**GOOD NEWS SHOULD BE SHARED**

2 Kings 6:24-7:20

Key verse 7:9

Then they said to each other, “What we’re doing is not right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let’s go at once and report this to the royal palace.”

**Introduction**

 At the time of difficulty, we are tempted to throw in the towel and blame God and His servants. The king of Israel in today’s passage tried to kill Elisha in a bad situation. But we can learn through his mistake and 4 lepers who did the work of God instead of blaming others. When we are in deep trouble, we better hear the word of God and believe in God who is always faithful regardless of the bad situations. In the previous passage, we learned how important it was to see what we should see by faith. But in today's passage, we must develop our spiritual ears to hear God’s word and repent of our unbelief and trust in God who is the Almighty God. May God help us to grow in our faith so that we may find God’s will in the seemingly worst situation and live a life of faith to render glory to the Lord God in earnest prayer and hearing God’s words and leading others to God.

1. Read verses 24-33. Describe how great a famine in Samaria was. (24-29) Who did the king of Israel blame for the tragic situation and what did he do to overcome it? (30-33)

1-1, Read verses 24-33.

 Some time later, Ben-Hadad king of Aram mobilized his entire army and marched up and laid siege to Samaria. 25 There was a great famine in the city; the siege lasted so long that a donkey’s head sold for eighty shekels[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700a)] of silver, and a quarter of a cab[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700b)] of seed pods[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700c)] for five shekels.[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700d)]

26 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, “Help me, my lord the king!”

27 The king replied, “If the Lord does not help you, where can I get help for you? From the threshing floor? From the winepress?” 28 Then he asked her, “What’s the matter?”

She answered, “This woman said to me, ‘Give up your son so we may eat him today, and tomorrow we’ll eat my son.’ 29 So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, ‘Give up your son so we may eat him,’ but she had hidden him.”

30 When the king heard the woman’s words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and they saw that, under his robes, he had a sackcloth on his body. 31 He said, “May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today!”

32 Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a messenger ahead, but before he arrived, Elisha said to the elders, “Don’t you see how this murderer is sending someone to cut off my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and hold it shut against him. Is not the sound of his master’s footsteps behind him?” 33 While he was still talking to them, the messenger came down to him.

The king said, “This disaster is from the Lord. Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?”

1-2, Describe how great a famine in Samaria was. (24-29)

 ***Some time later, Ben-Hadad king of Aram mobilized his entire army and marched up and laid siege to Samaria. 25 There was a great famine in the city; the siege lasted so long that a donkey’s head sold for eighty shekels[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700a)***] of silver, and a quarter of a cab[***[***b***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700b)***] of seed pods[***[***c***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700c)***] for five shekels.[***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9700d)***] 26 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, “Help me, my lord the king!”***

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* When Ben-Hadad lay siege to Samaria, the suffering was indescribable. The people were starving and the ugliness of those who suffer without God appeared.

1-3, Who did the king of Israel blame for the tragic situation and what did he do to overcome it? (30-33)

 ***When the king heard the woman’s words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and they saw that, under his robes, he had a sackcloth on his body. 31 He said, “May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today!”***

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***The king said, “This disaster is from the Lord. Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?”***

* When a severe famine struck Israel, the king blamed Elisha because he thought that he should have killed Aramean soldiers in the previous chapter.
* But at the difficult time, he should have remembered the word of God to make a correct assessment about the bad situation.
* Solomon prayed in 1 Kings 8:35-40 by the spirit of the Lord, “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and give praise to your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, 36 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.
* 37 “When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, 38 and when a prayer or plea is made by anyone among your people Israel—being aware of the afflictions of their own hearts, and spreading out their hands toward this temple— 39 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with everyone according to all they do, since you know their hearts (for you alone know every human heart), 40 so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our ancestors.
* So the king should have repented of all his rebellions against God and turned to the Lord. He should have remembered God’s promises in Deuteronomy 28.
* Elisha also went through the same challenging time with others. While others and the king despaired and gave up and blamed the Lord or others, Elisha never blamed the Lord or others. He trusted the Lord and sought the Lord’s will together with the elders. He was very patient.
* He must have earnestly prayed by sitting in his house. He challenged impossible situations through prayer. So indeed, he was a man of prayer.
* God was pleased with Elisha, a man of prayer. God heard his prayer and shepherded his people through his prayer.
* The Lord still loved northern Israel, even though they abandoned the Lord. So the Lord worked to reveal himself to them and to help them seek him and restore their relationship with him.
* The Lord used Elisha, a man of prayer, to shepherd his people. The Lord is seeking such men and women these days as well.
* Let’s pray that we may grow to be people of prayer like Elisha, so that God may use us to shepherd the people of our time and bring our nation back to God.
* God wants to raise up a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, through people of prayer, like Elisha although he was in the spotlight to be killed as a traitor.
1. Read verses 1-8. What was Elisha’s prophecy? (1) What did he say about the officer who didn’t believe the word of the Lord? (2) What did 4 lepers do as the siege was lifted? (3-8)

