

2 Kings 7:3-10 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

1. Introduction:

- a. Story of four men who had leprosy
- b. Characteristics of these men

2. Plight of the Land (1 Kings 6:24-31)

- a. Syria besieges kingdom of Israel (also known as Samaria or Northern Kingdom)
 - i. Kingdom of Israel (Samaria or Northern Kingdom) under siege by Syria
 - ii. Benhadad king of Syria trying to starve out cities of Samaria
 - iii. People of the land starving to death
- b. Samaria suffered consequences of national sin
 - i. Steep inflated prices for any scrap of food
 - ii. Some people became cannibals (eating human dead bodies)
 - iii. Oppression from Assyria because God judged Israel's sins

2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Isaiah 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

c. Prophet Elisha blamed for catastrophe

- i. King of Samaria wanted Elisha dead, but God protected him
Psalm 46:1 ... God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
- ii. Prophet Elisha voice for God in Samaria
2 Kings 21:10 And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

3. Persistence of the Lepers

a. Resume of the four lepers

- i. God often works with unworthy people in this world
- ii. Lepers had to live outside the protection of the city walls
Leviticus 13:3 And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and [when] the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.
- iii. Lived as outcasts from ancient society
- iv. Dependent on family, friends, or charity for food, water, & clothing
- v. Original social distancing in ancient society
- vi. But God changes all things for any person

Psalm 40:1-3 ... I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. "set me on a rock ... put a new song in my heart"

b. Rationale of the four lepers

- i. Lepers at rock bottom because everyone starving
- ii. Looking at death very soon
- iii. They had nothing to lose by going to Syrian army
- iv. They had attitude of action – determined to live

c. Do what you can with what you have in hand

- i. God can multiply effect of human actions
- ii. God can multiply incoming supplies

- iii. God can block other human action based on Christian limited action
2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. "If my people will humble themselves"

4. Provision of the Lord

Isaiah 43:13 Yea, before the day was I am he; and [there is] none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

- a. Lepers savored the provisions
 - i. Four lepers came into empty camp
 - ii. Lord had created a huge noise which Assyrian army thought were enemy Hittites
 - iii. Assyrian army ran away in fear at twilight leaving everything
 - iv. They found animals, food, drink, clothes, lots of money
 - v. Lepers really enjoying the best part of the camp & hiding the money
 - vi. They reasoned that they better tell the king about the provisions
- b. Lepers shared provisions of the Lord
 - i. Lepers did not wait until the next morning
 - ii. Lepers went back through the night to tell the city
 - iii. They told the city the good news

5. Conclusion

- a. See the blessings of God's goodness
- b. Share the gospel (good news)

1 Corinthians 9:16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!