

“Deliverance Delivered”
2 Kings 7:3-20
(Preached at Trinity, March 13, 2022)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time we began looking at this horrific story of the siege perpetrated by the Syrians. The duration continued until famine became wide-spread. The author describes the severity of their condition. A donkey's head sold for eighty shekels. Who would eat the head of a dead donkey? They did. The situation finally became so bad that they were resorting to cannibalism.
2. The king (Jehoram) became so angry that he ordered the death of Elisha.
2 Kings 6:31 NAU - "May God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today."
3. Upon the king's arrival Elisha prophesied God promised deliverance
2 Kings 7:1 NAU - "Then Elisha said, "Listen to the word of the LORD; thus says the LORD, 'Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria."
4. It was an amazing promise. In fact, an official of the king plainly stated his doubts that such a thing would happen.
2 Kings 7:2 NAU - "The royal officer on whose hand the king was leaning answered the man of God and said, "Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?"
5. Elisha was declaring that in one day God would send food in abundance. He was not believed. It sounded too incredible to be believed.
 - a. Elisha is speaking as God's messenger. He is speaking a word that must be believed. Belief was not an option. He was speaking God's Word.
 - b. The royal officer refused to believe. It was unbelievable. Even if the army stopped their siege and retreated it would take months to recover from the devastation of the famine. Elisha is declaring it would happen in a day.
 - c. The officer would not believe, and Elisha declared that he would perish in his unbelief.
6. The Gospel is God's promise of deliverance.
 - a. God declares that those who trust His Son will have eternal life.
John 3:16 NAU - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."
 - b. Most will not have it. Like the royal officer, they will perish in their sin.
John 3:36 NAU - "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."
 - c. Like the royal officer, the lost will see Christ coming in His glory but will not be partakers of the benefits. They will only know His judgment.

- d. Unbelief is great wickedness. The Father loves the Son. The Father gave that which was most precious to Him in order to redeem lost men. He expects all men to bow before His Son. He commands it.
7. But will God actually follow through with His promises? The answer is a resounding, yes!
- I. God's plan put to action
- A. In our text we find the Arameans suddenly being stricken with terror – **Verses 6-7**
1. At sunset they heard the sound of a great army approaching. Panic ensued followed by mass hysteria.. They left everything behind and began fleeing in fear.
 2. But there was nothing there. There was no army, no chariots, no horses, no soldiers. It was all in their minds.
 3. They presumed it was the armies of the Egyptians and Hittites. Are we to presume the king of Israel was able to sneak out of the besieged city? And what would he have used to pay for the armies. The fears of the lost man don't have to make sense.
 4. A life without God is easily terrorized.
Proverbs 28:1 NAU - "The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, But the righteous are bold as a lion."
- B. More important, we need to understand it was God who stirred their hearts.
1. When men deny God His rightful worship He turns them over to the corruption of their hearts.
Romans 1:21 NAU - "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
Romans 1:24 NAU - "Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them."
Romans 1:28 NAU - "And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,"
 2. Paul described this will be the condition at the end of the age.
2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 NAU - "in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰ and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, ¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."
 3. It's not that God sows fresh evil into their hearts. He simply gives them over to the corruption that is already there.
 4. God's restraining grace is a great blessing upon the earth without which our existence would be almost unbearable.
 5. Such was the case with the Arameans. God simply gave them over to the corruption of their heart and they were overcome with extraordinary fear and terror.

- a. It could have been the horses and chariots Elisha's servant saw in the previous chapter.
2 Kings 6:17 NAU - "Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."
 - b. Whether God caused the actual sound or whether it was only in their ears and imaginations, they were smitten with fear. Elisha's servant was comforted while the Syrians were terrified.
 - c. Matthew Henry – "The noise of horses and chariots terrified the hosts of Syria. For notices from the invisible world are either very comfortable or very dreadful, according as men are at peace with God or at war with him."¹
- C. They fled with such haste they left everything behind.
- 1. Their camp was left with all of the provisions that were sustaining them in their warfare with Israel and abundantly more.
 - 2. There was silver and gold, many changes of garments, and great stores of food. God had promised food in abundance and this is precisely what happened. It was all of God.
 - 3. This is the nature of the Gospel. It is all of God. It is as Jonah said, **Jonah 2:9 KJV** - "Salvation *is* of the LORD."
Psalms 118:22-23 NAU - "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner *stone*. ²³ This is the LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes."
 - 4. No matter how amazing God's promises may appear to be, they will all come to pass just as He has said.
2 Corinthians 1:19-20 KJV - "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. ²⁰ For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."
- II. God often uses the most unlikely to reveal His blessings
- A. There were four leprous men
 - 1. Lepers were outcasts. They were driven from the community to dwell in exile. We are told in **Verse 3** they sat at the entrance of the gate. They were not welcome inside the city and they were unwelcome in the camp of the Syrians.
2 Kings 7:4 NAU - "If we say, 'We will enter the city,' then the famine is in the city and we will die there; and if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us go over to the camp of the Arameans. If they spare us, we will live; and if they kill us, we will but die."

