

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
THE LORD ENDS THE FAMINE
2 KINGS 6:31-33; 7:1-20

Introduction

We saw last week in *Vs. 24* how the Syrians laid siege to the city of Samaria. The city was locked down in an effort to thwart an anticipated Syrian invasion, but the Syrians were only interested in starving the city into submission as they allowed no shipments of food into the city. That caused a great famine to take hold of the city! How great?

Well we saw in *Vs. 25* that the famine was so bad that the head of a donkey brought an outrageous sum of money as did a half pint of dove's dung. But it was way much worse than that!

Vs. 26 records that as the king walked atop city's wall observing the plight of his city, his troops on top of the wall and the Syrian troops in the distance, he heard the cry of a woman from below him saying, "*Help, my lord, O King!*"

In *Vs. 27*, he spoke against the LORD and her, replying in what appears to have been spoken in a mocking manner!

And then in *Vs. 28*, he said to her, "*What aileth thee?*" Now, after he heard her story in *Vs. 29*, he probably wished that he had never asked!

Vs. 29 reveals that two women had become so desperately hungry that they hatched a horrific plan that involved cannibalism. They had pledged to eat this woman's son on the day before, and then on this day they were to eat the other woman's son! But the other woman had a change of heart and hid her son!

In *Vs. 30*, we saw the king responded by tearing his clothes—A sign of deep grief! The people who observe the king scurrying along the wall see that he's clothed in sackcloth underneath his clothes.

Ordinarily that would be evidence of piety and holiness and concern for God, but as we read we discover that all that form of outward piety just covered up the spiritually dead man that he was!

In reality, the king of Israel was wicked to the core and hated God and God's man, Elisha! He had no concern for God's message to him in this famine!

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His show of outward piety while being corrupt to the core shows how easy it is to have a form of godliness while denying the power of God in one's life!

I. WE SEE THE KING'S EDICT AGAINST ELISHA! (*Vs 31*)
Here we see the king's true spiritual condition was shown!

He swore an oath declaring an edict that Elisha would be beheaded by the end of the day! Be careful little mouth what you say! Because in his words he brought God into the scenario as well as himself saying, "*God do so and more also to me*" if Elisha wasn't beheaded!

Guess what? Elisha isn't going to be beheaded.

When he took to **blaming God's prophet** for his troubles, he was essentially **blaming the God of the prophet!**

Ahab did the same thing! Like father, like son!
(*1 Kings 18:17*— "*...Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*")

II. WE SEE ELISHA'S RESPONSE TO THE EDICT! (*Vs 32-33*)

A. Elisha Sat In His House With The Elders. (*Vs 32a*)
Elisha did not run, he sat! We see no fear!

B. The King Dispatched A Messenger To Elisha. (*Vs 32b*)
He was sent to remove the head of Elisha!

C. Elisha Told The Elders What Was About To Happen. (*Vs 32c*)
The LORD revealed to him that the king wanted his head!
The LORD also revealed to him that not only was the king's messenger on the way, but the king himself was not far behind!

D. Elisha Instructed Them To Block The Door Until The King Arrived. (*Vs 32d*)
Elisha had a message from the LORD to deliver to the king!
He wanted the king to be there in person for the message!

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E. Elisha's Message To The Messenger! (Vs 33)

1. "Behold, this evil of the LORD!

(i.e. The famine and all that came with it was from the LORD)

2. "What should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

The king probably thought that Elisha could go to the LORD and call a halt to the famine anytime he wanted to. But, Elisha was prefacing his message in Chapter 7 with this statement! There was no need to wait for the LORD any longer because the LORD had a message!

III. WE SEE ELISHA SPOKE WITH THE AUTHORITY OF GOD! (7:1)

Note that when Elisha spoke, he didn't give his opinion or feelings about the king or even the situation! **He spoke boldly with the Authority of God!**

Sadly, this is, by-and-large, a big problem in our day as well! Many who call themselves men of God have strayed away from God's Authority—His Holy Word! They preach their own reasonings and the reasonings, platitudes, and thoughts of other men while they forsake the Word of God!

Elisha stood boldly in the presence of this earthly king, and in the presence of the king's messenger who was sent to take off his head! In their presence and the presence of the elders who were there with Elisha, he lifted his voice to shout out these words,

"Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD!" and then he gave with boldness and clarity the Word from the LORD!

Now, with this authority and this announcement, I want you to see something about the message that he gave.

Here was a dying city. We've seen the destitution and the desperation!

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And yet this prophet of God had the audacity to speak up and say basically that the next day the famine would be over!

IV. WE SEE THE DOUBT EXPRESSED! (7:2a)

Here we see doubt expressed from the man that the king leaned on to get around.

He was basically implying that it was impossible for such a thing to happen that quickly!

He cast doubt on the Word of the LORD! He was calling the LORD a liar!

V. WE SEE THE ASSURANCE BY THE PROPHET! (7:2b)

This servant of the king would see it with his eyes, but he would not get to eat any of it himself! That was Elisha's way of saying that he was about to lose his life!

VI. WE SEE THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LORD'S WORD! (7:3-20)

A. The Plight Of Four Lepers! (7:3-4)

What is worse...dying of hunger or dying at the hand of the enemy? That was their reasoning! They chose to put their lives in the hands of the Syrians since otherwise they were going to die anyway!

B. The Discovery Of These Four Lepers! (7:5)

These four lepers went into the camp of the Syrians at twilight to find that the Syrians had vacated their camp!

C. The LORD Had Caused This To Happen! (7:6-7a)

D. The Syrians Left An Abundance Behind! (7:7b)

E. The Lepers Began Eating And Then Hiding Spoil! (7:8)

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F. The Lepers Realized They Weren't Doing Right In Keeping This Good News To Themselves! (7:9)

There is a parallel here to the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

We who are saved are beggars who found the Bread of Life ourselves and its not right to keep it to ourselves when others need that same Bread!

G. The Lepers Went Back To The City And Shared The Good News! (7:10-11)

H. The King Doubted The Good News! (7:12)

He believed it to be a trap of the enemy!

I. The Good News Was Confirmed! (7:13-15)

J. The Entire Word Of The LORD By The Mouth Of Elisha Was Fulfilled! (7:16-20)

Conclusion

Note three things here as we close out this Chapter:

- 1. Don't blame God for your problems like the king of Israel did! (God is not the problem, but He has a solution!)**
- 2. Don't keep the Good News you have received (i.e. The Gospel) to yourself, when it is in your possession help others who are still starving spiritually just as you were!**
- 3. Don't ever doubt the Word of God! If the LORD said it He will do it!**