

**THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GOLDEN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL**  
I and II Kings - Session 4 / Wednesday, September 6, 2018

**THE HEROICS OF FOUR LEPERS**

II Kings 7

1 The drama continued in the northern kingdom of Israel. We saw last week the attempt  
2 made by Syrian King Ben Hadad to assassinate the prophet of God Elisha at his home in  
3 Dothan, Israel. God intervened by sending chariots of fire to protect him. A famine  
4 caused by lack of rain plagued Israel until God informed Elisha that the famine would  
5 now end and he made the big announcement:  
6

7 2 Kings 7:1

8 **Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To morrow**  
9 **about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures**  
10 **of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.**  
11

12 “A measure of flour” would have been about a bushel which would be sold for a shekel -  
13 then about 65 cents. That seemed impossible at the moment. How could food even be  
14 brought into Samaria (capital city) when the Syrian army was camped just outside the  
15 walls.  
16

17 Apparently the king (Joram) believed the report but one of his underlings did not and he  
18 scoffed at Elisha: 2 Kings 7:2 **Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered**  
19 **the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might**  
20 **this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat**  
21 **thereof.** In other words, Elisha prophesied, “You’re going to see a major miracle, but it  
22 isn’t going to help you any!”  
23

24 THE DRAMA OF DELIVERANCE UNFOLDS  
25

26 Four lepers are huddled outside the city - halfway between the capital of Israel, Samaria,  
27 and the Syrian army....seemingly trapped, when one of them ventured to say:  
28

29 2 Kings 7:3-5

30 **And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one**  
31 **to another, Why sit we here until we die? [4] If we say, We will enter into the city,**  
32 **then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die**

1 **also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us**  
2 **alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. [5] And they rose up in the**  
3 **twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the**  
4 **uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.**

5  
6 Four dying men - trapped, nowhere to turn. But one of them had the nerve to ask:  
7

8 **WHY SIT WE HERE UNTIL WE DIE?**

9  
10 What a fantastic insight! He reasoned, “No point in going into the city for they have no  
11 food there and we’ll die. But if we go to the Syrian army, where they have food, they  
12 could kill us on sight. One way or the other, we will perish. In the city – for sure!  
13 With the Syrians – possibly. So let’s take the chance and go to the Syrians!”  
14

15 So that’s what they did. But when they arrived at the Syrian army encampment, they  
16 were in for a shock! There was no one there! How come?  
17

18 2 Kings 7:6-7

19 **For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a**  
20 **noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the**  
21 **king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the**  
22 **Egyptians, to come upon us. [7] Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and**  
23 **left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled**  
24 **for their life.**  
25

26 The Syrian army has not done well in combat for a long time. I used to wonder why until  
27 many years ago, in Damascus, I watched the army on maneuvers and my questions  
28 ceased. Even 2800 years ago, when this scriptural drama took place, the Syrians were  
29 easily spooked. Someone heard a noise outside the encampment and thought it sounded  
30 like a great army approaching. They ran for their lives - every man for himself!  
31

32 2 Kings 7:8

33 **And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one**  
34 **tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and**  
35 **went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence**  
36 **also, and went and hid it.**  
37

38 These four lepers now had all the food, all the clothing, all the silver and gold they could



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carry! They had hit the mother-lode!

The world watched much the same scenario on Saturday, June 10, 1967 - the Six Day War in Israel. In the first five days, the Israelis had routed the combined forces of Egypt and Jordan, now only the Syrian forces remained, dug in on the famous Golan Heights, the east bank of the Sea of Galilee. Here is how the Associated press reported the carnage:

*The bleak hills of Syria lay wrapped in the morning mists. Then, with expected suddenness, the hills shook again with the sounds of war. Israeli jets tore through the sky and hurled napalm and high explosives at the Syrian positions, some of them dug 50 feet deep into the mountains. Now came the Israeli armor and infantry, on the move once more. All along the border, Israeli forces were pounding away ceaselessly at the Syrians in the hills.*

*The ancient Crusader's castle at the heights near Kalat Namrud (Nimrod's Castle), already worn and toppled by time, was hit again by Israeli jets to smash Syrian mortar crews using it for cover.*

*Said one lieutenant, his submachine gun still smoking, said, "The Syrians ran like rabbits*

1 *when they saw us!” Syrian escape routes were littered with burned and blasted Syrian*  
2 *tanks, rifles, mortars, boots, even socks. Some of the Syrians found it easier to flee*  
3 *barefooted.*

