

Kings and Prophets 14-10-03b

Let's pick up our study now, we're getting a little bit of experience, a little bit of practice in deciphering some of the common and meaningful symbolic elements in Scripture. Some of them we're more familiar with than others. For example, fire, we don't have to spend a lot of time affirming and confirming to ourselves that fire is a picture of judgment.

But if a chariot is representative of sort of the movement of time, then what would a chariot of fire represent? Time of judgment, right? It's the time of judgment. When the chariot of fire appears, that's going to be when time goes to the point at which judgment takes place. And there is no greater judgment than that that took place on the cross.

And the chariot of fire represents, in anticipation, I think, the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, which is why it doesn't say that Elijah enters the chariot and is carried by the chariot into heaven. That would spoil the picture. That is what separates the first section of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, who is personified in the Old Testament law, who is emblematic in the Levitical offerings, sacrifices and feasts and the function of the priesthood and all of the...he is the fulfillment of the law, he is the walking embodiment of the Word of God and the law in the Old Testament sense and the ministry of Elijah sums all of that up.

Then the time of judgment separates him and Elisha, who represents the latter, the post-crucifixion, post-resurrection ministries of the Lord Jesus. And that is the great separation. But there is this curious persistence of Elijah after this time.

And we find out that Elijah is not really gone, he is not visible anymore from this day forward until this letter arrives a few years later to a king and we find out that Elijah is actually alive and well elsewhere writing this missive, which is another reminder of the fact that the Lord Jesus is not conquered by death, he conquers death himself. So, the chariot movement of time, the forward progress in the plan and purpose of God. So as you assign this value to that, think about what happens when the kings go forth to battle, one king invites another to go fight the Syrians and they are in their chariot and this is history, this is emblematic of what is the best efforts of man coming apart.

The prophets are speaking, they are not heeded and people die as a result of disregarding the word of the Lord that is clearly presented to them. We don't have time to rehash all of those, but if you go back to chapter 9 now, 2 Kings chapter 9, just a little bit back, what we just recently covered, after Jehu is anointed king and remember Jehu is another facet, another foreshadowing, Yehu, his name means the Lord is he, he is the Lord, you can't get any more of a clue than Jehu is one facet. Now Jehu is not necessarily a nice guy, he is not certainly a perfect foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus, Joshua is a much better picture and of course his name is identical, but this is a facet, this is an aspect of what God is going to do through the Lord Jesus in terms of judgment when the time comes.

And this is why in 2 Kings chapter 9, beginning in verse 14, you have the story of the anticipation of the arrival of Jehu and suddenly we have this zooming in verse after verse about this guy is coming and we are sending people to say is it peace, is it peace? And there is no answer, the guys who go and ask that question there is no answer, well in the meantime the chariot is rolling, what does that represent? During the time of the forward movement, what happens? Everybody says, oh I can't wait for Messiah to come because then we will have peace. I can't wait for Messiah to come because everybody will be happy over there. I can't wait for Jesus to come because we are all going to go to heaven and walk the streets of gold and play harps and listen to angel choirs and everything is going to be wonderful, it is peace, it is peace.

Is it peace? Is it peace? When Jesus comes it will be peace. Jesus said in the first advent, I have not come to bring peace but a sword and it is going to divide households, based on what? Arbitrary divine sovereignty? No, based on attitudes, based on response, based on what you do with the word of God, look at the example of the Old Testament, those that did not heed it are judged accordingly, those who respond are blessed accordingly. So when Jehu comes, he is in his chariot, says I see a company of men, get a horseman and send to meet him and say, is it peace? Jehu says, turn around and follow me.

Another one goes, is it peace? Turn around and follow me. And because you have got these two messengers, possibly this is the Old Testament expectation, the Jews expectation, still waiting for their Messiah, is it peace when the Messiah will come? And then the second one is the church saying, well when Jesus returns is it going to be peace and safety and everybody will enjoy wonderful blessings? But as he gets close they say, the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously. He is coming in our direction and it does not look like peace, it looks like trouble.

That furious driving is not because he is happy to get there. Where is the fatted calf? I am sure I drove furiously so I could get here and join the feast. Furious driving means I am coming to do something that you are not going to like.

So Joram says, make ready and what happens? The leadership when Jehu meets them suffer. Treachery ahaziah, it is not what we thought. It is not what we thought it was going to be.

And Jehu draws his bow with full strength and shoots Jehoram between his arms and the arrow comes out his heart. He sank down in his chariot. Talk about dividing the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow.