2-1, Read verses 1-8.

 Elisha replied, “Hear the word of the Lord. This is what the Lord says: About this time tomorrow, a seah[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9709a)] of the finest flour will sell for a shekel[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9709b)] and two seahs[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9709c)] of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria.”

2 The officer on whose arm the king was leaning said to the man of God, “Look, even if the Lord should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?”

“You will see it with your own eyes,” answered Elisha, “but you will not eat any of it!”

### The Siege Lifted

3 Now there were four men with leprosy[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Kings%207&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9711d)] at the entrance of the city gate. They said to each other, “Why stay here until we die? 4 If we say, ‘We’ll go into the city’—the famine is there, and we will die. And if we stay here, we will die. So let’s go over to the camp of the Arameans and surrender. If they spare us, we live; if they kill us, then we die.”

5 At dusk they got up and went to the camp of the Arameans. When they reached the edge of the camp, no one was there, 6 for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, “Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!” 7 So they got up and fled in the dusk and abandoned their tents and their horses and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives.

8 The men who had leprosy reached the edge of the camp, entered one of the tents and ate and drank. Then they took silver, gold and clothes, and went off and hid them. They returned and entered another tent and took some things from it and hid them also.

2-2, What was Elisha’s prophecy? (1)

***Elisha replied, “Hear the word of the Lord. This is what the Lord says: About this time tomorrow, a seah of the finest flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria.”***

2-3, What did he say about the officer who didn’t believe the word of the Lord? (2)

***2 The officer on whose arm the king was leaning said to the man of God, “Look, even if the Lord should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?”***

***“You will see it with your own eyes,” answered Elisha, “but you will not eat any of it!” The Siege Lifted***

2-4, What did 4 lepers do as the siege was lifted? (3-8)

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* God started working to fulfill His promise. First of all, the siege was lifted. Verse 6 and 7 explained in great detail about what had happened.
* *“for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, “Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!” 7 So they got up and fled in the dusk and abandoned their tents and their horses and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives.”*
* God caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses of a great army. So they panicked and ran for their lives, leaving everything behind.
* They were deceived by their own ears. There was no one attacking them, but with only sounds, the Lord terrified them and they fled in fear. The Lord is the Almighty God. If the Lord is willing, he works in a mysterious way.
* God then moved the hearts of four lepers who were outside the city gate. They discussed among themselves, “Why stay here until we die? So let’s go and surrender to the Arameans. If they spare us, we will live...”
* These four lepers were also in a very difficult situation. They sat in the gate of the city as that was the place where they could beg. However, due to the siege no-one was going in or out of the city and so they were hopeless.
* However, there was a slim chance that the army would have mercy on them and so they decided it was worth a shot.
* It was this decision that led to the salvation of many. As the four lepers approached the camp it appeared much quieter than they had anticipated.
* They encountered no hostile guard. No-one challenged them as they approached the nearest tents.
* They heard no voices of soldiers laughing or shouting with each other. All they heard was the noise of horses and the donkeys that were abandoned.
* They could not believe what was happening! They cautiously entered a tent on the edge of the camp and found food and drink and enjoyed themselves.
* Once they had satisfied their immediate desire for something to fill their stomachs they looked around and realised that the tent contained silver, gold and clothes.
* They couldn’t believe their luck and so gathered up the items and ran off to hide them. Having done that, they moved to another tent and did the same thing.
1. Read verses 9-20. What can we learn from the lepers who decided to share the good news they had discovered? (9) What actions did the lepers take in order to share the good news? (10) How was Elisha’s prophecy fulfilled just as he had said? (12-20)

3-1, Read verses 9-20.

