

2 Kings Lesson 7

2 Kings Chapter 7

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Memory verses for this week: *2Co 8:21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

Introduction: Last week we studied about some of the things that happened in Elisha's life including the incident in the Jordan River where he was able to make an iron axe float on top of the water. Later he had a revelation in regards to the military plans of Benhadad. This week we begin with the incident of the four lepers entering the camp of the Syrians after God's miraculous deliverance.

I. Prophecy of Costs

2Ki 7:1 Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.

2Ki 7:2 Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

As the chapter begins, the context remains of the starvation in the city of Samaria because of the Syrian siege. When conditions seemed utterly hopeless, Elisha announced a message from God. The next day, a measure of finely milled flour would cost only a shekel and two measures of barley would also cost the same. It is not clear how much a measure of either was nor how much worth was a shekel. What is clearly implied is that though there were extremely inflated prices for food then, the next day, it would be selling for bargain prices.

Significant is that this announcement was in the name of Jehovah God. Man may inflate prices and cause false economies, but we have a God that levels the playing field. You can look back over the big prices when the Internet was going to close down all the brick and mortar stores a few years back. Millions of dollars got poured into web sites and eCommerce. Then the real estate boom came and then in 2005 through 2009 it all came crashing down. Inflated values won't last, but we have a God who has promised to meet our every need. Paul spoke of how the churches had met his needs in his letter to Philippi, and the promise God has made to all of us about meeting our needs.

Php 4:16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Php 4:17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

Php 4:18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the

things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

Php 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Upon hearing Elisha's announcement, one of Jehoram's close advisors not only doubted such abundance could happen the next day, even worse, he doubted if Jehovah Himself could bring it to pass. Elisha announced that the next day this fellow would see it for himself, but would not be allowed to partake thereof. You can doubt man as he may lie, but NEVER DOUBT GOD. He has never lied, and He being God can not lie as He is perfect and infallible.

2Ki 7:3 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

2Ki 7:4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

Meanwhile, there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? According to Leviticus 13:46, lepers were to be forced to live outside the camp. These four lepers of Samaria no doubt lived on the outside of the city wall during the Syrian siege.

They there made a living the best they could. However, in seeing the dire straits in which they were in, they knew they had nothing to lose by leaving the city walls. They reasoned and their options were bleak. Even if they could enter the city (which they could not), there was no food there. If they stayed put, they would die as well. They decided to go to the camp of the Syrians nearby. They faced no worse a fate there than awaited them where they were at. The Syrians might even spare them.

Sometimes are situations are such that we want to give up. But these men kept trying which is commendable. While God takes care of even the birds, it is true that he even to them requires them to get out and seek the food. Even they have to put forth some effort.

Dave Ramsey said this about the provision for birds:

God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into the nest.

II. Travel to the Syrian Camp

2Ki 7:5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

2Ki 7:6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

2Ki 7:7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

Upon arriving at the encampment of the Syrians at dusk that day, they found it deserted. That afternoon, God had caused the Syrian army to hear what sounded like the noise of a major military operation with the sound of chariots of war, horses snorting and whinnying, orders being barked, and the tramp of infantrymen. The Syrians concluded that Jehoram, king of Israel (northern kingdom), had hired other nations as allies to fight against them. They therefore up and fled for their lives thinking they were vastly outnumbered. Note how 'thinking' can get us into trouble. Fear without a reason for fear is so prevalent in our day. In almost all cases where an angel appeared unto man in the bible, their first words were to "Fear Not". But man is so fearful. When Joshua was told to lead the nation of Israel into the promised land, how many times did he tell him to not fear but to be strong in the book of Joshua. I counted at least 10 times where he told them to be strong. Strength is the opposite of fear.

Jos 1:7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

*Jos 10:25 And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be **strong** and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.*

My current memory verse is Proverbs 24:10.

If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. Only if we look to God will we be strong and able to stand in the day of adversity.

Pro 24:10 If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

2Ki 7:8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it.

2Ki 7:9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

In discovering this windfall, the four lepers ate all they wanted and then began to loot the abandoned tents of the Syrians of everything of value they could find.

“ they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon

us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household."

Their conscience pricked them. They soon remembered their brethren starving back in Samaria. They realized the good news they had. They realized if they held their peace, many of their brethren would perish. They also feared that something might happen to them before dawn. Therefore, they determined to tell their good tidings to the authorities for their desperate brethren in the city.