Cut straight to the heart. A judge of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And the judgment is going to be on the heart.

The arrow that was launched from the bow goes right to, through and out of the heart. Put him in the tract of the field of Naboth. That is his inheritance.

That is his lot. That is what he asked for. That is where he and his family belong.

That is the inheritance. Death in what they tried to take illegitimately. And you can carry that on through the chariot of Ahab.

These guys prevail for a time but as time moves forward they are going to end up at the end of that time with their blood being washed out of the chariot. The chariot is now stopped and there is nothing but blood there. He is not alive.

He is not well. He is not feasting. He is not inheriting.

So this is the idea. The idea of the storm. You remember this in the book of Job.

After the speech of Elihu and then God himself appears in the storm. You have in the Psalms. He rides on the chariot of the storm.

And I wish we had time to look these up. You can look them up. They are easy to find in a concordance search.

But you will see that God's chariot, God's conveyance is in the storm. And this is God's movement superintending. He is above.

You don't see God rolling along on the earth. God's chariot moves through the heavens. His ways are higher than our ways.

His history super abounds above and beyond mundane human history. But there is progress. There is purpose that is conceived, executed and fulfilled.

And this is God's chariot. And in the coming of the storm, this is something utterly beyond human control or influence. The storm is going to do what the storm wants to do.

Remember the men in the boat that was trying to take Jonah to Tarshish? And they threw everything out of the boat. They are trying to survive. They can't do anything about the storm.

They are just trying to survive it. And they finally realize that Jonah, emblematic of the nation of Israel itself, is the problem because the storm is directed at Jonah. The storm is related to Jonah and Jonah's disobedience to God's word.

It is a divine ruach that is hurled into the sea that causes this storm. And Jonah is both its cause and its resolution. And not until Jonah is representatively swallowed up for three days and three nights is the stormy presence of God's word and God's judgment satisfied.

The Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. And the stormy presence of God, not the fiery picture of judgment, but the overarching purpose of God is visible in this storm. You have the idea of a head.

And this is another one like fire that we know well. What does a head represent? The head of the woman is the man. The head of the man is Christ.

Does that mean the boss? What does the head represent? Rosh in Hebrew, kephale in Greek. What is it that got anointing oil poured on it? What is the leader of a tribe called? Rosh, kephale, head, just like it does in English means responsible. It's responsibility.

They don't put the crown on your shoulder. The government might be on his shoulder, but the crown is where? On his head, because that's responsibility. His blood be on our hands? Is that what the crowd cries out when Pilate is going to crucify the Lord Jesus? His blood be on what? On our heads.

If a man does certain things, his blood is on his own head. It's his responsibility. He is accountable.

The head is what is held accountable. That row of heads in the days of Jehu, outside the city, what was that symbolically indicating? We have no leadership that is going to come up against you. Nobody is going to take responsibility to be rebellious against you.

Goliath is the throne of God. He is the foremost soldier in the Philistine army. David doesn't cut off his arm and say, look, he can't wield his spear and his shield anymore.

He cuts off his head. By killing Goliath, he cuts off the head of the army. By cutting off Goliath's head, he symbolically routes the entire army.

What's the first place in the Bible where you have head mentioned? It's a little tricky because you say, well, this is he shall bruise thy head, thou shalt bruise his heel. It's literally he will crush your head. But in the crushing of the head, he suffers a wound.

It costs something to crush the head of the serpent. He will crush your head, but as he does so, you're going to bruise his heel. It's going to cost him something very painful to crush the head of the serpent.

But in reality, Rosh is the first word in the Bible, Be-Rashit, in the beginning. And a form of the word Rosh is Rashit, which is beginning, R-E-S-H-I-T, Be-Rashit, in the beginning. Be-Rashit, you put the preposition on there, and it's one word, Be-Rashit, in the beginning, the Rosh.

Well, this is the start, the inception, the initiation of a thing, and that's another one of the valences, one of the meanings of this word, Rosh, and head. And so whenever you see the head, you see the head of Jezebel laying down in the dirt, being licked by the dogs, and that's all that's left is her skull and her hands and the soles of her feet, you know, down there in the dust. It's meaningful, it means something.

Or was it just her head and her hands? Were her feet there too? Yeah. So the idea here is that these things are more than the sum of their parts when they show up in a story. Water, rivers, and seas.

