

## Greater

“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (**I John 4:4**).

Who is in the world? John has said a lot about the world, those in it, and those of it. John is now talking about the one in the world who is empowering the worldly. In **John 12:31; 14:30** and **16:11**, Jesus mentions the ruler of the world. **I John 5:19** explains the world lies in the power of the evil one. **Ephesians 5:11-12** speaks of the devil and his minions as rulers, authorities, cosmic powers over this present darkness, and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Our enemy is powerful, frightening, and cunning. He is a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (**I Peter 5:8**).

Further, we've seen the battle between those who are of the world and those of God, and it isn't pretty. In **I John 3:12-15**, John reminds us of Cain who was of the evil one and his attack on Abel who was of God. Cain killed Abel because he was filled with hate and was of the evil one, the devil (cf. **I John 3:8**). This doesn't seem to bode well for us. How are we supposed to survive against such an enemy, let alone be victorious?

**I John 4:4** makes it clear. The one who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world. **I John 3:24** explains that everyone who keeps God's commandments “abides in God, and God in him” (ESV). We have God on our side, and not just on our side, on our inside. As powerful as the ruler of this world may be, God is more so. We may not be able to overcome the enemy, but God can, has, and will. We may not be able to figure out how He will win the victory, we simply need to keep surrendering to His will and obeying Him. He will take care of the victory.

There is a great Old Testament account that illustrates this principle. In **II Kings 6:8-23**, the king of Syria kept trying to attack Israel, but Elisha, the prophet of God, kept revealing the Syrian king's plans to the Israelite army. When the Syrian king discovered this he sent horses, chariots, and a great army to take Elisha captive. When Elisha's servant rose early in the morning to do his work, he saw the army and came crying to Elisha saying, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” The situation seemed dire, impossible even. But listen to Elisha's encouragement. “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Sound like anything we've heard before? Elisha prayed that his servant's eyes would be opened. Then the servant saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire, the army of God that surrounded and protected them. Interestingly, having seen that heavenly army, we might expect it to run down and slaughter the Syrian army. But that isn't how Elisha escapes. Instead, God strikes the Syrian army blind and Elisha leads them into the middle of the capital city with the king of Israel and his army.

We can't see the army of the Lord. We can't always fathom how God will win. But here is our faith. The One in us is greater than the one in the world. God always wins. If we abide in Him and allow Him to abide in us, we always win. Praise the Lord!