

2 Kings 7:3 -20

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[0 : 00] Kings chapter 7, 2 Kings chapter 7. We're going to finish up that 7th chapter tonight. We'll pick it up in verse 3. And then we'll read down to the end of the chapter, which gets us to verse 20.

So 2 Kings chapter 7, verses 3 through 20. We'll pray, we'll kind of set the context for ourselves in case you had missed the context so you would know where we're at.

But let's open up with a word of prayer as we go to the Lord together. God, so thankful for this day you've given us. Lord, we rejoice in the opportunity we have of gathering together.

And we thank you for this church. We thank you for not only the buildings, but we thank you for each individual. We thank you for the fellowship we enjoy, the encouragement it is to us in our walk of faith.

And pray that you continue to lead and guide us as a body of believers, that we would mature in your word. And Lord, we would grow accordingly. We pray that you'd be with the start of Awanas tonight. Pray that you minister in the lives of those children.

[0 : 57] You'd be with our workers back there, that Christ be magnified. Pray for our youth and those working with the youth. Lord, be with us as we open up the word of God with one another and pray that we would see it with clarity, that we would understand it.

And Lord, not only that we would gain the information of it, but that our lives would be conformed to it, that we would apply it to our daily lives for your glory and honor. And Lord, as always, we just ask that it would be you that is seen as we understand more and more of who you are and we understand more and more of ourselves through it.

We ask it all in Christ's name, amen. We're still in our study of the Northern Kingdom, mainly in the prophetic ministry of Elisha. Now, we need to put it in context so that we understand where we're reading.

It kind of spilled over from the sixth chapter in the first two verses of the seventh chapter of 2 Kings. And that is a time came when Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, surrounded the city of Samaria and took the city of Samaria by siege.

Starvation fell upon the city to the place that they resulted to cannibalism. It's just really a horrendous time. I encourage you to go back as we did Sunday night.

[2 : 13] We were looking at that. And I don't know, those of you that were here, how many of you did it. When we ask ourselves how we get to that place, how are these matters happening?

We have to go back and look at the book of Leviticus in Leviticus chapter 26, and we see how God had commanded his people that if they walked in disobedience, he would begin to rebuke and correct and chastise them.

And if they did not repent of that disobedience, that the disciplinary action would continue to progress to worse and worse and worse until it finally got to the point where even God declares in the 26th chapter of Leviticus there that your city would be sieged and you would result to eating your offspring, really just horrendous matters.

So how does a loving God allow these matters to happen? Well, really it's the rebellion and disobedience of his people that brought it upon them. During that time, the king of Israel went to the house of Elisha, but before he got there, he sent an assassin or a would-be assassin to take the head of Elisha because, as had already been noted through the works of Elisha, if anyone had power and presence with the Lord God Almighty, it was Elisha.

And if he was permitting these things to take place and was not stopping them by interceding on behalf of the Lord, then Elisha would be to blame. When they went into the house, Elisha declared to them a very astounding statement that though today they were living in the midst of starvation, by that time tomorrow, there would be an abundance of food.

[3 : 53] The right-hand man to the king, literally described in Scripture the man on whom the king's arm was leaning, the king was leaning upon his arm, doubted that. And we've seen the prophetic

word of Elisha there in verses 1 and 2 as the result of his doubt.

We see that fulfillment tonight, starting in verse 3, of what God has declared through his man. But in the midst of this, we don't want to separate ourselves from the reality that while God was disciplining his people, his representatives stayed put.

That's an astounding thing. Elisha did not leave the city. He was present. That the disciplinary actions of the Lord God Almighty was falling upon his people, but they had someone to go to, and that someone was Elisha.

He could have left. He could have fled. But he allowed the Lord God to leave him in a place so that he could be there to offer a word. And so tonight, we're moving from the tragic consequences of the sin they had sown to the provisions of the Lord.

I want you to see tonight the provisions of the Lord in 2 Kings 7, starting in verse 3. Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate, and they said to one another, Why do we sit here until we die?

[5 : 19] 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.

They arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Arameans. And when they came to the outskirts of the camp of the Arameans, behold, there was no one there. For the Lord had caused the army of the Arameans to hear a sound of chariots and a sound of horses, even 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 and the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us.

Therefore, they arose and fled in the twilight and left their tents and their horses and their donkeys, even the camp, just as it was, and fled for their life. 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.

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. So they came and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Arameans, and behold, there was no one there, nor the voice of man, only the horses tied and the donkeys tied in the tents, just as they were.

