these in a circle around the center figure.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Why Worry When You Can Pray?" — Happy Time, vol. 2, page 2

"My Lord Knows the Way" — Beginners Sing, page 10

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Use Unit 10 Support material

