

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony
Schultz
9th Sunday aft Pentecost
(WELS B.)
August 6, 2017
2 Kings 6:8-17



⁸ Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place." ⁹ The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." ¹⁰ So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. ¹¹ This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Tell me! Which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?" ¹² "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." ¹³ "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." ¹⁴ Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked. ¹⁶ "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

People of God, rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Again~it never ceases to amaze me—how breakable people are! I saw on the Internet just the other day that a man named Randy died. Randy was a licensed and experienced skydiver! Did you ever want to do that? I asked a guy one time—why would you want to jump out of a perfectly good airplane? He said—“most of the time the planes aren't that great!”

Randy jumped out of airplanes all the time! He jumped out of a plane that morning – and that same afternoon he did it again! I thought – I bet I know what happened – experienced as he was – he got a little careless and made a rookie mistake packing his chute and it failed to open! And so? *No! That's not* what happened. Randy jumped – and another guy jumped – and they both opened their chutes. And then they collided! They crashed into each other – and Randy's chute collapsed. The other guy hurt his leg. Randy died! In a world where people are so very breakable – God's Word encourages and enables us:

Don't Be Afraid!

- I. There is danger all around...
- II. *But* the LORD is always with us!

The part of God's Word we are concentrating on is from the book of 2 Kings! This part of God's Word is not part of the ILCW Series A or B or C. So chances are very good you have not heard a sermon on this text – except for what is called a free text – a text that the pastor picks for a special Sunday. The Summer of 1992 I talked with someone who only came to church rarely and they complained – it's always the same old same old. You never hear *anything new!* That really bothered me – so that Summer of 1992 we did a series of sermons that I was pretty sure you never heard before. One of those sermons was based on Judges chapter 19. Do you remember a sermon 25 years ago from Judges chapter 19? **19 In those days Israel had no king. Now a Levite who lived in a remote area in the hill country of Ephraim took a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. ² But she was unfaithful to him. She left him and went back to her parents' home in Bethlehem, Judah. After she had been there four months, ³ her husband went to her to persuade her to return. He had with him his servant and two donkeys. She took him into her parents' home, and when her father saw him, he gladly welcomed him. ⁴ His father-in-law, the woman's father, prevailed on him to stay; so he remained with him three days, eating and drinking, and sleeping there. Eventually the Levite and his concubine started home. They stopped on the way home – and kind of like the two visitors who came to Lot's house in Sodom – **wicked men came to attack the Levite.** To protect his guest – the overnight host pushed the concubine out the door and she was attacked. ²⁷ **When her****

master got up in the morning and opened the door of the house and stepped out to continue on his way, there lay his concubine, fallen in the doorway of the house, with her hands on the threshold. ²⁸ He said to her, "Get up; let's go." But there was no answer. Then the man put her on his donkey and set out for home. Parts of her were sent to the Twelve Tribes of Israel—a call to war to battle those who had attacked her... What a tragic story—recorded in God's Word. For what purpose? To warn us—lest we fall into such horrible wickedness! Is there gross evil in our world today? Gross wickedness—with all the drive by drug dealing shootings in Chicago? With all the car jacking—gang related shootings in Milwaukee? With all the wickedness—what with Heroin addiction in Watertown and Ixonia and Lebanon? If there are not sermons about Levites and their girlfriends how are we to know this Scripture—if Father's don't read their Bible then talk to their family around the supper table—during family devotions.

Many years ago—we had a sermon about 2 Kings chapter 6—the verses just before the ones we read in Church today—the story of the axe head? Do you remember that? **6 The company of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we meet with you is too small for us. ² Let us go to the Jordan, where *each of us can get a pole*; and let us build a place there for us to meet."** And he said, "Go." ³ Then one of them said, "Won't you please come with your servants?" "I will," Elisha replied. ⁴ And he went with them. They went to the Jordan and began to cut down trees. ⁵ As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axhead fell into the water. "Oh no, my lord!" he cried out. "It was borrowed!" ⁶ The man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it there, and made the iron float. ⁷ "Lift it out," he said. Then the man reached out his hand and took it. So—there are all kinds of new lessons for us to learn from God's Word!

