

THE LEPERS FIND FOOD

II Kings 7:1-20.

LESSON 74 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "I will put my trust in him" (Hebrews 2:13).

BIBLE TEXT

II Kings 7:1-20

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

2 Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

3 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

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

9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

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

13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.

17 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and

the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

18 And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

NOTE

Great Famines

We who live in Africa should give thanks to God with all our hearts for protecting our countries during the war. Today we have plenty of food and clothing while in many other countries people are hungry and cold. Thousands of little children lost their parents during the war; some of the fathers and mothers were killed by bombs and many of the parents were carried away from their children. Today thousands of those children have no real home, and very little food, and not enough clothing to keep warm. Children in Africa who have good homes and Christian parents should never forget to thank God for His goodness to them and pray that God will take care of the poor children in other countries and that they, too, may learn to love and obey Him. They have been sent some food and clothing, but still there may not be very much for each one of them. They need much help from God in every way.

Starving People

We read in the Bible about a country where there was a war, and the people were starving. The Israelites – God’s chosen people – had forgotten how good God had been to them when they were hungry and thirsty and in great danger. Instead of loving God for His kindness to them they had turned away from Him and were worshiping idols who could not hear nor see nor help them in any way. It must have grieved God very much to see people so unthankful.

City Walls

In those days people built big walls around their cities to keep out the armies that might come to fight them and perhaps carry them away. The gates to the cities were locked at night, and there was always a gatekeeper. The Israelites were inside such a city – one that had high walls and closed gates so that no one could get into the city or out of it.

One day a wicked king brought a great army to fight against the people that God had been so kind to – the Israelites. The army could not get into the city. They stayed so long outside the walls trying to get in that the people inside the city had eaten all the food they had and were now becoming very hungry.

The Lepers

Four lepers were outside the closed city and they, too, were very much in need of food. They decided to risk going to the camp of the enemy to get some food. They said that perhaps the enemy would kill them if they went there but they would starve if they did not go, and they said, “Why sit we here until we die?” So they went while it was not very light; and one can imagine their great surprise when they came to the camp and found no one there. The Lord had caused the enemy’s army outside the city to hear the sound of many chariots and horses as though a big army were coming. The enemy soldiers became frightened and ran away as fast as they could, leaving their food in the tents. So the lepers went in and took all the food they wanted, and the gold and the silver. They must have been very glad that they had come to the enemy’s camp. We believe it was God’s way of helping His people in the city.

Unselfishness

The lepers did not forget the people in the city who were starving. Sometimes people who have plenty to eat and to drink and to wear forget about those who are poor and needy, but the lepers did not. They said: “We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king’s household” (II Kings 7:9).

The lepers went to the city gate and called the gatekeeper and told him what they had seen – that the enemy had gone away and left much food in their tents. The gatekeeper told the king, but he evidently thought it was too good to be true. He said it was a trick that the enemy was playing on them. He thought they were perhaps hiding, and if the people came out of the city the enemy would catch them and get into the city. But when he sent messengers out to look they saw that what the lepers said was true. Then the gates were opened and the people were able to go outside the city and get the food. How thankful they must have been to the lepers!

The poor lepers had done a good deed in not being selfish. God is never pleased with people who want to keep all the good things for themselves. God is good to everyone, and he wants all to be kind to one another and share their blessings with others.

“Unclean”

People who had leprosy were not permitted to live with the rest of the people. They were kept outside the cities and by themselves. If they came near other people they were expected to say “Unclean,” so that people would keep from touching them. They must have had a sad life away from their homes, and out where they had a hard time finding food to eat.

The Bible tells us about many lepers. Jesus was not afraid to touch them and heal them. At one time ten lepers came to Jesus and he healed them all. Jesus still heals the lepers who believe His Word and look to Him for help. Ten lepers who have been healed through the prayers of God’s people have written to tell us about it. There is no disease too hard for God to heal. He can heal the leper’s body and soul. The lepers feel that nobody loves them and nobody wants them, but when they hear that Jesus loves them and will make them clean and well and ready to live in a beautiful place with other people, it makes them very happy. Everyone should pray that Jesus will save all the lepers in the world, and heal them as he did when he was here on earth.

QUESTIONS

1. Tell what the lepers found in the camp of the Syrians. II Kings 7:6-8.
2. To whom did the lepers tell what they had found? II Kings 7:10.
3. Did the king believe the story? II Kings 7:12.
4. Did Jesus heal lepers when He was here on earth? Luke 17:11-19.
5. Is Jesus’ power the same today? Hebrews 13:8.