[6 : 48] The gatekeepers called and told it within the king's household. 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.

One of his servants said, Please let us, please let some men take five of the horses which remain, which are left in the city. Behold, they will be in any case like all the multitude of Israel who are left in it.

Behold, they will be in any case like all the multitude of Israel who have already perished. So let us send and see. They took therefore two chariots with horses and the king sent after the army of the Arameans saying, Go and see.

They went after them to the Jordan and behold, all the way was full of clothes and equipment which the Arameans had thrown away in their haste. Then the messengers returned and told the king.

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.

[7 : 55] 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.

It happened just as the man of God had spoken to the king saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel and a measure of fine flour for a shekel will be sold tomorrow about this time at the gate of Samaria.

Then the royal officer answered the man of God and said, Now behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven could such a thing be. And he said, Behold, you will see it with your own eyes but you will not eat of it.

And so it happened to him for the people trampled on him at the gate and he died. Second Kings chapter 7 verses 3 through 20. We see here the provisions of the Lord.

Provisions at a time of great need. Provisions really in a season of great discipline. One that was brought upon themselves by their own actions. God is not unfair or unjust in allowing this siege to take place around the city of Samaria.

[8 : 58] This is not a big mean God just really doing what he wants to as a matter of fact. He is allowing them to reap the rewards of that which they have sown. Namely, disobedience and rebellion.

They have sought to replace the true worship of the Lord God and God will not be mocked. These things had been foretold and foretold. They had been told in advance all the way back to the book of Leviticus and they had been foretold by the prophets of that current day that was telling them that they needed to repent yet they would not and therefore they began to reap the rewards of their own sowing.

And yet we see in the midst of that the ever increasing ever remaining loving kindness of God in demonstrating his provisions to them. These provisions are there as a testimony to the presence and power of God.

God does a mighty work and he does it in a mighty way. I want you to see three things tonight as we consider these provisions. The first thing that we see are the means of his provisions.

This royal officer said, Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven could this thing be? This is the sentiment of man in a desperate situation and it is the questioning of the ability of God to meet a need in such a short season.

[10 : 19] It is the reality that the need is great. It is the reality that we stand in the midst of starvation and there seemingly is no apparent way in which God could meet this need by such a provision in any way.

Yet scripture teaches us and tells us over and over again that the arm of the Lord God is not shortened nor are his ways limited. That is, the means of God's provisions differ throughout scripture but they remain consistent in the reality that he can provide.

We see the manna falling in the wilderness. We see the wind blowing the quail into the camp. We see the multiplication of the loaves and fish. Over and over again throughout scripture we see the reality and the certainty that God can provide but there is also the assurance that he is not limited in how he provides.

God uses various means and in various ways. What we notice from the passage before us starting in verse 6 it says for the Lord had caused the army of the Arameans to hear a sound of chariots and a sound of horses.

Now there is one matter which you need to have settled in your mind when it comes to the sovereignty of God over all the nations and that is God is free to do whatever he desires to do with whoever he desires to do in any way he wants to do it.

[11 : 44] God is using the Arameans as a tool of discipline upon his people for their rebellion. The sovereignty of God permits that. We would like to say well the Arameans are upset at the nation of Israel.

The Arameans are fighting for all these political reasons or these economic reasons that's why they're sieging the city. No the reality is God says that if his people walked in faithfulness that no man would be able to stand before them no king would ever come upon them that a few of them would run a multitude of others away.

So when we see the opposite of that happening yet they're walking in disobedience and God is using the nations around them as tools of discipline as tools of correction to gather their attention back to himself then we need to understand that the same God who is sovereign to use the Arameans as a tool to discipline is also the God who could cause them to hear the sound of horses and chariots.

He is a sovereign God that can bring in nations and take out nations. He is not limited in what he uses nor is he limited in who he uses.

I say it quite often we need to be careful about boasting in the reality that God uses us in any work and the reason we need to be careful about that is because we read in scripture that God used a bush that would not burn, a donkey that started talking, and a rooster that crowed.

[13 : 08] God is not limited in what he uses and who he uses and there is no boasting in being the one used by him. There is the surrender to his usefulness and the reality is that we understand that

the God who brought the army can also remove the army.

This is not a coincidental reality. This is not a coincidental series of events. This is the means by which God seeks to provide the provisions he has promised.

He is going to provide it through the preparations of the Arameans by leaving it in the camp. God does this by natural means that is the army brought their provisions but he does it in a supernatural way.

