

that we may go and tell the king's household."

The Great Things That

"of the Lord" (v. 33). The king knew it, and he also realized that he himself was to some degree to blame. Why would the Lord let the siege and famine come, and refuse to hear the people's cries for help? We can

One of the great prophets and miracle-workers of the Bible was Elisha. His ministry after the translation of his master Elijah covered over fifty years, and was marked by mighty evidences of the power of faith in God. Let us let our faith grow as we study what Elisha did.

Lesson #10:
A Miraculous Supply

Scripture:
II Kings 6:24 - 7:20

Key Verse:
II Kings 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,

Hath Done

The king of Syria was Ben-Hadad at this time, as we see in II Kings 6:24. The name "Ben-Hadad" was used for several Syrian kings in ancient times. The king of Israel was still Jehoram (See II Kings 3:1-3) and, of course, Elisha was God's chief spokesman in the northern kingdom. One of the greatest trials Israel ever endured was the siege of Samaria described in II Kings 6 and 7. The raiding parties had stopped coming down from Syria some time before this, but the king finally decided to wage full-scale war on Israel. Remember that Elisha was acquainted with leaders on both sides of this war (II Kings 5). The siege of Israel's capital city produced a terrible famine that brought about awful conditions among the residents (II Kings 6:24-30). King Jehoram's horror over the ravages of the famine and the cannibalism the people were beginning to practice led him to blame the man of God (vs. 31).

I. The King's Anger (II Kings 6:24-33)

The horrible conditions during the famine in Samaria filled the king first with anguish, and then with anger (Note especially verses 30 and 31). His anger was directed at Elisha the man of God. Perhaps Elisha had urged the king of Israel not to surrender the city to the Syrians, and perhaps Jehoram was blaming the prophet for the famine. On the other hand, the king may have turned in wrath against Elisha because he was angry at God. Often people who are angry at God vent their wrath against those who represent God. Without question, the king revealed displeasure with God's dealings when he ordered Elisha's execution (vs. 31-32). He couldn't understand why God would let the people of Samaria suffer so much. He was angry that the Lord did not deliver them. We must remember when we read this passage that the king was a wicked man. As Elisha said in verse 32, Jehoram was the "son of a murderer." His father was evil Ahab, and some of his ways he followed. Jehoram ran after the messenger he sent to arrest Elisha (v. 32), probably because he had changed his mind. The prophet should not die, because the siege and famine were

(II Kings 8:4)

think of at least two reasons.

- A. They were suffering because they were sinning. Ben-Hadad and the Syrian host were not invading a godly and righteous nation. The Israelites of the northern kingdom were still worshiping idols and breaking God's law. Their king "cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom" (II Kings 3:3). When God's people are disobedient to God, they should expect chastisement (Read Hebrews 12:4-11).
- B. Their faith was being tried. God was going to deliver them, but He was waiting in order to teach them to believe (I Peter 1:7-8). The wicked king saw no reason to keep on waiting upon God (II Kings 6:33).

"Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

Some think that if they lived in Bible times their faith would be stronger. Yet people in the Bible had plenty of opportunities to question and doubt God. Remember the trial of faith that the Shunammite woman endured in II Kings 4? The siege of Samaria presented the city's inhabitants with their own great trial of faith. Deliverance would come, but they would have to wait and believe. Faith is strengthened when we wait on God. Romans 5 says that

"...tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. . ." (vs. 3-4)

Trouble ("tribulation") gives us an opportunity to wait on God and trust Him for deliverance in His time ("patience"). Those who wait and pray and believe until God *does* come through have an "experience" that gives them "hope" (faith that God will keep His promises). People who give up ("... what should I wait for the Lord any longer?") never benefit from a trial of

faith. But the people were dying of starvation. How could they wait and trust in God? First of all, we do not know that they would have starved to death before deliverance came. We learn in Chapter 7 that deliverance came very

Notes:

quickly. What we know is that in a panic because the food was gone, certain people resorted to cannibalism. Let it be said that this fact speaks more of *their* character than of God’s character. It would be better to *die* than to cook and eat your own child! We expect that deliverance was on the way and would come shortly, but that the wicked justified their horrible acts on the basis of appearances and despair. Many sinners say they *had* to do some sinful thing because of the circumstances, but this is never true. People who believe in God’s promises and are committed to the doing of right will not resort to wickedness in a trial of faith.

**II. The Lord’s Promise
(II Kings 7:1-2)**

Here was the situation. Elisha had a house in Samaria (II Kings 6:32) and the elders of the city were meeting with him there. A messenger from the king had come to arrest and execute the prophet because of the king’s rash order, and some of the elders had grabbed him and were holding him. Shortly after the messenger was grabbed, the king himself appeared at the door, an occurrence which Elisha had predicted. When the awful situation regarding the siege and the famine was discussed, the king said,

“Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?” (II Kings 6:33)

It was then that Elisha spoke words of hope.

“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.” (II Kings 7:1)

Just the day before, an ass’s head could be sold for an exorbitant sum in starving Samaria (II Kings 6:25), but tomorrow good food was going to be cheap! How could this be? Yet it was the Word of the Lord through His prophet. But the nobleman nearest to the king expressed his doubts (II Kings 7:2).

“Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?”

Elisha rebuked him for his doubt and pronounced doom upon him.

“Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.” (II Kings 7:2)

We can always rely upon the promises of God, even when their fulfillment seems unlikely to us. God cannot lie. God never breaks His promises. In claiming one of the promises of God, we must be sure of four things, however.

- A. Be sure that you understand the promise correctly.
- B. Be sure that you know to whom this promise is made.
- C. Be sure that you understand what, if any, conditions must be fulfilled by you in order for God to do what He promises to do.
- D. Be sure that you are willing to wait upon God.

“For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.
(Hebrews 10:36)

He did not do this, but what He *did* do was almost as strange!

Four lepers began to reason with each other about their situation as they sat at Samaria’s city gate.

“Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into 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.” (vs. 3-4)

They decided to go out to the Syrian camp, and take their chances. Instead of being captured or killed, the lepers were surprised to find the camp abandoned with food, clothing, and money left behind! The Lord had scared the Syrians during the night with noises that made them think an army was coming (v. 6). The great enemy army had fled and left everything behind! Soon the lepers went back to the city to tell the good news (vs. 9-11). Before long the whole population of the city was rushing out to the camp, and the nobleman who had expressed disbelief in the divine promise was trampled to death. All of God’s promise was fulfilled that day, just as Elisha had said (vs. 16-20). God can do anything, and often He will choose some unusual way to fulfill His promises. Just keep on believing and obeying, and see what the Lord will do.

**III. The Strange Fulfillment
(II Kings 7:3-20)**

God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. How was He going to end the famine so suddenly and so completely? Was He going to “make windows in heaven” and pour food from the sky?