⁸ Now the king of Aram (today we would say the king of Syria) was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place." ⁹ The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." ¹⁰ So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. ¹¹ This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Tell me! Which of us

is on the side of the king of Israel?" ¹² "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." ¹³ "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." The LORD protects His people! It is impossible for us to know how many times Jesus has kept us safe from harm and danger! 9.11 there were countless stories about people who were supposed to be at work in the Twin Towers that terrible morning – supposed to be in offices right where the airplanes crashed – but they were not at their desk. Maybe it was someone's birthday – and they took the day off – to spend the day with their family – breakfast in bed – or a trip to the Zoo – or going to the movies. There were people who got in their car and turned the key and their car wouldn't start. Odds are they pounded the steering wheel in frustration and turned the key again and again until their battery was dead. Others were stuck in traffic – again pounding the steering wheel and honking the horn and yelling to no one in particular – "Move it! I'm gonna be late!" There were people with little infants and toddlers that woke up with a temperature or the stomach flu – and their mommy or daddy stayed home to take care of them. At the moment it seemed like something bad was happening. That's when it's important for us to remember the Scriptures: **"We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose, because those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. And those he justified he also glorified."** Romans 8:28-30 EHV. Sometimes it's difficult – almost impossible for us to understand God's eternal plans. The LORD – the Great I AM – the one who changes not – the same yesterday and today and forever – makes what happens to us – work for the ultimate good of bringing us home to Heaven! In the same way earthly Fathers and earthly Mothers know what's best for their little people – so our Heavenly Father always knows what's best for His children.

¹⁴ Then he (*that is the king of Aram/Syria*) sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh

no, my lord! What shall we do?" *Oh no...what shall we do?!* Have you read the papers lately? Have you watched the news? Do you open your computer to the latest on the Internet? People being murdered by their fiancée! They go hiking and get pushed off a cliff – literally. They go scuba diving and get their oxygen hose cut! They have an argument in a hotel room and get pushed through the glass door – off the balcony and fall to their death below! The North Koreans are working on a nuclear missile capable of reaching Alaska or California. Iranian ships are buzzing our Navy in the Gulf and Marines are dying in Afghanistan. The e-devotion you can get in your e-mail the other day talked about being concerned for your job, for your health, for your family! I think more people who sit in these pews worry about their children and their grand-children far more than they worry about themselves! That's when you need to remember – the One who loves your family even more – even more than you do! That's your Heavenly Father. So – if we think we have troubles – think about the young father in Illinois. His family was in their way to VBS when they were in a terrible accident. The mommy and the baby in her tummy went to Heaven. Another child in the car went to heaven. Two more little children were so terrible injured they are in medically induced comas and one of them died – while the other fights for his life. Here is a father and family to pray for. Jesus loves them and Jesus will help them in the best way possible. What shall we do? There is a Bible verse that is on more than one plaque and picture and poster in our home. It's Psalm 46 verse 10. It says, **"Be still and know that I am God!"** We are forever safe in Jesus' nail marked hands. **Never will he leave us! Never will he forsake us. Be still and know** that Jesus is God!

¹⁶ **"Don't be afraid,"** the prophet answered. **"Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."** ¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, **"Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see."** Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire **all around Elisha.** *Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see.* The eyes of faith see the LORD's hand all the time! It was in the wee hours of the morning the last week of July – when I woke up hearing the sirens – 1,2,3 – maybe 4 – maybe even 5 sirens? Then came the sounds of a helicopter. We say, "Flight for life!" That means a lot in our house. Flight for life carries people in urgent need of the best medical care possible. Flight for life means organs being taken or delivered for transplant! When you hear the sirens in

the night – helicopter blades in the night – what do you think? Do you feel afraid? Do you hope and pray your phone doesn't ring? Do you pray? Pray that Jesus would watch over the first responders – the police officers, state troopers, county sheriffs – keep the fire fighters and first responders are safe! Pray that Jesus would spare the life of anyone injured – or take them safely home to Heaven! Only the Lord Jesus can keep us safe from all harm and danger. Only He can enable us to be unafraid – always remembering **if God is for us – who can be against us?** Amen!
To God alone all glory!



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