

"The Famine and the Provision"

Part 4

2 Kings 6:24-7:20

**Introduction:** Tonight, in our message we are again returning to 2 Kings 7 and the miracle which God performed to save His people from the famine and the siege. Last week we focused upon the **grace** and the **mercy** of God as He would through a miracle provide for His people who would not repent of their sinful ways.

**Lamentations 3:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

<sup>23</sup> *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

**Romans 2:4**

<sup>4</sup> *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

The famine and the siege were the hand of God upon His people because of their sin but the king as well as the people refused to acknowledge either as the chastening of God. The king blamed Elisha and in his madness, he vowed a vow to have Elisha executed. Last week we looked at how the king and the people had recognized the ceremonial part of the Law for they had put the four lepers outside the camp, but they ignored the civil and the moral parts of the Law. They were picking and choosing what they would recognize and obey. We also looked at how God chose to use four men who were the outcasts of their society to discover and to announce the end of the siege and the famine. This is the very way in which God works today also. He uses common ordinary people whom the world would see as insignificant.

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29**

<sup>26</sup> *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*

<sup>27</sup> *But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;*

As we continue our look at this miracle I want to back up to some of the verses which we looked at last week because there is still more to see which we skipped over.

## I. The Announcement

### Notice 2 Kings 7:1

The first word in this verse is very important, it is the word "THEN". But what does this word point to? It points to the famine and the siege and the threat upon Elisha's life. It was in the midst of all of this devastation that Elisha prophesied that in 24 hours the famine and the siege would end. God had made this known to Elisha. Now we are quick to skip over something very important here. This took a great amount of faith for Elisha to believe this Truth. Then it took a great amount of courage to stand up and announce this Truth as the city was starving to death all around him. There was no sign this would happen. Humanly speaking, what Elisha announced was impossible. But what we need to see here is that regardless of the surrounding conditions he believed God's Word to be true. Then standing amid the skeptics he was not afraid to proclaim that which seemed to be impossible.

### Application:

Might we also exhibit this very same boldness and courage to be able to proclaim the Truth of God's Word! Elisha's message was one of great news that the famine and the siege would end but our message is even greater! Our message is that God has made a way for all sinners to be forgiven and to be able to enter into His presence at any time.

### Luke 2:10-11

<sup>10</sup> And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

<sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

So, the question is, "Why is the church so silent when it comes to proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel?"

I believe there are several reasons:

#### 1. Fear

No one likes to be rejected. Our sin nature loves to be accepted and he loves to announce news that is not offensive so that others will appreciate us more. So, this fear of rejection keeps many believers from telling their friends or their family about the Good News of Jesus Christ. Let me show you the encouragement which Paul gave to Timothy.

### 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13

<sup>6</sup> *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

<sup>7</sup> **For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**

<sup>8</sup> *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*

<sup>13</sup> *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

I read a story this past week about a man named Ben Malcolmson. He was a skinny senior journalism major at USC and he asked the football coach if he could try out as a walk on only because he wanted to write a paper about the experience. To his surprise he made the 2006 team. He was a believer and he said he knew God had a plan for him. From the first day on the team he began to press forward for God. He however experienced many heartbreaking failures. He decided to start up a Bible Study and no one showed up. He then decided to start a prayer group, and no one showed up. Then he read Isaiah 55:11.

### **Isaiah 55:11**

<sup>11</sup> *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Believing that God's Word will not return void he decided to put it to the test. He anonymously placed Bibles at each of his 100 teammate's lockers on Christmas Eve days before USC was set to play in the Rose Bowl. But when he walked in the day after Christmas, what he found crushed him. The Bibles had been ripped up. Here is what he said.

*"When I walked in and saw the Bibles torn up and shredded all over the locker room carpet, I was devastated," Malcolmson said. "It was the culmination of a season full of discouragement and my hopes for finding my purpose were now shredded all over the floor of the locker room."*

But nearly four years later, as an assistant to Coach Pete Carroll at the Seattle Seahawks, an old friend connected with him and told him that one of the Bibles was picked up and read by a teammate who accepted Christ three days before tragically passing away.

