

2 Kings 7.1-20**Elisha: This Day is a Day of Good News!****Read 2 Kings 7.1-20****I / MAKING THE CONNECTION**

1. **“This day is a day of good news!” [verse 9]** is what the four lepers said to one another upon discovering these large stashes of food left behind by the panic-stricken Syrian army – thus breaking the tragic famine that the people of Samaria had been suffering ... but we’re getting way ahead of the story!
2. Here’s what had been happening to set up this spectacular, gracious provision that Yahweh had made for them...
3. For months, the Syrian army had been blockading and besieging Samaria. They had surrounded the city and prevented anyone from either coming into or going out of the city. *Think of it as a severe ‘supply chain’ issue.* The Syrians had totally cut off any supply chains of food from getting into Samaria.
4. It was so dire that they were eating even the last remaining of their service animals and beasts of burden.
 - a. **ch 6.25** / a donkey’s head – the most undesirable part of an unclean animal – was selling for two pounds of silver...
 - b. and a pint of dove’s droppings [probably to be used for fuel for a little fire] was selling for two ounces of silver. [Two ounces of silver was what an average worker would earn with six months of labor.]
5. The inhabitants of Samaria had even been driven even to cannibalism – they were boiling and eating their own children / **see ch 6.26-29**
6. This drove King Jehoram to swear by God that he would kill Yahweh’s prophet Elisha before that day was done / **ch 6.30-31**
7. He sent assassins to take Elisha out / **ch 6.32-33**

But Yahweh had a message for Jehoram and the people of Samaria – and He gave it to Elisha to deliver to Jehoram and the starving populace of Samaria...

ch 7.1-2 / “DON’T DOUBT ME!” ~YAHWEH

1. **v 1** / Elisha announced that Yahweh had a message for him to deliver – a message of relief from their famine and starvation. He quoted Yahweh twice so there would no mistaking who was speaking: **“Hear the word of Yahweh: thus says Yahweh...”** When God speaks, even through His prophet, we must believe Him and trust Him to do what He says He will do ... even when we see no way He can do it!
2. **God has no limits or restraints on what He is able to do ... or the means by which He chooses to do it!**
3. Do not doubt God! To doubt God’s Word or His power to fulfill His promises is to call God a liar / **see 1 John 5.10**
4. What Yahweh promised was **“Tomorrow about this time a seah [about 7 quarts] of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel [2/5 of an ounce of silver – much reduced and more affordable prices than were being demanded during the famine / see 6.25], and two seahs [about 13-14 quarts] of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.”** There was going to be food tomorrow – real food! And at affordable prices! No more donkeys’ heads! The food supply chain was going to be restored! And Yahweh was going to provide it! They didn’t know how ... but they couldn’t wait!

- a. The ‘gate’ was their gathering places for city council business and marketing – kind of like their ‘farmer’s market’ for the people.
5. **v 2 /** The poor starving people were ecstatic. But the **‘captain on whose hand the king leaned’** [chief of staff / right-hand man] was not just skeptical – he was openly and brazenly scoffing at such an ‘impossible’ prospect. He arrogantly disdained God, His Word, and His prophet.
6. And besides, he was not about to let Yahweh be seen as the One who would do this. He **said to the man of God, “If Yahweh Himself should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?”** Obviously, if there was a Yahweh, only He would be able to produce such a turn-around. But he wasn’t about to let this stand. This was not just doubt and unbelief at the word of Yahweh ... He was mocking, insulting, ridiculing, blaspheming the very notion that even Yahweh could do such a thing!
7. Elisha doubled down: Not only will Yahweh do this as He had said, but this unbelieving, mocking Syrian captain – the king’s ‘right-hand man’ – will not be alive to enjoy any of it. **“You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.”** *Hold this in in your memory for when we get to the end of this story – we’re going to see if Yahweh shows him who is God!*
8. **Before we go any further, we have to ask ourselves: Why would Yahweh even be willing to be so gracious to this unbelieving city of Samaritans? Why is Yahweh doing this? Why is this story in the Bible? What is the narrator’s purpose for telling it?**
 - a. Yahweh will graciously demonstrate again to unbelieving Israel that He alone is God
 - b. ...And that He can – and is willing to – provide for them
 - c. ...And He will again authenticate and validate His prophet who is faithfully delivering His Word to call Israel to repentance and to return to love and worship Him only as their true God
 - d. As He did with the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness, He will demonstrate again that He is faithful to all His promises to be gracious to them and to provide for all their needs – *if only they will believe and trust Him. But, as we shall see ... they will not!*
see Psalm 81.8-16 / “Hear, O my people, while I admonish you! O Israel, if you would but listen to me! ⁹There shall be no strange god among you; you shall not bow down to a foreign god. ¹⁰I AM the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. ¹¹But my people did not listen to my voice; Israel would not submit to me. ¹²So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels. ¹³Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways! ¹⁴I would soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes. ¹⁵Those who hate the LORD would cringe toward Him, and their fate would last forever. ¹⁶But He would feed you with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

vv 3-8 / FOUR UNLIKELY ‘SAVIORS’

“But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the Presence of God” / 1 Corinthians 1.27-29

1. **v 3 /** Look who Yahweh chose to be the messengers of this deliverance – four lepers ... who were not only outcasts from their society, but they were shunned and excluded from any social contact or privileges. They were huddled outside the city gates – just waiting to die from starvation along with the rest of the people in the city.
2. They decided to do ... something other than... **Why are we sitting here until we die?**
3. **v 4 /** They weighed their options – they had zero good options if they hoped to stave off their own dying from starvation:
 - a. if we sit here like we’re doing – we die