¹ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 533.

2. These unlikely ones were the first to receive of God's promise.
 - a. It was like winning a sweepstakes. They found the camp empty and full of riches – gold and silver, boundless garments, and most important, food!
At first they kept the blessings of God's promise to themselves. They carried them out and hid them.
2 Kings 7:8 NAU - "When these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they entered one tent and ate and drank, and carried from there silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid *them*; and they returned and entered another tent and carried from there *also*, and went and hid *them*."
 - b. They were then convicted of their negligence
2 Kings 7:9 NAU - "Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent; if we wait until morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's household."
 - c. These unlikely lepers were God's evangelists to share the good news.
 3. There's more. God uses an unnamed servant.
Verse 13 - "Please . . . let us send and see."
 4. God chooses the least to confirm His promise.
- B. God has revealed His Gospel to us
1. It is a boundless gift. The gift of life, of hope, of eternal blessings.
 2. But they are blessings we must not keep to ourselves. We must share the good news.

III. In the clear revelation of God's promise many will remain in unbelief

- A. The four lepers began to spread the word
 1. They told gatekeepers – they simply passed the word up the chain
 2. The king absolutely refused to believe. It's a trick. They're trying to entice us to leave the city.
 - a. The king had many thoughts, many considerations as he pondered the strategy of the Syrian army. His mind went in many directions, but he gave no thought of God.
 - b. This was in the face of God's promise. Don't forget it's only been a day since Elisha told him something amazing was about to happen. God's promise had no impact upon the heart of the king.
2 Kings 7:12 NAU - "Then the king arose in the night and said to his servants, "I will now tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry; therefore they have gone from the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, 'When they come out of the city, we will capture them alive and get into the city.'"
 3. One of the king's servants speaks out: what have we got to lose. **2 Kings 7:13 NAU** - "Please . . . let us send and see."

4. They were able to convince the king - **Verse 14** - "Go and see." The king's words were not words of faith. They were words that were basically, "What other choice do we have?"
 5. They went and they understood what God was doing, how He was fulfilling His promise, just as He said.
2 Kings 7:16 NAU - "So the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. Then 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."
- B. We may not understand every detail of what God is doing.
1. His ways are inscrutable.
Romans 11:33 NAU - "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!"
 2. It isn't necessary for us to know the end. Only that we trust the promise. There are endless unknowns.
When will Jesus return? What will it be like? How will everyone across the earth witness the event?
What happens when we die? How are we transported into the presence of Christ? What will the new heavens and new earth be like?
What will our glorified bodies be like in the resurrection? Will elect infants receive adult bodies?
 3. The only thing necessary for us to know is God's promise of forgiveness, of imputed righteousness, of eternal life in His presence—all made possible through the Gospel.

Conclusion:

1. God's promises **MUST** be believed. They are not optional.
2. There remains one more promise that came from the lips of Elisha.
2 Kings 7:2 NAU - "The royal officer on whose hand the king was leaning answered the man of God and said, "Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?" Then he said, "Behold, you will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat of it."
3. And it was fulfilled according to the Word of the LORD. The starving Israelites were so impassioned for food they stampeded out the gate and trampled upon the officer killing him.
2 Kings 7:17 NAU - "Now the king appointed the royal officer on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate; but the people trampled on him at the gate, and he died just as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him."
4. Those who refuse to receive and believe the Gospel of Christ will surely perish in their sin, just as God has promised.
Revelation 21:7-8 NAU - "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. ⁸ "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."