We know what the troubled, stormy ocean represents, and Jonah out there on the stormy sea

and ultimately swallowed up by it, foreshadows Israel scattered among the nations and subject to the long history of what is now called anti-Semitism that you see for the last 2,000 years. And it is only through accepting, entering into, identifying with the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, in His burial, and in His resurrection, and in His perfect obedience to the plan and purpose of God, as an example to the nations pictured by Nineveh, that Israel is the light to the Gentiles that God called them to be, that they enter into the salvation that God ordained for them. And Jonah is one of the biggest gospel books in the whole Bible in that regard.

But you have that idea of the water, the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. No peace. Is it peace, Jehu? Is it peace? There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

The dominance of water in preventing access to things. If the children of Israel are going to leave Egypt, the waters of the Reed Sea must be moved aside. If they are going to enter into the land of promise, the waters of the Jordan must be moved aside.

It is something that only God can do. And so this idea that there are these circumstantial elements, that water often represents circumstance. You can see the Jordan in the story of Elijah and Elisha and how prominently it figures in who is on one side, who is on the other.

It takes the striking of the mantle for the water to be moved aside. It is an act of God. The purification of the water on several occasions, whether it is Moses throwing in the branches, whether it is Elisha, whether it is in Jericho, and then ultimately with the Lord Jesus, the turning of water into wine.

But water is a very powerful symbol, the washing of water by the Word. Water is a cleansing agent. Water is necessary for life.

The river of life, out of his belly shall flow rivers. It doesn't say cupfuls. It doesn't say vases.

It doesn't say pitchers. Rivers of living water. Again, like fire and oil and some of these other things, we have a pretty good idea of what they mean.

Well, in the course of working on these elements that have showed up time and again in our study, I came across a passage that is very fascinating for a couple of reasons, mainly because it has all of them in one place. Turn to Habakkuk 3. We don't get to go to Habakkuk very much. Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk.

So this is a good chance. And we'll look at Habakkuk in full when we get to the historical context a little bit later in our Kings and Prophets study. But if you look here at chapter 3, it says, "...a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet on Mount Sinai Shigionoth." If you look up Shigionoth in a lexicon, nobody knows what it means.

They're clueless. This is what I think. It is a tune name like Doe of the Dawn and some of the others.

Keep your finger here. Turn back to Psalm 7. Psalm 7, but don't lose Habakkuk. Notice, "...David prays against the malice of his enemies." Here it says, "...a meditation of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cush a Benjamite." Sorry, in the English it's Psalm 6. Hebrew Bible, I looked at it all in Hebrew and it was 7. It's Psalm 6. Actually, that's not either.

Sadly, my computer just died. Oh, a meditation. Yeah, Shigionoth.

Okay, sorry, that's right. It is Psalm 7. The other one is Shemaneath in Psalm 6. But this is Shigionoth. It's the same word that's over in Habakkuk 6. But look at Psalm 7. Just glance at the content.

"...O Lord my God, in you I put my trust. Save me from those who persecute me." This is a theme you find over and over again in the Psalms. "...Deliver me, lest they tear me like a lion, rending me in pieces, while there is none to deliver." I am in distress.

I am being attacked. This is an appeal to the Lord for deliverance from specific enemies. "...Lord, if I have done this, if there is iniquity in my hands, if I have repaid evil to him who is at peace with me, or plundered my enemy without a cause, let the enemy pursue me and overtake me.

Let him trample my life to the earth, and lay my honor in the dust." Selah. "...Arise, O Lord, in your anger. Lift yourself up.

Because of the rage of my enemies, rise up for me to the judgment you have commanded." The Lord commanded the judgment, and David says, O Lord, rise up to that ordained judgment. Commanded is the same as ordained. "...So that the congregation of the people shall surround you.

For their sakes, therefore, return on high. The Lord shall judge the peoples. Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my integrity within me." A bold thing to say for any human being.

We know some of David's faults, and yet he says, judge me according to my righteousness. How can he say that? This is the same David that says, you have separated my sins from me, as far as the east is from the west. If we've got failures or shortcomings in the past, God says, if you have acknowledged those, if you have claimed the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, they're gone.

Now you can stand on your righteousness by faith. Don't be dragging up the old bones that God has already dispensed with. "...Let the wickedness of the wicked," verse 9, "...come to an end, and establish the just.

For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. My defense is of God, who saves the upright in heart. God is a just judge.

God is angry with the wicked every day. If he does not turn back, he will sharpen his sword. He bends his bow and makes it ready." Some of these people are going to be judged in time.

Others will not be judged until down the road, the potential judgment in the future. "...He prepares for himself instruments of death. He makes his arrows into fiery rods, fiery sticks, fiery shafts." Pay special attention to verse 13 there.