*"With hindsight perspective and years removed from that experience, I could see that God's goodness was on me and that situation all along," Malcolmson concluded. "Even when I couldn't see His hand in the moment, He truly was at work all along."*

## **2. The influence of society.**

We live in a society that tells us we can talk with people about anything but politics and religion. Therefore, we are so cautious about offending someone else by speaking the Truth and instead of trusting God the church has become silent. Let me just say that we live in a world of sinners and there will always be those who are offended by the Gospel.

### **Illustration:**

Years ago, I was at an outdoor event and I handed a Gospel tract to an older man and he graciously accepted it. He seemed very pleasant and so I began to talk with him and I shared the Gospel with him and when I was finished he just stood there looking at me. He had no reply at all. So, I ask him, "What he thought of the Gospel?" His response caught me completely off guard. He said, "I'll tell you what I think. I wish I had never met you tonight!" He then walked away.

People are going to be offended but we cannot allow people or government to dictate when it is ok to share the Gospel and when it is not. Let me show you what happened to the Apostles in Jerusalem.

### **Acts 5:18-20, 25-29**

*<sup>18</sup> And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.*

*<sup>19</sup> But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,*

*<sup>20</sup> Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.*

*<sup>25</sup> Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.*

*<sup>26</sup> Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.*

*<sup>27</sup> And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,*

<sup>28</sup> *Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.*

<sup>29</sup> *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

### 3. Satan's lies.

The third reason the church has become silent is because of the lies of Satan. He will convince us that people do not want to listen. We must understand that there are people all around us today who are looking for answers.

#### John 4:35

<sup>35</sup> *Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*

Remember the meeting Jesus had with the woman at the well in John 4? After their conversation she ran back into the city and made an announcement.

#### John 4:28-30

<sup>28</sup> *The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,*

<sup>29</sup> *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*

<sup>30</sup> *Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.*

When she told the men that Jesus had revealed that He knew all she had done, we would think these men would have run the opposite direction because these were the very men she had been with. But instead they came to Him. Why? Because they longed to have Him expose their sin so that they too could be set free from the guilt and the shame. This by the way is the desire of many people today. They are carrying both guilt and shame and they would love to be set free. Don't believe the lies of Satan!

## II. The Miracle

#### Notice 2 Kings 7:3-7

God chose to end the famine and the siege in a very unique way. He caused the Syrians to hear the sound of chariots, horses, and soldiers. God used sound effects to bring it all to an end.

**Application:**

When it comes to problems in our lives God uses different means to resolve them. If you have a problem and I have the same problem most likely God is going to solve your problem in a completely different way than he will solve mine. Let me show you some verses from the Gospels.

**Matthew 9:27-30**

*27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us.*

*28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.*

*29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.*

*30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.*

These men were healed with a touch.

**Mark 10:49-52**

*49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.*

*50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.*

*51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.*

*52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.*

This man was healed by a spoken Word.

**John 9:1-7**

*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.*

*2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*

*3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

<sup>4</sup> *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

<sup>5</sup> *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

<sup>6</sup> *When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,*

<sup>7</sup> *And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.*

This man was healed with clay from the ground.

The point is God's resources are unlimited. He used a shepherd boy, a sling and a stone to defeat a giant. God sent an angel to slay thousands of the Assyrians. He used Gideon's band of 300 men with torches and pitchers to defeat the Midianites. He used the Red Sea to drown the Egyptian military. He used a tear in Moses' eye to melt the heart of Pharaoh's daughter. He used 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish to feed over 5000 people.

The point for us to grasp in all of this is, our God is not limited in His resources. He promises to meet our needs.

#### **Philippians 4:19**

<sup>19</sup> *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

The situation around you may look impossible, but God has many ways in which He can meet our needs.

#### **Conclusion:**

#### **Matthew 6:31-33**

<sup>31</sup> *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

<sup>32</sup> *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

<sup>33</sup> *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*