They began to hear the horses of chariots, the sounds of horses and chariots and began to fear. Those who were so proud in their siege of the city became so scared that they left their belongings behind.

God does this over and over again. If you read throughout scripture and we see in these interactions again we are reminded of the sovereignty of God.

[14 : 12] He truly holds the heart of the kings in the palm of his hand and God is using this as a means of provisions. This gives us comfort because we understand that we find ourselves time and time again in the position as the doubting man that says well even if God was to do this there's no way it could happen.

Friend it is not a matter of if God it is just a matter that he has promised that he would. We don't need to know how we don't need to know where and we don't need to know when we just need to know that God has the ability to provide whatever the means may be.

We understand here that this is a testimony to the reality that God can use whatever and whoever he longs to to meet the needs of his people. Here are the means of his provisions.

The majority of our text is focused on the second one that is the messengers of his provisions. God is meeting the needs of the people of Samaria in a most unlikely of way.

The enemy who was sieging them now has fled and left behind but it says now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate the outcast and the unclean.

[15 : 31] Those who could not go into the city for they were unclean yet if we pay attention what was going on inside the city was so much more unclean than the ones who were outside the city. Right? They were deemed unclean and unfit therefore they were cast out.

They by law had to remain outside the city gates. They were unfit to be with the general population but yet these men are going to be the messengers of the provisions that God is giving them.

And we understand that before they could be the messengers they had to come to a place of surrender. They looked at one another and says we're going to die anyway. Right? If we sit outside the gates we die.

If we go inside the city we die. If we go to the Arameans we may live or we may die. But they come to this place of surrender and says what does it matter? If we die we die.

See friend you are never a messenger of what God has provided until you surrender your own life. They came to the reality that their life could not be preserved on their own.

[16 : 36] And so they surrendered their own lives to the sake of something else. They gave themselves up for the unknown and they went into the camp and they seen that before they were provided in a supernatural way.

So this surrender led to a blessing. This surrender led to a revelation. Now that revelation brought about a second thing. Look at what it says. Then they said to one another we are not doing right. We are not doing right. This revelation that God was meeting their needs came to be an understanding that what they were doing was not right. They were eating and hiding eating and hiding plundering the camp and hiding it for themselves.

Says what we are doing is not right. This day is a day of good news but we are keeping silent. This day is a day of good news but we are keeping silent.

See they understood these who were unmerited by man undesirable in appearance knew that the news they had come to realize was needed by everyone.

[17 : 47] And they also knew that by keeping it to themselves regardless of how other people saw them was not appropriate nor right. That this was to be a day of rejoicing but it could not be a day of rejoicing until they were the proclaimers of the message.

Says we can't keep this to ourselves. We can't hold on to this because this is a day of rejoicing and no one knows it. The reality is is that we are sitting here reaping the rewards and everybody else is still shut inside the gates.

We must tell them because it makes this declaration. It says that if we wait until morning light punishment will overtake us. It is reminiscent of the word we read in the prophet Ezekiel where he tells them that if he knows the corrective word to declare to the people but he does not do it and the people do not repent then he will be held to blame.

But if he declares the word and they do not repent then they will be held to blame. See it is knowing the news and not telling the news that brings the punishment upon the one who knew.

Jesus said it this way to him much has been entrusted much will be expected. Because see when we have the revelation of what other people need but we keep it to ourselves we are not doing right. [19:08] We are not doing right. It is to be a day of rejoicing but how can they rejoice if they do not know the news that has not been told them. It does not matter how people see you.

It does not matter how people perceive you. These are leprous men outside the city gate. They could not even go inside the city. They had to stand outside and call out to the gate keepers. They had to beg for the attention of someone else. They had to get them to listen to them. It does not matter if people ridicule them. It does not matter if people mock them.

It did not even matter the reality that the king doubted them. what they knew to be true was true and therefore they bore the responsibility of being the messengers of the provisions of God.

The church today is the messenger of the provisions of God. And in a world that is starving in its own desires and its own lusts and in its own realities and it has been captivated by the enemy though the church may know the means of God's provisions if it does not declare that message it is not doing right.

[20:22] Because the revelation of the message is to be declared to all. We see here these messengers of his provisions. Those that were rejected by men were compelled and concerned enough to share a message with them.

Isn't it astounding in scripture though the messengers that God uses? Think about that. I mean we're told in the New Testament that he has not used the wise or the popular, the wealthy. He uses the foolish to confound the wisdom of the wise. The apostles were seen as uneducated and unskilled and unlearned men yet they held man spellbound by the message they were declaring.

