

ELISHA WEEK FOUR—SALVATION (EVEN UNDER SIEGE)

2 Kings 6:24-7:20

Introduction

The narrative of the one-sided conflict is further recounted in 6:24–29, where instead of launching raids, the Syrian king opts to lay siege to Samaria. The siege proves to be highly effective, resulting in dreadful conditions in Israel, with even instances of cannibalism. At this moment, the nameless Israelite king turns against both Yahweh and Elisha, who speaks on his behalf. When Yahweh assures his people through Elisha that the siege will be lifted soon and everything will return to normal, the king's right-hand man derides the prophet and the deity he serves (7:1–2).

Four lepers facing desperation decide to risk their odds with the Syrians in 7:3. When they arrive at the Syrian camp, they find that Yahweh has caused the army to flee. Initially, the lepers indulge in the left-behind provisions, but they soon recognize the importance of sharing this valuable information, which reaches the king through word of mouth. Despite skepticism and the deployment of a search party, the news is ultimately confirmed, and the people rush to collect the Syrian riches. The writer emphasizes that this occurs exactly as Yahweh had predicted (7:16). In the commotion, the king's doubtful servant is crushed, fulfilling Yahweh's prophecy and providing additional evidence of his influence. Even when his people abandon him, God will not abandon them. God brings SALVATION (EVEN UNDER SIEGE), and that is good news worth sharing.

Outline

The camouflage of religious sackcloth will not hide a sinful heart from God.

Sitting and waiting on the Lord while suffering is safer than unbelief.

Doubting God and blaming him for sin's paycheck won't change the wages.

Salvation changes everything for the soul under siege.

Salvation is meant to be shared.

Application

Have you been saved by Jesus, or are you using religious camouflage?

Do you understand that God punishes those who reject him?

Are you doing what's right and sharing the good news?

Questions

1. The king of Samaria blamed God and Elisha for the disaster that had befallen the kingdom (2 Kings 6:33). He planned to kill Elisha. What should his response have been?
2. God's rule over history is shown in the fulfillment of the words of the prophets. What promises of God bring you comfort in difficult times?
3. The animosity of a wicked world is directed against God and against those who announce his word. Have you had the opportunity to share in the sufferings of Christ (Rom. 8:17–18; Phil. 3:10; 1 Peter 4:13)? When and how—or why not?
4. The officer of the king doubted the word of the prophet, and his doom was sealed because of it. The Bible is the word of God to us today. What should our attitude toward it be?
5. We looked briefly at the delusion and transitoriness of riches, against which this passage warns. Are there subtle areas in your life where you have begun to believe the lie that there is salvation in earthly wealth? How might you need to change?

Blaming God while arguing contracts with cannibals is

Outward appearances don't change internal realities.

Jesus came to rescue souls under siege from sin, Satan, and death.

Sitting lepers and city savages