- b. if we enter the city – the famine is there, and we die with everybody else
 - c. Hey! I've got an idea: let's defect to the camp of the Syrian soldiers – if they kill us, then we die ... but we're going to die anyway
 - d. but maybe ... they'll spare our lives, and maybe even give us some food ... and we live!
 - e. since we're going to die anyway one way or the other, it's worth the risk!
4. **v 5 / So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians...** - but, lo and **behold, there was no one there!** The camp had been deserted...abandoned. Nothing but an eerie silence...and LOTS of food and stuff everywhere!
 5. **v 6 /** What had just happened? Yahweh had intervened! He had messed with the minds and ears of the Syrian army. **For Yahweh had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, 'Behold, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites [from their north] and the kings of Egypt [from their south] to come against us!'**
 6. Of course, King Jehoram had done no such thing ... but Yahweh sent them this delusion to accomplish his purposes!
 7. **v 7 / So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives.**
 - a. Notice that in the same 'twilight,' at the same time, simultaneously, the lepers were coming in 'the front door' and the panic-stricken Syrian army were running for their lives out 'the back door'! And Yahweh was orchestrating both of these actions!
 8. **v 8 /** These four starving lepers began gorging themselves with the food the Syrians left behind. And they started going from one tent to another, carrying stuff off to hide it so they come back later to retrieve it. It was like hitting the Powerball Mega-jackpot!

vv 9-15 / "WE GOTTA SHARE THIS GOOD NEWS!"

1. **v 9 /** While they were celebrating and hoarding all their new-found bounty ... suddenly their consciences smote them: "Wait a minute here ... **We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come; let us go and tell the king's household.**"
 - a. *We should be so gracious and willing to share the Gospel [Good News] with all of those around us who are dying and perishing in their sins! / see Luke 2.8-20*
2. **v 10 /** They did come back to the city. They told the gatekeepers what they had found.
3. **v 11 /** The gatekeepers immediately dispatched messengers to carry this good news to King Jehoram.
4. **v 12 /** King Jehoram didn't believe it – he suspected that the Syrians were only playing hide-and-seek [or maybe hide-and-slaughter] by sneaking off to hide in the countryside to draw them out of Samaria and into the open plains so they could ambush and slaughter them.
5. **vv 13-14 /** King Jehoram's counselors urged him to at least check it out: '**Let us send and see**'; so he agreed to send out some scouts to sneak around the perimeters to see if they were really gone... '**Go and see**'
6. **v 15 /** So the scouts sneaked out and circled around the Syrian campsite – and what to their wondering eyes should appear but **behold, all the way was littered with garments and equipment that the Syrians had thrown away in their haste!** It was true! The camp was empty and all the roadways and paths and fields were strewn with the stuff the Syrians had jettisoned in their haste to escape from what they thought were approaching armies hired against them by King Jehoram [*the delusion Yahweh had sent them*].

vv 16-20 / "TOLD YOU SO!"

1. **v 16 / Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD / see v 1.**
2. Notice how the narrator of this book repeats word for word what Yahweh had said would happen and when it would happen ... *and how it actually did happen as Yahweh had said: 'according to the word of Yahweh'!*
3. That's why I titled the first section **"DON'T DOUBT ME!" ~YAHWEH"** and why I have titled this section **"TOLD YOU SO!"**
4. These **verses 16-20** are a word-for-word repetition of:
 - a. Elisha's prophecy from Yahweh that he delivered yesterday that not only would there be plenty of food by this time today, but also at what prices they would be sold / **v 16**
 - b. how King Jehoram's 'right-hand' man had scoffed, mocked, disdained, and ridiculed how such a thing couldn't possibly happen – not even Yahweh could **'make windows in heaven'** and make this be / **vv 18-19a**
 - c. and how Elisha had pronounced the death sentence on the king's 'right-hand' man for doubting and not believing what Yahweh had said He would do: **And he had said, 'You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it' / v 19b**
5. The key emphasis the narrator wants to make here is that **according to the word of the LORD** that He had said in every detail – **SO IT HAPPENED!**
 - a. **v 17 / Now the king had appointed the captain on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate.** During the time of the famine, his charge was to maintain order, crowd control, and put down any uprisings and riots that may have erupted among the starving townspeople.
 - b. Now that the supply chain has been restored and food is flowing in from the camp of the Syrian army, he is put in charge of the 'gate' to still maintain order.
 - c. Instead, he got trampled to death by the townspeople in the mad stampede to get food for themselves! **And the people trampled him in the gate, so that he died, as the man of God had said when the king came down to him / v 17**
 - d. When he had scoffed at the word of Yahweh, **Elisha had said, 'You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.'** **And so it happened to him**, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.
 - i. **'according to the word of Yahweh'**
 - ii. **'as the man of God had said'**
 - iii. **'and so it happened to him'**

Again ... Yahweh is demonstrating to Israel that He is most capable and willing to be their God, to be faithful to His every promise, to supply for their every need – even in the severest of their extremities and by the most unlikely of means. AND in His time, He will do that fully and perfectly by giving them and us Jesus Christ, **"the True Bread from Heaven" / John 6.32.**

"Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For Him God the Father has set His seal" / John 6.27.

"This is the work of God of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent" / John 6.29.

"I AM the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" / John 6.51

Or do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed / Romans 2.4-5.