

1 Chariots of Fire

2 Flying Chariots

- Recently, NASA's space shuttle Atlantis has just flown its last mission, and there's lots of speculation about where the space agency will turn its attention.
- Recent inventions, however, may turn the attention from outer space to inner space -- namely, the space right above our heads.
- NASA is developing a "Highway in the Sky" technology, which may allow us all to have our own personal flying machines, commuting to work about 400 feet in the air.
- In other words, very soon we all could be piloting our own flying chariots to work, school, and to church.

3 The AirScooter

- One such invention is called the "AirScooter," invented by Woody Norris.
- The AirScooter will be able to fly for two hours at 55 mph and go up to 10,000 feet above sea level.
- Everything is controlled with a motorcycle-like handlebar, which manages two helicopter-like, counter-rotating blades.

4 The AirScooter

5 Highway in the Sky

- With NASA's "Highway in the Sky," the commuter pilot only needs to focus on one computer screen with a box on it.
- Keep the AirScooter's nose centered in the box, away from other personal flying machines, and the computer will guide you to your destination.

6 Other Personal Flying Machines

7 The Puffin

8 Upcoming revolution

- Many believe that today's jets and planes will eventually become relics, replaced by these machines that will make your average city look like something out of a Star Wars movie.
- In a few years, Ford, Chrysler, Honda and Toyota dealerships may be replaced by salespeople hawking AirScooters, Skycopters, CarterCopters and other personal flying machines.
- Just think you could start each day with a bird's eye view of God's creation with no more traffic jams.
- Traveling by straight-line distance; our commuting time to work would be cut to almost nothing.

9 The first personal flying machine

- According to 2 Kings 2:11, Elijah was the first passenger of a Personal Flying Machine.

- As they [Elijah & Elisha] were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a Whirlwind™. (2 Kings 2:11 NIV)
 - No one knows if Elijah asked God to circle around for a while so that they could survey the landscape of the Jordan River Valley.
 - Or if God gave Elijah the control to fly the Whirlwind™ himself.
- However, what we do know about Elijah, he was a significant figure in both the Old & New Testaments.

10 Elijah

- He was first of the prophets that God raised up to confront Israel (Northern Tribes) of their sins.
- He is most remembered by the calling down of fire on Mount Carmel to prove that Yahweh was superior to Baal.
- Along with Enoch and Moses, he never died but was taken to heaven in a Chariot of Fire.
- He is also prophesied to return to Israel before the Day of the Lord and restore all things.
- Some believe that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses mentioned in the book of Revelation.

11 Elijah

- However, in the book of James, Elijah is not described as someone with super abilities, but as an ordinary man.
- Elijah was a man just like us. (James 5:17 NIV)
- In fact, Elijah had a history of being moody, pessimistic, and someone who suffered from depression—especially when expectations weren't fulfilled.

12 Flawed & Timid

- Interesting enough, the Bible reveals that both Moses and Elijah were flawed leaders and timid prophets as well.
 - When through a burning bush God confronted Moses with the mission of leading the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses, lacking confidence in himself, balked in fear of the Pharaoh.
 - He sometimes let the anxiety of his people get the best of him.
 - Elijah demonstrated a similar bent when he ran for his life in the desert after being threatened by Jezebel and hid in a cave until God talked him out of it with a display of divine power.

13 The Flawed

- But, fortunately, God does not seek the flawless when looking for those to be in service.

- Being flawed and having shortcomings and weaknesses does not mean God's going to pass over and look for someone else to do God's work in the world.
- When, like Moses, we say, "I can't do this; find someone else," God says, "I don't want anyone else. When, like Elijah and Jonah, we run away, God finds us."

14 The Heroes of Faith

- Let us look at the “Heroes of Faith” mentioned in Hebrews 12, and ask ourselves, did any of these people have flaws.
 - Noah
 - Abraham
 - Jacob
 - Moses
 - Gideon
 - Barak
 - Samson
 - David
- Yes, these men had flaws but were commended for their faith and perseverance. They all were overcomers.

15 Elijah in James

- When James mentions Elijah, what is the context?
 - And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; . . . If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:15–16 NIV)
- What is James point?
 - Since Elijah was an ordinary man and saw great results with short prayers, we too don't need to be timid either.
 - Powerful answers to prayer are the result of ordinary people who are serving the Lord in righteousness.

16 UnAnswered Prayer

- We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. (John 9:31 NIV)
- Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me. I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. (Psa 66:16–19 NIV)
- If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable. (Prov 28:9 NIV)

- When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. (Is 1:15 NIV)

17 Answered prayer

- If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15:7-8 NIV)
 - According to the context, what brings glory to God?
 - What is bearing much fruit?
 - What is the condition of answered prayer?
 - Can ordinary people like us do this?
 - Then why don't we believe it?
 - God works through ordinary people just like you and me!

18 Signs of

Ordinary People

- They are hopeful most of the time, but do deal at times with self-pity.
- They are courageous most of the time, but at times do display fear.
- They are compassionate most of the time, but can hold on to a grudge for a season.
- They are content with their lives for the most part, but can give ground to envy.
- They are humble most of the time, yet can be tempted with pride.
- Yet because of their faith and perseverance and trust in God's mercy and grace ordinary people can see the mercies and power of God.

19 We'll all fly away

- Not only does God promise answered prayer to ordinary people like us, like Elijah, he also promises an awesome departure as well.
- For one day, we will all fly away . . .
 - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable . . . (1 Cor 15:52 NIV)
 - After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. (1 Th 4:17-18 NIV)
- In other words, we all will get a ride on God's personal flying machine. "Tally Ho!"

20 Conclusion

- Just like in the Bible, God uses ordinary people today.
- If fact, he is looking for some tonight.
 - People who are willing to trust God at his word and put it in to action.

- It is faith that moves mountains not piety and when God sees our faith and that we trust in Him those obstacles have got to go!
- All the Church needs today is not revival but ordinary people willing to take God at His Word and put it in to practice.
- If Elijah was able to do it, so can we!