4  
5 *In the distance, columns of smoke rose from the hills, and the sky was pocked with black*  
6 *splotches where Syrian ammunition and fuel dumps flared into the sky.*

7  
8 *With devastating thoroughness, the Israelis scourged the area that had been a*  
9 *springboard for Syrian terrorists who had raided the kibbutzim (communal farms) since*  
10 *1948. And with a vengeance they blew up the concrete and stone forts where Russian-*  
11 *made cannon and mortars were trained on the Israeli border.*

12  
13 The lepers now had all they would ever need - except leprosy-free bodies. But they had  
14 their consciences in tact. Verse 9 speaks of their nobility:

15  
16 2 Kings 7:9

17 **Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings,**  
18 **and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come**  
19 **upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. [10]**  
20 **So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We**  
21 **came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice**  
22 **of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.**

23  
24 But the king of Israel, Joram, was like so many people today – he could not make himself  
25 believe in the supernatural. Listen to his skeptical reply:

26  
27 2 Kings 7:12

28 **And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you**  
29 **what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they**  
30 **gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of**  
31 **the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.**

32  
33 The king decided to send out a scouting party to show what “liars” those lepers were;  
34 however, what they found corroborated the leper’s testimony:

35  
36 2 Kings 7:14-15

37 **They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the**  
38 **Syrians, saying, Go and see. [15] And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all**  
39 **the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their**  
40 **haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.**

1 Remember back in verse 1 Elisha's prophecy regarding the famine: 2 Kings 7:1 **Then**  
2 **Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To morrow about**  
3 **this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of**  
4 **barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.**

5  
6 So what actually happened?

7  
8 2 Kings 7:16

9 **And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine**  
10 **flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the**  
11 **word of the Lord.** It was exactly how Elisha said it would happen.

12  
13 But what about the king's associate who mocked at Elisha's words?

14  
15 2 Kings 7:18-20

16 **And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two**  
17 **measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to**  
18 **morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: [19] And that lord answered the man**  
19 **of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might**  
20 **such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not**  
21 **eat thereof. [20] And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate,**  
22 **and he died.**

23  
24 This will be a help to you: Three things you should never do:

- 25 \* Spit against the wind
- 26 \* Draw on the Lone Ranger
- 27 \* Mock God's Word!!!!!!

## 28 29 CHAPTER EIGHT

30  
31 In this chapter, the legacy of the prophet Elisha continues. In previous chapters, the king  
32 of Syria, Ben Hadad, wanted Elisha dead. But now he himself is critically ill. The  
33 palace intrigue now begins:

34  
35 2 Kings 8:7-10

36 **And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it**  
37 **was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. [8] And the king said unto**  
38 **Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of**  
39 **the Lord by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? [9] So Hazael went to meet**  
40 **him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty**

1 **camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king**  
2 **of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? [10] And Elisha**  
3 **said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord**  
4 **hath shewed me that he shall surely die.**

5  
6 Now this fellow Hazael is close to the Syrian king and entrusted with this question to  
7 Elisha. The prophet told him, "Well, you're going to live but the king is not." How  
8 would you like to break THAT news to the king?

9  
10 But, remember, Elisha is a true prophet of God. And even as he tells Hazael that he is  
11 going to live and replace Ben Hadad, he begins to weep.

12  
13 2 Kings 8:11-12

14 **And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of**  
15 **God wept. [12] And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I**  
16 **know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt**  
17 **thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash**  
18 **their children, and rip up their women with child.**

19  
20 Hazael denied this, of course, but Elisha's prophecy came true quickly when Hazael went  
21 back to the palace to check in with the king:

22  
23 2 Kings 8:14-15

24 **So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said**  
25 **Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover. [15]**  
26 **And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water,**  
27 **and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.**

28  
29 Hazael was just another horrible king in Israel. During his long reign of 42 years he led  
30 the Syrians in battle against the forces of King Joram of Israel (bad king) and King  
31 Ahaziah (another loser) of Judah. Hazael's death is recorded in 2 Kings 13:24  
32 **So Hazael king of Syria died; and his son reigned in his stead.**

33  
34 Now follows a series of change on the thrones of both Israel and Judah and in I Kings 9  
35 we come to a man named Jehu. What a mixture of bloodshed and nobility with this  
36 fellow as we shall see.

