

Eastern Mission

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

October 2020

Dear Friends,

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha

II Kings 6:15-17

For the servant of Elisha the prophet, the situation is hopeless. He and Elisha are doomed. The Syrian army have come to take Elisha captive and have surrounded the city. Since the servant sees no way out, he cries out to Elisha ***“Alas, my master! how shall we do?”***

At one time or another, we have all probably been overwhelmed by the circumstances that were against us. My family recently suffered a housefire due to a lightning strike. As I watched the firefighters endeavor to extinguish the fire, I found myself becoming increasingly upset by the loss of property, the prospect of being out of our home for weeks, if not months and the thought of the arduous cleanup that awaited us. It was overwhelming. What were we going to do?

Like the servant of Elisha, there was much that I could not see. At first, I did not see the hidden blessings of the God who has always promised to take care of His children. I did not see the ***“...horses and chariots of fire”*** that surrounded us. God quickly opened my eyes to see the blessings of firefighters, police officers and emergency personnel that risked their health and lives to help us. I began to see the many family members, friends and neighbors that came, offering assistance. In the days that followed, I witnessed the power of the body of Christ as brothers and sisters in Christ offered financial gifts, cards of encouragement and prayers for me and my family. We were never alone. God was always with us.

This is the reality of God’s care for His people. ***“If God be for us, who can be against us?”***, the Apostle Paul tells us. When we engage in the battles of this earthly life, we can take comfort in God’s ***“horses and chariots of fire”*** that surround us. Whether we are assailed by temptations, cares of this life or the burden of our sin, they are no match for our heavenly Father who loves us. Through His Cross, Jesus Christ has conquered our sin, death and the devil. As a result, we stand forgiven, abounding in hope and ***“...more than conquerors though Him that loved us.”*** **Romans 8:37** May God open our eyes that we may see.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” **John 16:33**

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylkas

P.S. Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on large gatherings, we have cancelled the fall Seminary Rally which usually takes place in October. Thank you for your continued support during these difficult times. We appreciate your fellowship in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God Bless your kindness.