

The Bible 20/20: “Under Siege” (4-19-20)

Introduction: Today is Bible 20/20 Week 15 - “**The Siege of Samaria**” (2 Kings chapters 6-7)

Overview of the Siege:

- Israel (northern kingdom - 10 tribes) - the capital city Samaria is under siege from Syria
- Famine in the city - everything is running out and very expensive
- It’s not just the enemy holding them captive, its the death and despair in the city

How can we escape?

1) An Honest Assessment - Truth

2 Kings 6:24-25 (ESV)

(24) Afterward Ben-hadad king of Syria mustered his entire army and went up and besieged Samaria. (25) And there was a great famine in Samaria, as they besieged it, until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver.

Note: Look how specific, even quoting prices on usually cheap, unwanted items!

Donkey’s Head - 80 shekels

Dove’s Dung (1 cup)- 5 shekels (likely a “pulse”) - edible seeds of the legume family (ex: chick pea)

Compare (Next Day’s price) - Flour (2 gallons) & Barley (4 gallons) sold for 1 shekel (Elisha says in 7:1)

The King . . . He took time to walk the wall (an overview), but a woman called his attention to look closer . . .

2 Kings 6:26,28,30 (ESV)

(26) Now as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, “Help, my lord, O king!” . . . (28) And the king asked her, “What is your trouble?” . . . (30) When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes

Notes: A devastating reality follows - the people are eating their own children to survive!

Reality: The Scripture is very specific - even to the point of brutal honesty. . .

Our Big picture moment:

- Coronavirus has us feeling under-siege and out of sorts
- We feel this specific problem especially because it has disrupted our lives
- But death has been in the city already - Opioid Crisis, Abortion, Violence, etc.

Your Big Picture moment:

- When life gets disrupted - it is a great exposor of other underlying issues that are already there.
- What has already been at work in your “city” that’s now being really exposed by this situation?

Will you face - with **honesty** and **clarity** what is being exposed in the midst of tragedy?

Honesty is Key, but when combined properly with our next point, it can move us toward freedom!

2) A Hopeful Outlook - Faith

The King (and his messenger) React to the situation . . .

- 1st - The King felt Helpless

2 Kings 6:27 (ESV) - The King responds to the woman looking for help . . .

“If the LORD will not help you, how shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the winepress?”

Notes: King felt helpless, beaten, and crushed

- 2nd - The King’s messenger Blames God

2 Kings 6:33 (ESV) - The King’s messenger declares to Elisha . . .

“This trouble is from the LORD! Why should I wait for the LORD any longer?”

Notes: This is God’s fault, why should I keep waiting on Him for help?

***Hope is Offered** - Then, when Elisha says things are going to dramatically change in one day!

- 3rd - The King’s messenger doesn’t Trust God for help

2 Kings 7:2 (ESV)

“If the LORD himself should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?”

Notes: The King’s messenger couldn’t receive hope, even when freedom was offered

Beware - If you give up on hope, and you lose trust in God, it can rip you off from the coming freedom!

2 Kings 7:2 (ESV)

But (Elisha) said, “You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.”

The Lepers at the Gate . . .

2 Kings 7:3-4 (ESV)

(3) Now there were four men who were lepers at the entrance to the gate. And they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die? (4) If we say, ‘Let us enter the city,’ the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the camp of the Syrians. If they spare our lives we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die.”

Notes: These guys have both Honesty & Hope! And it give them a “why not” mentality - If we remain sitting where we are the outcome is already determined, **but** if we will go out and face the actual enemy, the one that has us surrounded and trapped, who knows maybe we’ll survive?

How much more us? In light of the Hope we have in Jesus, we should live in view of Resurrection Life!!!

Therefore, why not face problems head on, and with some faith that shakes off the:

“I’m helpless, it’s God’s fault, and I can’t trust him anyway” mentality

Listen: If we can look **honestly** at our situation, and in the midst of it find a **hopeful outlook** in Jesus, then we can find the courage to make a **bold move** towards freedom!

3) A Bold Move - Courage

2 Kings 7:5-8 (ESV)

(5) So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there. (6) For the Lord had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, 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 Egypt to come against us." (7) So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. (8) And when these lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent and ate and drank, and they carried off silver and gold and clothing and went and hid them. Then they came back and entered another tent and carried off things from it and went and hid them.

Notes: They go, and the enemy runs!

- God goes with them - and makes them an army in the view of the surrounding enemy!
- They get food and treasure - filling what they lacked, and adding more than ever expected!

When we go - we go not just to face our enemy, we go towards Jesus, & He frees us from our enemy . . .

Jesus heals a leper . . .

All 3 gospels record a similar story Matt 8, Mark 1, Luke 5 (most likely the same one) and Matthew tells us it immediately follows the sermon on the mount (if you remember last week's message). Here is Mark's account:

Mark 1:40-42 (ESV)

(40) And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean."

(41) Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean."

(42) And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

Jesus isn't afraid to get his hands dirty - He is willing, capable, and loving!

Conclusion/Application: If you are stuck . . .

Be honest

Be hopeful

Be courageous

In Jesus there is healing & freedom!

If you have listened to this whole message, and it is "past tense" for you.

There is one thing left to be sure to hear and act upon . . .

2 Kings 7:9 (ESV)

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

Bring hope to the City!

Discussion Questions:

1) Can you think of a time in your life when you felt under siege? What was that like for you?

In the sermon there were 3 keys discussed to help us break free - honest assessment, hopeful outlook, and a bold move to face the problem.

- 2) How can we make an honest assessment when we are stuck? What role do others close to us play in helping us see the truth of a situation? (Remember: A turning point for the king to really understand how bad things were was when someone else who was in it with him pointed out what was really going on). Have you ever had to speak up in someone else's life like that? Has anyone ever done that for you?
- 3) The King struggled with feeling helpless and defeated, he blamed God for the problem, and when hope was offered he couldn't believe that God would help. Have you ever struggled with any of those feelings? How can we find a hopeful outlook when we are stuck in a bad situation? What is our hope based upon?
- 4) The 4 lepers show up in the story, and reach a big decision. They are willing to go face the real enemy, the real problem. They are tired of sitting around in the same situation waiting for the inevitable. Why does it take courage to make a bold move to seek change? What are some ways we can do that when we are in need? (remember: the lepers weren't alone, they went together, and God was helping them - even when they didn't realize it!)
- 5) How can we find comfort in how Jesus treated the leper found in Mark 1:40-42. How does Jesus treat us when we are stuck, in trouble, and in need of help? In this story Jesus is filled with compassion and unafraid of touching the lepers uncleanness. Do you ever struggle with seeing Jesus this way? Do you think He is lovingly ready and willing to help you?
- 6) The story closes with the lepers realizing they should be sharing this good news with others. How can we share our victories with others in need? What does that look like? How can we bring hope to people who are feeling hopeless?