"...He bends his bow and makes it ready. He makes his arrows into fiery shafts, shafts of judgment. The wicked bring forth iniquity.

He conceives trouble, brings forth falsehood, makes a pit, digs it out, falls into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head. His violent dealing shall come down on his own crown, his head, his crown." His head, his crown.

Who is responsible? He is responsible. What is the nature of the judgment? Some of it is future, the bow. Some of it is present, the sword.

"...I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness, sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High." The tune, the orchestral arrangement on which this psalm was performed is Shigaioth, now Habakkuk chapter 3, on Shigionoth, a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on the same thematic foundation. That is whatever Shigion is in the plural, it is related to that same idea. "...O Lord, I have heard your speech and was afraid.

O Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years." I personally, I wish I had time to really exegete this, but let me say that this is, O Lord, I have heeded your command, your communication, and was reverent. This is the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom. This isn't, oh my gosh, I'm afraid of God, I've heard what he said and now I'm running to hide.

This is, I've heard your word and it fills me with godly fear, with reverence, with the fear of the Lord. "...Revive your work in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years, make it known." What is the midst of the years? This is the traveling of the chariot, this is the onward march of time.

He says, Lord, I don't necessarily want to wait for the bow shot, revive your work soon. "...In wrath, remember what I have done." Mercy, don't forget the ark when you send the flood. God came from T-man.

What do you know about T-man? What does that make you think of? Who's from T-man in the book of Job? Didn't we have a T-manite? Oh, how soon we forget. Eliphaz the T-manite, Bildad the Shuhite, right? T-man, T-man means the south. He's a southern boy, from the south.

Eliphaz, God came from the south. Relative to what? In the Bible, everything is relative to Jerusalem. If it's south, it's south of Judah, south of Israel.

What happened down south? What famous historical come to pass is south? If you leave Egypt

and cross the Red Sea and you wander for 40 years, where are you? You're in the south. You're in the south. The Holy One from Mount Paran.

Paran is the region in which the Israelites wandered for 40 years. Paran literally means the place of caverns. So God came from the south.

He came from the north. I thought He dwelt in the sides of the north. Why is it talking about God in the south? Harking back, where is the God of the covenant? Where is the God of Sinai? God is coming up from the place where you made your agreement with Him, where He tested you for 40 years.

God is coming from there. God is looking to see if you've learned anything. He comes from the south.

His glory covers the heavens and the earth was full of His praise, brightness like the light rays flashing from His hand. There's power there that is hidden. Before Him goes pestilence.

Fever follows at His feet. He stood and measured the earth. He looked and startled the nations and the everlasting mountains were scattered.

The perpetual hills are bowed. His ways are everlasting. This is God in His overarching sovereign might and power overseeing, ruling, and judging history and the operation of people in history.

I saw the tents of Kushan in affliction. Kush, Kushan, this word group has the idea of blackness, darkness. And the curtains of the land of Midian trembled.

These are the tents of the Arabic world, the early Abrahamic offshoot that wasn't in Isaac, shall thy seed be called. Those who are near but not in are trembling. Those who are of the Ishmaelites, those who are the 17 sons of Abraham with Keturah and the rest of them, this is Midian.

This is the tents of Kushan. Oh Lord, were you displeased? And notice, and I really disagree with this translation, but I don't have time to go through and fix it, except to say I don't think these are questions. Just treat these, I think they are statements.

The Lord was displeased with the rivers. The Lord had anger against the rivers. The Lord had wrath against the sea.

Now look, we just talked about the sea, right? We just talked about the storm with the flashing and all the rest of it. Look at all the elements that we have here. Your anger against the rivers, your wrath against the sea, that you rode on horses, your chariots of salvation, your chariots of salvation.

In the forward moving of the plan and purpose of God, there is deliverance for the people of God. But you've got to wait for them to come. They're on the hills.

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence cometh my help? Your bow was made quite ready. Quite ready is funny.

You remember in Genesis chapter 3 when it says the serpent was more cunning? And then later on it says Adam and Eve, after they ate the fruit, knew that they were naked. And it's the same word. This is that word.

It means naked. It laid bare. Of course, remember we had the, we figured out that that's actually two different words.

There's the I in and the guy in between naked and cunning. Anyway, this is the word for naked. And it's the doubling, you know, dying thou shalt die idea.

This is a doubling of that verb. It means the nakedness was made naked. The bareness was made bare.

This means God has got his bow out and he is not kidding. He's got the bow out. He's got the arrows out of the quiver.

