

2 Kings 7

Verses 1- 4

Then Elisha said, “Listen to the word of the Lord; this is what the Lord says: ‘About this time tomorrow a measure of fine flour *will be sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.’” ² The royal officer on whose hand the king was leaning responded to the man of God and said, “Even if the Lord were to make windows in heaven, could this thing happen?” Then he said, “Behold, you are going to see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.” ³ Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die? ⁴ If we say, ‘We will enter the city,’ then the famine is in the city and we will die there; but if we sit here, we will also die. Now then come, and let’s go over to the camp of the Arameans. If they spare us, we will live; and if they kill us, then we will die.”

Then Elisha said, “Listen to the word of the Lord; this is what the Lord says: ‘About this time tomorrow a measure of fine flour *will be sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria

The famine in Samaria that caused woman to eat their own children would be over in 24 hours.

² The royal officer on whose hand the king was leaning responded to the man of God and said, “Even if the Lord were to make windows in heaven, could this thing happen?” Then he said, “Behold, you are going to see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.”

The royal officer would have been wise to remain silent especially in the presence of a prophet that was well known for doing great miracles.

³ Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die?”

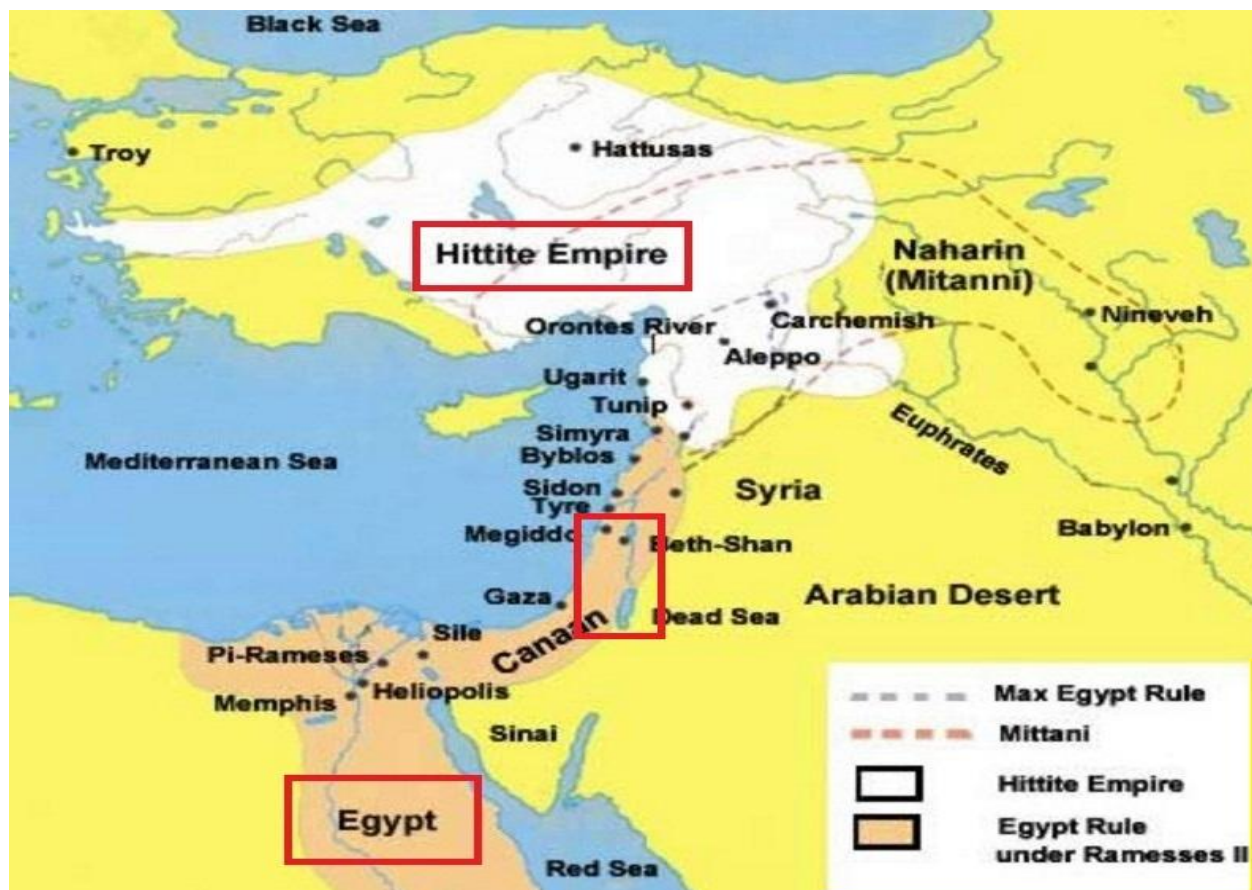
The lepers were very practical in their thinking. The only possible way of saving their lives was by going to the camp of the Syrians.