 Then they said to each other, “What we’re doing is not right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let’s go at once and report this to the royal palace.”

10 So they went and called out to the city gatekeepers and told them, “We went into the Aramean camp and no one was there—not a sound of anyone—only tethered horses and donkeys, and the tents left just as they were.” 11 The gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported within the palace.

12 The king got up in the night and said to his officers, “I will tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know we are starving; so they have left the camp to hide in the countryside, thinking, ‘They will surely come out, and then we will take them alive and get into the city.’”

13 One of his officers answered, “Have some men take five of the horses that are left in the city. Their plight will be like that of all the Israelites left here—yes, they will only be like all these Israelites who are doomed. So let us send them to find out what happened.”

14 So they selected two chariots with their horses, and the king sent them after the Aramean army. He commanded the drivers, “Go and find out what has happened.” 15 They followed them as far as Jordan, and they found the whole road strewn with the clothing and equipment the Arameans had thrown away in their headlong flight. So the messengers returned and reported to the king. 16 Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a seah of the finest flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley sold for a shekel, as the Lord had said.

17 Now the king had put the officer on whose arm he leaned in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died, just as the man of God had foretold when the king came down to his house. 18 It happened as the man of God had said to the king: “About this time tomorrow, a seah of the finest flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria.”

19 The officer had said to the man of God, “Look, even if the Lord should open the floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?” The man of God had replied, “You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it!” 20 And that is exactly what happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died.

3-2, What can we learn from the lepers who decided to share the good news they had discovered? (9)

 ***Then they said to each other, “What we’re doing is not right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let’s go at once and report this to the royal palace.”***

* Soon they realized that they were not doing right. The good news should be shared with all people in Samaria who were suffering from the famine.
* The lepers realized that this was good news for them and also good news for the people. This was not a victory God had brought about just for four lepers.
* This was good news for all the people! “We are not doing right’, they said, ‘This is a day of good news…let us go and report.”

3-3, What actions did the lepers take in order to share the good news? (10)

***10 So they went and called out to the city gatekeepers and told them, “We went into the Aramean camp and no one was there—not a sound of anyone—only tethered horses and donkeys, and the tents left just as they were.” 11 The gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported within the palace.***

* The lepers called the gatekeepers, who woke up the king, and soon everyone in Samaria knew what the lepers had found.

3-4, How was Elisha’s prophecy fulfilled just as he had said? (12-20)

 ***The king got up in the night and said to his officers, “I will tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know we are starving; so they have left the camp to hide in the countryside, thinking, ‘They will surely come out, and then we will take them alive and get into the city.’”***

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* After the king had verified this, the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a seah of flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley sold for a shekel, as the Lord had said.
* As the people flooded through the city gates to enjoy the plunder, the officer of the king was trampled in the city gate and died, just as the man of God had said to him.
* Everything was done according to the word of the Lord spoken by Elisha. God’s word is trustworthy.
* Even in the most difficult situation or circumstance, we can believe God’s word is true. However, those who do not trust God’s word cannot receive God’s grace.

**Conclusion**

###  Ezekiel 3:16-21 reads, “16 At the end of seven days the word of the Lord came to me: 17 “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. 18 When I say to a wicked person, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ezekiel+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20521b)] their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. 19 But if you do warn the wicked person and they do not turn from their wickedness or from their evil ways, they will die for their sin; but you will have saved yourself. 20 “Again, when a righteous person turns from their righteousness and does evil, and I put a stumbling block before them, they will die. Since you did not warn them, they will die for their sin. The righteous things that person did will not be remembered, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. 21 But if you do warn the righteous person not to sin and they do not sin, they will surely live because they took warning, and you will have saved yourself.” Like 4 lepers, we are terrible sinners but we are forgiven sinners by the grace and mercy of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We can not hold or hoard this blessed gospel message for ourselves. Like them, we must bring this treasure to others who are veiled in their spiritual eyes and dying. (2Cor 4:3-4) May the Lord help us to wake up from spiritual slumber and share the gospel truth actively with others daily! Amen.

**One word: Good news!**