The thing is, it isn't in its sheath. It's not there for decoration. He's got it out and he is fixing to use it.

It is very obvious. Everybody can see the bow. Why not the sword? Everybody can see the certain future judgment of God.

The future judgment. He doesn't have to be laying people low now. Better quit sinning.

Look at that guy that died yesterday. The certain future judgment of God has been laid bare and this is emphatic. Dying now shalt die.

This bow bear has been laid bare. Naked has been made naked. Exposed has been exposed.

Visible, obvious. How can you miss it? Bow is the idea. Oaths were sworn over your arrows.

This is Shebeth, the basis for the name Elishebeth. My God has promised. This is the swearing of an oath, the making of a promise.

But this is nouns here. This is all nouns. You basically have three nouns here.

You have promises, you have the word spoken, and you have arrows, which is really the word rods, which is also translated tribes. Remember we saw that the tribes of Israel is the rods of Israel. Aaron's rod that budded and the rod is a metonymy, the adjunct sort of it.

The rod stands for the tribes and it's the rulership of the tribes, the leader of the tribes. Promises have been made and this isn't really the word for arrows. This is the word for rods or tribes.

But you divided the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you and trembled. The overflowing of the water passed by.

The deep uttered his voice, lifted his hands on high. This is the why do the nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing. This is the most powerful stuff on earth rising up against God.

But God is in his chariot. God has got his bow laid bare. God has got the lightning flashing forth, his brightness like the light and rays back in verse 4. And the power that has lain hidden down through the ages that launched the flood and created the earth and so on.

Well now the mountains see it and tremble. The overflowing of the water passes by. The deep utters its voice, lifts his hands.

The sun and moon stand still in their habitation at the light of your arrows. And this is the word for arrows here. They went at the shining of your glittering spear.

This is God riding forth to judgment. You marched through the land in indignation. You trampled the nations in anger.

You went forth for the deliverance of your people, for deliverance with your Mashiach, your anointed. You struck the head from the house. Now how many different things have we seen here of our symbolic elements? You try reading Habakkuk 3 with no sense of what those symbolic elements mean and it just sounds like wow, God's got a big chariot and he's riding and trampling everything in sight and he's mad at the nations.

I get that much. But when you start deciphering the specific symbolic imagery, we know when, we know how, we know why, we know where, we know who. You struck the head from the house of the wicked by laying bare, same verb you had up above, bearing the bow.

With that bow being laid bare, that's the threat, the portent, the visible coming of judgment. Still possible. It's like when Noah was building the ark, people could have said there's a future coming judgment, maybe I ought to get on board, literally.

Here, God laid bare the bow, people that did not repent and change their mind and respond in faith and in obedience are going to be laid bare from the foundation to the neck. This is from the sole of the foot to the jawbone. Every place that there ought to be clothing, they are going to be totally exposed.

Nothing to hide behind, no way to hide what they really are. They are exposed, they are laid bare from what they stand on all the way up to the neck, that stiff neck that they kept turning as they walked in the other direction from God. You thrust through with His own arrows the heads of the villages.

They thought they were going to create an empire. They thought they had the potential, they had laid plans, they were going to adopt and fulfill their schemes, but you've taken those

things, turned them around and stabbed them in the head with their own arrows. It's a very graphic picture.

They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me. Well, let's see your little Tasmanian devil whirlwind compared to the whirlwind of God. Your little arrows compared to God's arrows.

Your little whirlwind compared to God's whirlwind. These are people inventing themselves in the image of God. I will be like the Most High, imitating the career of Satan.

I've got some arrows, I've got a whirlwind, and I'm going to crush you under my plan. He who dwells in the heavens will laugh. You call that a whirlwind? That ain't a whirlwind.

This is a whirlwind. You call that an arrow? This is an arrow. Watch me stick these arrows through your head.

Your schemes will come back on yourself. The judgment with which you judge others is that with which you will be judged. Their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret.

You walked through the sea with your horses through the heap of great waters. All of this chaotic stuff that would overwhelm any normal human being, God effortlessly passes through with His horses and His chariot. It is nothing to God.

It's two-inch water to your tractor. It's just nothing. When I heard, my body trembled, my lips quivered at the voice.

This isn't so much rottenness as decay, and there's a reason why decay is a better translation here. Decay entered my bones, and I trembled in myself that I might rest in the day of trouble. This is a foreshadowing of Israel sleeping in the dust of the earth in the day of God's visitation.

