

# WINDOWS IN HEAVEN

BIBLE TEXT : II Kings 6:24-33; 7:1-20; 8:1-15.

LESSON 316 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25).

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### **2 Kings 6:24-33**

<sup>24</sup> And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

<sup>25</sup> And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was *sold* for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five *pieces* of silver.

<sup>26</sup> And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king.

<sup>27</sup> And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?

<sup>28</sup> And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow.

<sup>29</sup> So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.

<sup>30</sup> And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh.

<sup>31</sup> Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

<sup>32</sup> But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and *the king* sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: *is* not the sound of his master's feet behind him?

<sup>33</sup> And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil *is* of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?

### **2 Kings 7:1-20**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **Samaria**

Jehoram, the king of Israel, lived in the city of Samaria. He was the king of the northern kingdom which was made up of ten tribes of the Children of Israel. Samaria, the capital, was built upon a hill (I Kings 16:23, 24). Such a location would be an advantage against any enemy because the guards would be able to sight anyone from a distance.

In the days of Ahab; Ben-hadad, king of Syria, had gathered his armies in war against Samaria (I Kings 20:1). There were 32 kings to help Ben-hadad. God helped the Children of Israel when they went to battle against the enemy. Many Syrians were slain, but Ben-hadad, the king, escaped.

Ahab had the opportunity of destroying Ben-hadad, an enemy of God and of His people. Instead, Ahab made a covenant with Ben-hadad and permitted him to return to his home. God was not pleased to have Ahab allow the enemy to escape. Ahab was told that both he and his people would suffer because of his failure. (See Lesson 299).

#### **Famine**

The king of Syria came again to war against the Children of Israel. In a previous lesson we studied how God protected and delivered His prophet when the Syrian armies surrounded the town in which Elisha was staying. They failed to capture Elisha because God was with him.

Ben-hadad, king of Syria, decided to try again to capture the city of Samaria. His scheme was to surround the hill, cutting off all the supplies and causing a famine in the city. In those days, all the people lived in the city and brought in the food from their farms. When no one could leave or enter the city because of the enemy, the food supply became less and less. Finally there was a famine in Samaria. There was nothing to eat but that which was considered unclean for food, and the price charged for that was more than many people could pay. The Israelites were desperate for food, and it seemed that they would starve to death.

#### **A Promise**

Jehoram, king of Israel, blamed God for this trouble. We do not read that Jehoram asked the prophet to pray or that the king called all the people to prayer. No doubt God would have helped them sooner if they had called upon Him and prayed. Jehoram decided to take some action rather than to wait upon God to deliver them. He threatened to kill God's prophet, but that did not frighten Elisha. He prophesied, saying, "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." In one day there would be such a changed – from hunger to plenty! From high prices for unclean food to low prices for the finest foods! How could such things be?

#### **Doubt**

People today sometimes become impatient rather than pray and continue to trust God. They fail to receive the blessing because they give up too soon. The Psalmist David said, "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to

<sup>3</sup> 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?

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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*.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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*.

<sup>11</sup> And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> They took therefore two chariot horses;

pass" (Psalm 37:5). There are other people who do not receive the blessings of the Lord because they doubt, like the king's helper. He did not believe the words of Elisha when he said that the Lord had promised an abundance of food the next day. The king's helper asked, "Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" Because of his unbelief, he was told that he would see the food but he would not eat any of it. God could have made windows in heaven through which the food supply could have been sent. But that was not the way God used to provide for His people at this time.

### **In Need**

There were four lepers who, according to the Law, had to live outside the city (Leviticus 13:46). They usually received their food from those who took it to the city. Since the city gates remained closed and none were allowed to go in and out, the lepers were in need of food. They talked things over to decide what to do. To remain where they were meant death. To go into the city where there was a famine would mean death, too. If they went to the camp of the Syrians, they might be killed, but they had one hope — the Syrians might spare them. They decided to visit the camp of the Syrian armies.

### **One Hope**

In the twilight as the lepers approached the edge of the enemy's camp, they could see no man, not even a sentry. They entered a tent. Still no one was to be seen, so the lepers ate the food that was there because they were hungry. They went from tent to tent but the camp was empty except for food and valuables.

### **God's Way**

This was God's way of providing for the city of Samaria. The Lord had caused the soldiers in the Syrian camp to hear a noise, which sounded like approaching armies. They thought they heard many chariots, many horses, and a great army. The Syrians then said that the king of Israel must have hired armies to fight against them. They were frightened and fled for their lives. It would soon be dark and they dared not wait to gather their belongings together. They all fled from the camp, leaving their tents, horses, supplies, and valuables. They hurried away, leaving the camp as it was. The four lepers came and found the camp deserted.