Matthew Henry said this about the four lepers.

How the Syrians' flight was discovered by four leprous men. Samaria was delivered, and did not know it. The watchmen on the walls were not aware of the retreat of the enemy, so silently did they steal away. But Providence employed four lepers to be the intelligencers, who had their lodging without the gate, being excluded from the city, as ceremonially unclean: the Jews say they were Gehazi and his three sons; perhaps Gehazi might be one of them, which might cause him to be taken notice of afterwards by the king, [2Ki 8:4](#). See here, 1. How these lepers reasoned themselves into a resolution to make a visit in the night to the camp of the Syrians, [2Ki 7:3](#), [2Ki 7:4](#). They were ready to perish for hunger; none passed through the gate to relieve them. Should they go into the city, there was nothing to be had there, they must die in the streets; should they sit still, they must pine to death in their cottage.

They therefore determine to go over to the enemy, and throw themselves upon their mercy: if they killed them, better die by the sword than by famine, one death than a thousand; but perhaps they would save them alive, as objects of compassion. Common prudence will put us upon that method which may better our condition, but cannot make it worse. The prodigal son resolves to return to his father, whose displeasure he had reason to fear, rather than perish with hunger in the far country. These lepers conclude, "If they kill us, we shall but die;" and happy they who, in another sense, can thus speak of dying. "We shall but die, that is the worst of it, not die and be damned, not be hurt of the second death." According to this resolution, they went, in the beginning of the night, to the camp of the Syrians, and, to their great surprise, found it wholly deserted, not a man to be seen or heard in it, [2Ki 7:5](#). Providence ordered it, that these lepers came as soon as ever the Syrians had fled, for they fled in the twilight, the evening twilight ([2Ki 7:7](#)), and in the twilight the lepers came ([2Ki 7:5](#)), and so no time was lost.

III. Lepers Report to the Porter

2Ki 7:10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

2Ki 7:11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

2Ki 7:12 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew

you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.

2Ki 7:13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:;) and let us send and see.

2Ki 7:14 They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

2Ki 7:15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

The four lepers thus rushed backed to the city and informed the gatekeeper of their discovery. The camp of the Syrians was intact, but the Syrians were gone. The gate-keeper thus informed the other watchmen who in turn notified the king.

King Jehoram was immediately suspicious. He thought that the Syrians had set a trap for them. One of Jehoram's men suggested that they send a party into the camp of the Syrians to verify the situation. It is noteworthy that there were not many horses left in Samaria which could be ridden. Such was the ravages of the siege. In verse 14, Jehoram sent two men on chariot horses and they followed the route of the Syrians all way to the Jordan River. They had left in such haste that they had dropped clothing and various vessels behind them as they fled.

2Ki 7:16 And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.

2Ki 7:17 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

Verse 16 says the Israelites spoiled the tents of the Syrians.

“And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.”

Just as Elisha had prophesied on God's behalf the day before, that next day flour and barley were in such abundance, they sold for bargain prices. God had miraculously fulfilled His Word. Not only did God fulfill His Word in providing food, but also the man which had openly doubted God's ability to do so died.

God providentially judged him. The eager crowds trampled him to death. It is a dangerous thing to doubt God and to question what He promised. That is why Israel had to wander 40 years in the wilderness. The 12 spies came back and 10 had an evil report. Only Joshua and Caleb believed God and said they should go up and possess the Land. But because the ten refused to believe, they had to

wander 4 years for each of the ten men's fears.

John Gill said this about verse 17

2 Kings 7:17

And the king appointed the lord, on whose hand he leaned, to have the charge of the gate,.... Not to keep out the enemy, of which there was no danger; but to prevent disorders and tumults among the people, and that they might go out in an orderly and regular manner:

and the people trod upon him in the gate; being eager to get out for food; and he endeavouring to keep order among them, they pressed upon him, and threw him down, and trampled him under foot; or he was placed here to regulate the market, that everyone might be supplied in course, but through the people's pressing to get provisions, he was overborne, and trod upon:

and died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him; so that he saw the plenty, but partook not of it, as he said, see [2Ki 7:2](#).

2Ki 7:18 And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

2Ki 7:19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

2Ki 7:20 And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

The text reiterates the matter to drive home the point.

“And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.”

Faith expects from God what is beyond all human expectation. They who cannot find it within themselves to believe God forfeit the benefits of His provision.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.