37  
38 2 Kings 9:1-4

39 **And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto**  
40 **him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to**  
41 **Ramoth-gilead: [2] And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of**

1 **Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his**  
2 **brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; [3] Then take the box of oil, and pour**  
3 **it on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.**  
4 **Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.**

5 **[4] So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.**  
6

7 Unlike Samuel who had anointed David to be king several hundred years earlier, Elisha  
8 sent someone else - a young ministerial student to anoint Jehu. And now the prophet  
9 spells out the doom of the house of former King Ahab:  
10

11 **2 Kings 9:9-10**

12 **And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,**  
13 **and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: [10] And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in**  
14 **the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door,**  
15 **and fled.**

16 Jereboam and Baasha were the first two kings of Israel, the northern kingdom, who died  
17 well out of favor with God. Now, says Elisha, the same thing is going to happen to the  
18 house of Ahab. He foretells Jezebel's death, which we see soon, when she is tossed out  
19 of a tower in Jezreel and dogs ate her body.  
20

21 Now back to the present in chapter 9: Joram doesn't even know that God has written him  
22 off in Judah and has anointed Jehu to be the king. Word reaches him that a company of  
23 horsemen are galloping into town:  
24

25 **2 Kings 9:20**

26 **And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again:**  
27 **and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously.**  
28

29 One of the most memorable things about Jehu is his driving! I have a friend in town who  
30 has this on his license plate: JEHU. And it's very accurate!  
31

32 **2 Kings 9:22-24**

33 **And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he**  
34 **answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her**  
35 **witchcrafts are so many? [23] And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to**  
36 **Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. [24] And Jehu drew a bow with his full**  
37 **strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart,**  
38 **and he sunk down in his chariot.**  
39

40 Perfect shot! (Note that Joram is called Jehoram in this instance for both names have the  
41 same meaning in Hebrew and are used interchangeably for the king of Israel and Judah.

1 Now we come to the death of wicked Queen Jezebel! Some scholars believe she was a  
2 beauty. Maybe. But she was vile inside.

3  
4 *Jezebel was one of the most remarkable women in history. She was capable, she was*  
5 *influential, and she had a dominant personality. Her evil influence was felt in three*  
6 *kingdoms and extended beyond her lifetime. Her notorious life became a proverb. She*  
7 *poured a stream of poison into history. Scripture never mentions her again until you*  
8 *come to the book of Revelation. She introduced the worship of Baal. She imported 450*  
9 *prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Astarte. She was reckless, violent, rapacious and*  
10 *ferocious. She killed God's prophets.* J. Vernon McGee

11  
12 Now she will die the way she lived. When she saw Jehu riding into the courtyard, she  
13 looked out window of her tower and tried to negotiate. Didn't work!

14  
15 2 Kings 9:31-37

16 **And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his**  
17 **master? [32] And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side?**  
18 **who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. [33] And he said, Throw her**  
19 **down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and**  
20 **on the horses: and he trode her under foot. [34] And when he was come in, he did eat**  
21 **and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's**  
22 **daughter. [35] And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the**  
23 **skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. [36] Wherefore they came again, and**  
24 **told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant**  
25 **Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of**  
26 **Jezebel: [37] And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in**  
27 **the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.**

28  
29 She died as she had lived - violently. But God was not finished with Ahab's household  
30 just yet.

31  
32 2 Kings 10:1-3

33 **And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to**  
34 **Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's**  
35 **children, saying, [2] Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's**  
36 **sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and**  
37 **armour; [3] Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set him on**  
38 **his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.**

39 2 Kings 10:11

40 **So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great**  
41 **men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.**



1 Jehu wasn't done. Now he went to work on all the priests and followers of the pagan god  
2 Baal:

3  
4 2 Kings 10:18-19

5 **And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a**  
6 **little; but Jehu shall serve him much. [19] Now therefore call unto me all the**  
7 **prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a**  
8 **great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu**  
9 **did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.**

10  
11 **JEHU'S FATAL FLAW**

12  
13 Earlier in our study of I and II Kings, we learned about Jeroboam - a man in Solomon's  
14 army, who became the first king of Israel when Israel and Judah split over taxation. He  
15 was worried that some in his northern kingdom might return to Judah because that  
16 kingdom had retained Jerusalem as its capital. So in the gorgeous region of Dan, he  
17 erected a golden calf idol and encouraged people to stay there and worship this false god.  
18 The altar had stayed there all these intervening decades. Now read:

19  
20 2 Kings 10:29

21 **Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu**  
22 **departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that**  
23 **were in Dan.**

24  
25 Compromise is a deadly thing and it has no place in the life of Christ's followers.

26  
27 Our study continues next week, beginning in II Kings 11.  
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