

"This is a Day of Good News"

2 Kings 7:3-9

INTRODUCTION:

A. Lesson Text: **2 Kings 7:3-9** – "Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, 'Why are we sitting here until we die?"

4 If we say, 'We will enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die.'

5 And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no one was there.

6 For the LORD had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses -- the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, 'Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!'

7 Therefore they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact -- their tents, their horses, and their donkeys -- and they fled for their lives.

8 And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid them; then they came back and entered another tent, and carried some from there also, and went and hid it.

9 Then they said to one another, '**We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news**, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king's household.'

1. Background of Lesson Text

a. Ben-Hadad, king of Syria has taken all of his Syrian army besieged Samaria in the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the days of the prophet Elisha.

b. A great famine in Samaria just added to the hopelessness of the situation.

c. Just how dire had the situation become? Three examples . . .

1. **2 Kings 6:25** – "And there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver."

2. An example is found in **2 Kings 6:26-30** – “Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, ‘Help, my lord, O king!’

27 And he said, ‘If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?’

28 Then the king said to her, ‘What is troubling you?’ And she answered, ‘This woman said to me, ‘Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.’

29 So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, ‘Give your son, that we may eat him’; but she has hidden her son.’

30 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body.

2. Another example is seen in the King wearing sackcloth under his outer garments.

- d. Verses **6 & 7** of our lesson text tell of a mighty deed of God. “**For the LORD** had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses -- the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, ‘Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!’

7 Therefore they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact -- their tents, their horses, and their donkeys -- and they fled for their lives.”

2. A Lesson in evangelism from four lepers.

B. The blessings the four lepers were receiving were made possible because of the work God had done on the behalf of Israel.

C. But what about today? How can the principles of this story apply?

1. **Is there not a famine among us . . . A famine of not hearing the “words of the Lord”?** **Amos 8:11** – “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord GOD, ‘That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD.’”

2. **Is there not a great work already performed by our God?** **John 3:16-17** - “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

3. **And, haven’t we been assigned a responsibility to do something about it?**

- a. **Matthew 28:18-20** – “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- b. **Mark 16:15-16** – ". . . Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."

4. **And what if we don't go and tell others?** **2 Corinthians 4:3** – "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing."

SOME PARALLELS BETWEEN 2 KINGS 7:3-9 AND NOW

A. There was a famine.

1. **THEN:** of food
2. **NOW:** of spiritual blessings. **Ephesians 1:3** – "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places **in Christ.**"

B. There was an abundance available.

1. **THEN:** in the Syrian's Camp.
2. **NOW:** in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

C. Some found the blessings.

1. **THEN:** the Four Lepers.
2. **NOW:** those in Christ.

D. A decision had to be made.

1. **THEN:** Do we keep this all for ourselves, or do we go tell those who are starving and share?
2. **NOW:** Do we keep God's truth, salvation, and spiritual blessings to ourselves . . . Or do we share it with those who do not have it?
 - a. **2 Corinthians 4:3** – "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." (KJV)
 - b. **Ezekiel 3:18-21** – "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.

19 Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.

20 "Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand.

21 Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

A CONTRAST BETWEEN THEN AND NOW

A. **NOW:** The four lepers went and told the good news.

NOW: We often hoard the blessings to ourselves . . . And that because:

1. Some are still starving in the midst of plenty.
2. Some claim others are not interested.
3. Some are too afraid of offending others.
4. Some are in denial that those around them are lost.
5. Some hide behind their lack of knowledge.

B. Could it be that we just do not care and are just not willing to put forth the effort?

CONCLUSION:

A. **THEN:** The lepers said, **'We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news**, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king's household.'" **2 Kings 7:9**

NOW: What have we concluded?

B. Listening brethren . . . We are saved in order to save others.

C. The lost will die at a cost . . . The eternal damnation of their souls!

D. **Titus 3:1** – "Remind them . . . to be ready for every good work."

1. Be ready to the good work of:
 - a. Living in Christ.
 - b. Living for Christ.
 - c. Telling others about Christ.
2. Be ready to the good work of showing the lost the lighted path to Christ.
3. Be ready to the good work of cooperating with God in saving lost souls.
4. Be ready to the good work of teaching God's truth to those who have encompassed error instead.

E. Brethren . . .

1. We are not going to bring in the sheaves until we roll up our sleeves.
2. We'll never bring all the world into Christ, until we bring Christ into all the world!
3. We'll have no faith in the mission before us, unless we have faith in the Master behind us!
4. We'll never get others to obey the great commands until we obey the great commission!
5. We cannot expect the world to react to the Word, till we act on it!

6. We'll never get excited over sowing the seed, until we get excited over seeing the need!"
 7. We can't make Christ mean anything to others, until we make Him mean everything to us!
 8. Let's not jeeringly say, "Look what the world is coming to," but joyfully say, "Look what has come to the world!"
 9. We will make more conversions, when we have more convictions!
 10. We'll never get others to see the joy of claiming Christ, till we get ourselves to see the joy of proclaiming Christ!
 11. We'll never be challenged by seeing through our task, till we recognize the challenge of seeing our task through!
 12. We'll never really consider the lost, till we stop considering the cost.
 13. We'll quit trying to save money, only when we really start trying to save men!
 14. We'll be in a better position to help, when we are in a better disposition to help!
 15. We won't have to pay the penalty in the reaping, if we are willing to pay the price in the sowing!
 16. Every heart without Christ is a mission field, and every heart with Christ is a missionary!
- F. **2 Corinthians 4:3** – "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."
- G. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**