

Lesson IV.

ELISHA'S HEAVENLY DEFENDERS

October 24, 1915

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Between last Lesson and to-day's we have the story of Elisha's making the iron ax head to swim, vs. 1-7.

GOLDEN TEXT—The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psalm 34 : 7.

Memorize vs. 16, 17.

THE LESSON PASSAGE—2 Kings 6 : 8-17. Study 2 Kings 6 : 8-23.

8 ¹ Then the king of Syr'ia warred against Is'rael, and ² took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall* be my camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Is'rael, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place ; for thither the Syr'ians are ³ come down.

10 And the king of Is'rael sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and ⁴ saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 ⁵ Therefore the heart of the king of Syr'ia was sore troubled for this thing ; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Is'rael ?

12 And one of his servants said, ⁶ None, my lord, O king : but Eli'sha, the prophet that is in Is'rael, telleth the king of Is'rael the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

Revised Version—¹ Now the : ² he ; ³ coming ; ⁴ And the ; ⁵ Nay, my lord ; ⁶ see ; ⁷ with horses and chariots was round about the city.

*HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

M.—Elisha's heavenly defenders, 2 Kgs. 6 : 8-17.

T.—Elisha's heavenly defenders, 2 Kgs. 6 : 18-23.

W.—The all-seeing God, Ps. 139 : 1-12.

Th.—Heavenly defenders, 2 Chron. 20 : 14-21.

F.—God's guidance, Ps. 25 : 8-20.

S.—"If thine enemy hunger, feed him," Rom. 12 : 14-21.

Sunday—"The Lord helped me," Ps. 118 : 1-14.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. ELISHA'S DIRECTIONS.—8. Then. Whether this was before or after Naaman's cure (see last Lesson, ch. 5 : 1-10, 14) we cannot be sure. The king of Syria ; Benhadad II., as in last Lesson. Warred



AN ANCIENT WAR CHARIOT

against Israel. Bands of plunderers made raids through the fertile plains, especially at harvest times, of course with the knowledge, and under the direction, of the king. Took counsel ; worked out his plan of campaign. With his servants ; his chief officers. In such and such a place ; indicating a definite spot in Israel's territory. My camp ; from which raids might be made in all directions.

9, 10: The man of God ; a title given to the prophet (compare 1 Kgs. 17 : 24 ; ch. 4 : 9). Sent unto the king (Jehoram). Elisha had spoken strongly against Jehoram and his family on account of their sins (see ch. 3 : 13, 14), but, though disapproving

of much in the king's conduct, he, like a true patriot, gave Jehoram the benefit of his knowledge, for the sake of his country. Beware . . . pass not such a place. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says that Jehoram was setting out on a hunting expedition when the warning came. The Syrians are come down ; are lying, or planning to lie, in ambush, ready to spring upon and capture any passer-by. Sent to the place ; a messenger to find out whether the warning were true. Saved himself ; by heeding Elisha's words. Not once nor twice ; several times.

11, 12. The king of Syria . . . sore troubled. His mind was greatly disturbed. Called his servants ; gathered his officers together. Shew . . . which . . . for . . . Israel. The king thought that there must be a traitor amongst his own officers. None ; a flat and emphatic denial of disloyalty. Elisha, the prophet, etc. The one who made this answer may have got his information by living amongst the Israelites or from some captive. In thy bedchamber ; the most secret place.

II. ELISHA'S DANGER.—13, 14. Go and spy ; hunt out this most dangerous of enemies. Send and fetch him ; take him prisoner and thus put an end to his giving secret information to the king of Israel. In Dothan ; a town ten miles north of Samaria, the capital of Israel, on the great road from Egypt to Damascus. Chariots ; two-wheeled vehicles, usually drawn by two horses. The Egyptian, Greek and Roman chariots carried two men, the warrior and a driver ; but the Syrian, and other Asiatic, chariots carried three, the warrior, the driver and a shield-

* Courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.