### **An Abundance**

When they had eaten, and had hidden for themselves some of the clothing and money, they remembered the hungry people in the city. The lepers said: "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." To the city gate they went, to tell what they had found.

### **Leprosy and Sin**

When we studied about leprosy before, we learned that leprosy is sometimes spoken of as a type of sin. How do these four lepers in our lesson compare with sinners? The lepers realised that they were in need and that they would die if they stayed there. They said, "Why sit we here until we die?" They had one hope — the Syrians might spare them. The lepers did more than just talk about it; they showed some action. A sinner must realise his lost and undone condition before God. He must realise that he is in need, and to remain in that condition will mean death. A sinner has only one hope — the Blood of Jesus that can wash away his sins. To know these things is not enough. One must act. He must draw near to God and seek His face. There are many people in the world who know that they are not right before God, and they also know of salvation. If they continue in that condition, they will not be saved.

and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> 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:

<sup>19</sup> 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.

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

### **2 Kings 8:1-15**

<sup>1</sup> Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

<sup>2</sup> And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

<sup>3</sup> And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

<sup>4</sup> And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

<sup>5</sup> And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

<sup>6</sup> And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that *was* hers, and all the fruits of the field since the

What kind of person are you? Are you saved? or are you in need of God's saving grace? If you are like the four lepers in our lesson, why not say with them, "Why sit we here until we die?" Why not move toward your only hope, which is Jesus?

### **Spreading the Good News**

After a person has been saved, and has feasted on spiritual food, he has a desire in his heart to tell others. There is an abundance of blessings which he wants to share with those who are in spiritual need. There are many ways in which a person can spread the Gospel. He will want to give his testimony, to tell what God has done for him. He will want to invite others to attend church and Sunday School. He can spread the good news of salvation by handing out religious papers. No doubt you can name some other ways in which a person can tell others about Jesus. Are you doing any of these things to help others find the Lord? Shame on those who have to admit with the lepers; "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace"!

### **Doubtful**

The report of the lepers was taken to the king. He arose in the night and talked with his servants. He thought this was a trick of the enemy, that they had planned an ambush. Sometimes a plan like that was made. But did the king forget Elisha's words? Apparently he did not have the faith to believe there would be an abundance of food. One of the servants suggested that soldiers be sent to the camp of the enemy to see what would happen. So the king sent some men, saying, "Go and see."

Sometimes when people hear about the Gospel, the report sounds too good to be true. They seem a little doubtful, even though God has given the promises in the Bible. When they prove God for themselves, they find an abundance of good things, including victory over the enemy of their soul.

### **A True Report**

The king's messengers returned and reported that they had found the way "full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste." Then the people went to the Syrian camp. There they found food, clothing, and money as it was reported. Now there was an abundance of food in Samaria. It was sold at a very low price, "according to the word of the LORD."

### **Faith and Doubt**

The king's helper was put in charge of the gate. As the people hurried through the gate he was trodden upon and he died. This man, who did not believe the promise of God, suffered death. The others enjoyed the blessings of the Lord, for He cares for His people. God does not always provide for His people in this manner. Sometimes he sends them to another place, as Elijah was sent to the brook in the time of drought. (See Lesson 296.) The Shunammite's son was raised from the dead by the prayer of Elisha. (See Lesson 310.) Later, during a seven-year famine, she was sent into the land of the Philistines. God not only provided for her in that way but God also had restored to her the property she had left. More than that, there was restored to her "all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land."

### **True Promises**

God does provide for His people. David, the Psalmist, said, "O taste and see that the LORD is good: . . . they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing" (Psalm 34:8-10). As God's promise of blessing is sure, so is His promise of judgment.

Did you ever stop to wonder what happened to Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, who was an enemy of God and His people? He



day that she left the land, even until now.

<sup>7</sup> And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.

<sup>8</sup> And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

<sup>9</sup> So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

<sup>10</sup> And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

<sup>11</sup> And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

<sup>12</sup> And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

<sup>13</sup> And Hazael said, But what, *is* thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou *shalt be* king over Syria.

<sup>14</sup> So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me *that* thou shouldest surely recover.

<sup>15</sup> And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped *it* in water, and spread *it* on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

was slain by a man who wanted his kingdom. He was betrayed by a friend whom he trusted. In the Book of Proverbs we read, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD" (Proverbs 29:25, 26). Every person has a choice — either he may trust God or he may trust men. In whom have you put your trust?

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Who lived in the city of Samaria?
2. Who was Ben-hadad?
3. How did he try to capture Samaria?
4. How severe was the famine?
5. Why did the man ask if God would make windows in Heaven?
6. Why did the four lepers go to the camp of the Syrians?
7. In what ways do these lepers compare with sinners?
8. How did God provide for His people?
9. What happened to the man who doubted the words of Elisha?
10. Why was Ben-hadad slain?