

## **Food, Faith, & 4 Lepers – Sept. 6, 2023**

God wants us to know He is at work... He is the source of our victories.  
Often, the way that happens is when it seems it's impossible.

**Ex:** stars in dark sky. Darker it gets, the more you see.

Stars were there all the time. We always have all we need.

God does some amazing works in the dark.

**2 Kings 6** – Elisha has enemies – Syrian army & King of Syria. Dark times.

▶ Followers have foes. Not everyone will like you.

Syria attacks Israel, creating a famine. It's so bad – eat a child.

King of Israel blames Elisha. Sends messenger to get him... literally.

King thinks God made their bad situation happen. . . God won't help.

▶ In a world of negativity, be positive. Be different. Speak faith!

**2 Kings 7.** Elisha (prophet) has message: 1 sack flour/2 sacks barley – 1 silver  
King's officer doubts it. Specifically, doubts God can turn situation around.

"If the LORD should make windows in heaven [for the rain], could this thing take place?"

Elisha responds: "You will see it happen, but you won't eat any of the food,"

▶ When we doubt God, we miss out on His blessings.

**4 Lepers at the Gate.** Starving. Outcasts. Can't get any worse.

**2 Ki. 7:3-4** – "Why should we sit here, waiting to die? 4 There's nothing to eat in the city, so we would starve if we went inside. But if we stay out here, we will die for sure. Let's sneak over to the Syrian army camp and surrender. They might kill us, but they might not."

- Walk to camp at twilight . . . ▶ God had already been at work.

○ Syrian soldiers gone . . . food, clothes, silver & gold there.

▶ more blessings than we can hold... plenty to share!

God replaces tests with testimonies. Goons 4 goodness.

○ **We are called to share God's good news.**

**Lepers return, share the good news, but King is suspicious – set up.**

Faith sees life as God setting us up for blessings. Think ... story of **Job**.

Scouts sent to check it out. **Bounty galore.**

<sup>15</sup>“The men rode as far as the Jordan River. All along the way they saw clothes and equipment that the Syrians had thrown away as they escaped. Then they went back to the king and told him what they had seen. <sup>16</sup>At once the people went to the Syrian camp and carried off what was left. They took so much that a large sack of flour and two large sacks of barley sold for almost nothing, just as the LORD had promised.”

- The people go to Syrian camp, carry off what was left.
  - o Burning Man Festival. So much left . . .
    - God’s leftovers leave us with more than enough.

### **Elisha’s prophecy fulfilled.**

- <sup>17</sup>The king of Israel had put his chief officer in charge of the gate, but he died when the people trampled him as they rushed out of the city. <sup>18</sup>Earlier, when the king was at Elisha's house, Elisha had told him that flour or barley would sell for almost nothing. <sup>19</sup>But the officer refused to believe that even the Lord could do that. So Elisha warned him that he would see it happen, but would not eat any of the food. <sup>20</sup>And that's exactly what happened—the officer was trampled to death.
  - o Officer missed out b/c he didn’t believe.
    - What blessings are you missing for lack of faith?

**Lepers are not Left-Out.** They have a witness . . . a purpose . . . a message!

- ▶ don’t discount yourself. Everyone can be a blessing.  
Everyone can be used by God. Everyone is important!

Everything the Lepers did was by stepping out in faith.

1 – to leave the Gate & go to the camp

2 – to leave the camp & return to share the news.

- They took a chance . . . they stepped out in faith. Hope!  
-+ Believed their steps ... lead to better than present circumstances.

**Faith is confidence in what we hope for, assurance what we don’t see.**

Song of the week – “Stepping Out in Faith” by Jim Brady Trio