It does not matter the merit of the messengers as seen by the world's standards. All that matters is have they come to the realization of what God has provided that other people need. And once they come to that revelation then it is their responsibility to declare that message so that others can hear it and others can respond to it. These go to the door.

[21:30] They call out to the gatekeepers and the gatekeepers takes the news to the house of the king. We read the account. Finally after some convincing the king sends out a chariot and finds the message to be validated.

We see the means of his provisions. We see the messengers of his provisions. And then third and finally we notice the measure of his provisions. That is how much God provided.

The prophetic word of Elisha was that though they were paying an astounding amount for the head of a donkey and paying even a great amount for the dung of a bird that there would by that time tomorrow be such an abundance of food that it would be sold very cheaply.

God does so much more than just meet their needs. He over abundantly supplies the provisions. In a city filled with starvation anything would do.

But yet we find the means which God uses to provide and the messengers which bring the news sends the people out of the city and all of a sudden they find the measure of how much God has provided.

[22:55] There is more than sufficient. There is more than enough. So much so that they're able to sell a little bit at the gate of Samaria because if you're in a city and starving you're not selling anything.

Right? Have you ever thought about that? If you're starving in the city you won't sell anything when the food gets provided. But they had so much so that they could even sell some at the gate of Samaria though the price wasn't that good.

It was fine flour was so a measure of fine flour for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel. Compared to the price that they were paying for a donkey's head the day before that's astounding. What we see is that God not only met a temporary need but God over and abundantly supplied above and beyond all they ever needed. But the true measure of God's provision is found in verse

18.

It happened just as the man of God had spoken. It happened just as the man of God had spoken. It tells us also that it was in verse 16 according to the word of the Lord.

[24 : 04] That is the measuring standard of God's provisions was the word of God he had declared. God provided according to what he said.

He had declared that it would be an obvious amount so great and so large that man would have to acknowledge the reality that it was from God and God alone. God had given a standard that no man can meet.

He had spoken through Elisha and according to the word of the Lord through the man of God this measure was met. God provided according to the measure of his own word.

That is what God said he did. And not only what he said did he do in the amount of food he provided also what he said about the man that doubted was provided.

the man on whose arm the king had leaned was put in charge of the gate. Now in a city ransacked by famine desperate for food the last thing you want to do is be the man who opens up the gate to let people out.

[25 : 13] But this was the right hand man of the king. He saw the food outside the gate but he never ate any of it. Elisha said this would happen. Why? Because he doubted the ability and the word of God.

And just according as the man of God had said this man saw it but he did not eat it and he died before he ever consumed it. God provided according to the standard of his word.

We are reminded that God can do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ever think or imagine. What God always does is God always provides according to the measure of what he has declared.

What God has said he will do. We don't always know how. We don't always know when. But what he has said he will do.

The measure of God's provisions is the very word of God. This is why we need to know what the word of God declares to us. This is why we need to know all that God has promised for us.

[26 : 16] This is why we need to understand this. This isn't name it and claim it theology. But if we want to know how God meets our needs then we need to know what God has said to us about our needs. If we want to know how God provides for us then we need to know what it is God has said about his provisions.

Why? Because his provisions are always according to the measure of his word. And one thing that we have found in scripture is that God does not mind man holding him according to his word because he is a God of his word.

How many times in scripture do you find the prayers that says Lord have you not said? And man holds God according to his word. This is the very prayer that is after the heart of God.

It is God you have promised, you have declared, you have said and now all I'm asking is that you do what you said you would do. And God says I have the means to do that.

Why? Because he wants the message proclaimed that he is a God of abundant means and abundant measure. the sad reality is is even after all these provisions there is no praise of God.

[27 : 26] There is no acknowledgement from the people. There is no repentance and there is no turning back. And so finally and formally by the time we get to the 17th chapter the northern kingdom will be carried away by another empire.

God would utilize the Assyrians to bring disciplinary action upon them. But again he is without excuse. Because they have seen over and over and over again what he can do.

And yet they rejected it for their own selves. May we be those people who declare the provisions of the Lord, who rely upon them, who understand his means, sometimes standing astounded that this is the way he is provided.

Being those who proclaim that message and understanding that it is always according to the measure of his word for his glory and his glory alone. As we see in 2 Kings chapter 7 verses 3 through 20.

Thank you my brothers. Thank you.

[29 : 18] Thank you.