In the same way that the vast majority of Old Testament Israel is sleeping in the dust when God comes and judges in the tribulation period, and the vast majority of the church is asleep when the Lord Jesus returns with a shout and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. And we are delivered out of the judgment, and most of Israel does not see the judgment. When Ezekiel is told to prophesy to the dry bones and they stand up and become a great army, that's post-tribulational.

They don't rise to fight the dragon and the armed hosts that are filling the Valley of Armageddon, do they? They rise afterward. I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. The gift of the Holy Spirit on the nation of Israel is at their resurrection at the second coming, at the end of the tribulation period.

The judgment is over. And David says, I see the Lord riding in His chariot. I see Him bending His bow.

I see Him taking His arrows. I see the statement of these promises to the tribes of restitution, of salvation, of vindication, of restoration. I see that, but I feel the decay entering my bones, and I

will rest while these things are going on.

That's the idea. And you get that from the fact that God is coming in the chariot. This is going to come over time.

It's going to happen in the future. I will rest in the day of trouble. When He comes up to the people, He will invade them with His troops, though the fig tree may not blossom.

What's the fig tree? Another very fulsome image in Scripture. What is the fig tree? The same one Israel, the same one Jesus walks up to and is looking for fruit that ought to be there. It's not the season for figs.

Well, this isn't any old fig tree. This is God's covenant fig tree. And when God says, Be fruitful, it ought to be fruitful regardless of the season, and it's not.

And Jesus withers the fig tree. When the fig tree may not blossom, nor there be fruit on the vine, the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food. Rain coming many times upon it only yields thorns and brambles.

It is near to a curse and fit for burning. Remember Hebrews 6? God digs around His vineyard. What can I say about my vineyard? I've done everything for it, and it doesn't yield grapes.

Though the fig tree doesn't blossom, the fruit's not on the vine, the labor of the olive fails, the fields yield no food, though Israel utterly fails. This is the flock of God. I'm sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, right? The flock may be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord.

The group at large may be going down the drain. I will rejoice. I'm not just going to be patient.

I'm not just going to tolerate. I will rejoice, he says. I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my deliverance. The Lord God is my strength. He will make my feet like deer's feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills.

And it's a song. It's like the Song of the Bow. It's like Psalm 7. Habakkuk, in the latter days of Israel, repeats that great refrain.

We're not destined to sink or swim with the group. If you're part of the remnant, if you're part of the faithful few, even though God is going to judge, just wait for the chariots of God to roll. Heads will roll.

Arrows will be launched. The bow will be used. The fiery judgment will come.

God is in His heaven. God is in control. He oversees and overcomes the stormy sea.

The rivers may run where they will. The river is just the chaotic ocean with direction. It's trying to go somewhere, and it is dividing the land and stopping your progress.

It's more than the ocean, which you can just avoid by not going to the beach. This is something that can be a source of life when it's in its place, or it can be a source of challenge when you're trying to go somewhere and you cannot cross. You can be backed up against a river or a sea, as Israel was.

But these values, and as we go forward, we're going to see this. We're going to see arrows coming up in the very near future in 2 Kings. Now we'll have a little bit more background for what they mean and why Elisha is going to be so distressed at a particular king who doesn't do what he should with his arrows.

God just stretches the fabric of time and space and the heavens and of language and of the ministry of His Spirit to give us the resources of truth that are in His Word. This is one of many ways that He invests it with the content, with the opportunity for instruction and rebuke and correction and doctrine that the Word of God is so full of. The Word of God is never compared to a bow or an arrow.

What is the Word of God? It is the sharp sword. It is here. It is now.

It is for the present. It is an individual application to the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow. This will give us some helpful background.

We're going to pretty much resume our historical survey through Kings and Chronicles beginning next time. With these sort of helpful illuminating lights as we encounter these elements in the future, it's going to greatly help us understand why the account is the way it is and beyond that, what it means for us. How should we then live? As goes the nation in the Old Testament, so goes the believer in the New.

If there is a warning of God, if He's making bare His bow for all to see, should we take note? What should we do given that vision, given that appearance, given that certainty? It is something with which we will be measured and by which we will be judged when the Lord Jesus returns because we are without excuse. We have been told. We know what is coming.

We know the chariots are rolling. We know the fire is near. Well, let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for the instruction that it gives to us and for the power that it imparts to us in the hands of Your Holy Spirit, guiding us and convicting us, comforting us and encouraging us to live a life that is above and beyond the momentary and the mundane. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will keep us mindful of these things, that we'll be sensitive to them and can live in their light.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.