

Four Lepers

2 Kings 6:24 – 7:20

by Don Falkos

copyright 2017 Donald Falkos Storytelling LLC

King Ben-Hadad of Aram mobilized his entire army and laid siege to Samaria, the capital of Israel. Soon there was a terrible shortage of food. People were starving.

As Jehoram king of Israel walked on Samaria's wall a woman cried out to him, "Help me! A woman said to me, 'Today let's eat your son. Tomorrow we'll eat mine.' So we cooked my son and ate him. But now she refuses to give up her son." Jehoram was horrified and tore his robe in grief. He blamed Elisha for this dreadful state of affairs.

Jehoram went to Elisha with one of his officers. He intended to have the prophet executed. But Elisha said, "Tomorrow there will be a surplus of food in Samaria." Jehoram's officer mocked him in disbelief. So Elisha told him, "You will see this surplus, but you will not eat any of it."

Meanwhile the Lord caused the Arameans to hear a loud noise like that of a massive approaching army. In fear they abandoned everything and fled. At dusk four lepers, desperate to survive, went to the Aramean camp to beg for food. They found it deserted. They ate and drank their fill. They gathered up food and treasures, as much as they could carry. Then they went back into the city to report their find.

The king placed his officer, the one who had insulted Elisha, in charge of the city gate. But there was such a mad rush of people he was trampled to death. By morning the Aramean camp had been plundered and Samaria had an abundance of food. But, since he was dead, the officer did not eat any of it, just as Elisha had said.