LESSON RESOURCES

TITLE

THE LEPERS FIND FOOD

Lesson 74

II Kings 7:1-20

A Child's Thanksgiving

WATCH AND PRAY 37

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A Child's Thanksgiving

We sing the praise of God above

For all His goodness and His love

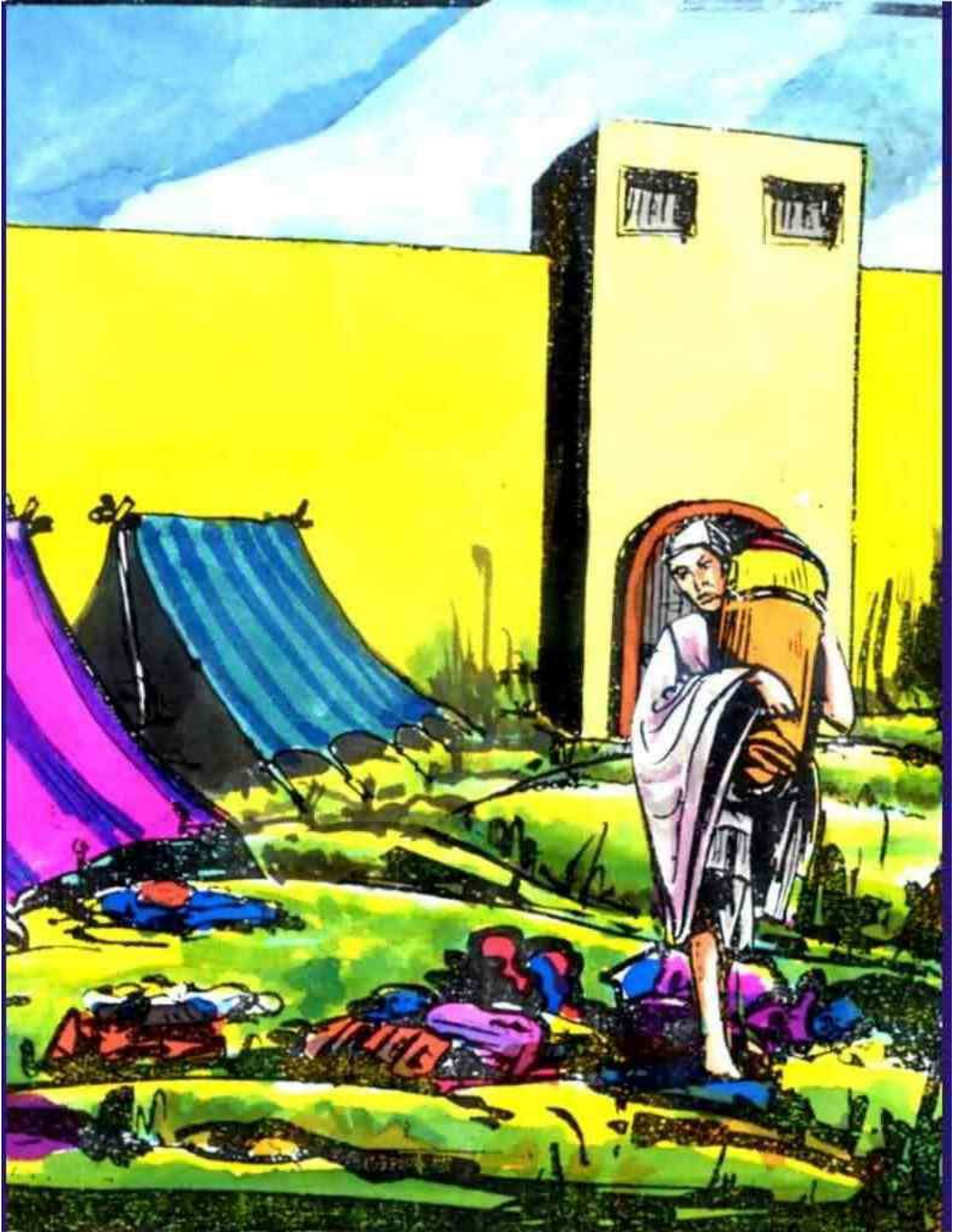
He sends all good things unto us

He feeds and clothes and houses us

PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3