Verses 5 - 7

⁵ So they got up at twilight to go to the camp of the Arameans; when they came to the outskirts of the camp of the Arameans, behold, there was no one there. ⁶ For the Lord had made the army of the Arameans hear a sound of chariots, a sound of horses, *that is*, the sound of a great army; and they said to one another, “Behold, the king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians against us, to attack us!” ⁷ So they got up and fled at twilight, and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—*indeed* the camp *itself*, just as it was; and they fled for their lives.

⁶ For the Lord had made the army of the Arameans hear a sound of chariots, a sound of horses, *that is*, the sound of a great army; and they said to one another, “Behold, the king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians against us, to attack us!”

See Map 705 Nations to the North & South



Hiring foreign nations to help fight a war was a common tactic at that time.

⁷ So they got up and fled at twilight, and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—*indeed* the camp *itself*, just as it was; and they fled for their lives.

God ended the siege of Samaria without one soldier on either side being killed and he did it by making the Syrians hear a sound of chariots, horses and a great army. It's interesting to consider all the different approaches that God has used to defeat the various enemies of Israel throughout their history.

Verses 8 -11

⁸ When these men with leprosy came to the outskirts of the camp, they entered one tent and ate and drank, and carried from there silver, gold, and clothes, and they went and hid *them*; then they returned and entered another tent, and carried *valuables* from there *also*, and went and hid *them*. ⁹ Then they said to one another, “We are not doing the right thing. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent *about it*; if we wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now then come, let’s go and inform the king’s household.” ¹⁰ So they came and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, saying, “We came to the camp of the Arameans, and behold, there was no one there, nor a human voice; only the horses tied and the donkeys tied, and the tents just as they were.” ¹¹ And the gatekeepers called and announced *it* inside the king’s house.

⁹ Then they said to one another, “We are not doing the right thing. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent *about it*; if we wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now then come, let’s go and inform the king’s household.”

The lepers had been saved from starvation and a certain death but the people in the city were still without hope. To delay sharing the good news would be a sin deserving of a severe punishment.

¹⁰ So they came and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, saying, “We came to the camp of the Arameans, and behold, there was no one there, nor a human voice; only the horses tied and the donkeys tied, and the tents just as they were.”

The men of this army were so frightened by what they heard that they even left their horses behind (the quickest means of escape).

Verses 12-15

¹² Then the king got up in the night and said to his servants, “I will now tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry; so they have left the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, ‘When they come out of the city, we will capture them alive and get into the city.’” ¹³ One of his servants responded and said, “Please, have some *men* take five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city. Behold, they *will be in any case* like all the multitude of Israel who are left in it; behold, they *will be* like all the multitude of Israel who have *already* perished, so let us send *them* and see.” ¹⁴ Therefore they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent *them* after the army of the Arameans, saying, “Go and see.” ¹⁵ They went after them to the Jordan, and behold, all the way was full of clothes and equipment which the Arameans had thrown away when they fled in a hurry. Then the messengers returned and informed the king.

¹² Then the king got up in the night and said to his servants, “I will now tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry; so they have left the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, ‘When they come out of the city, we will capture them alive and get into the city.’”

This should have been a time of great rejoicing but the king could only see a skillful trap being set by the enemy.

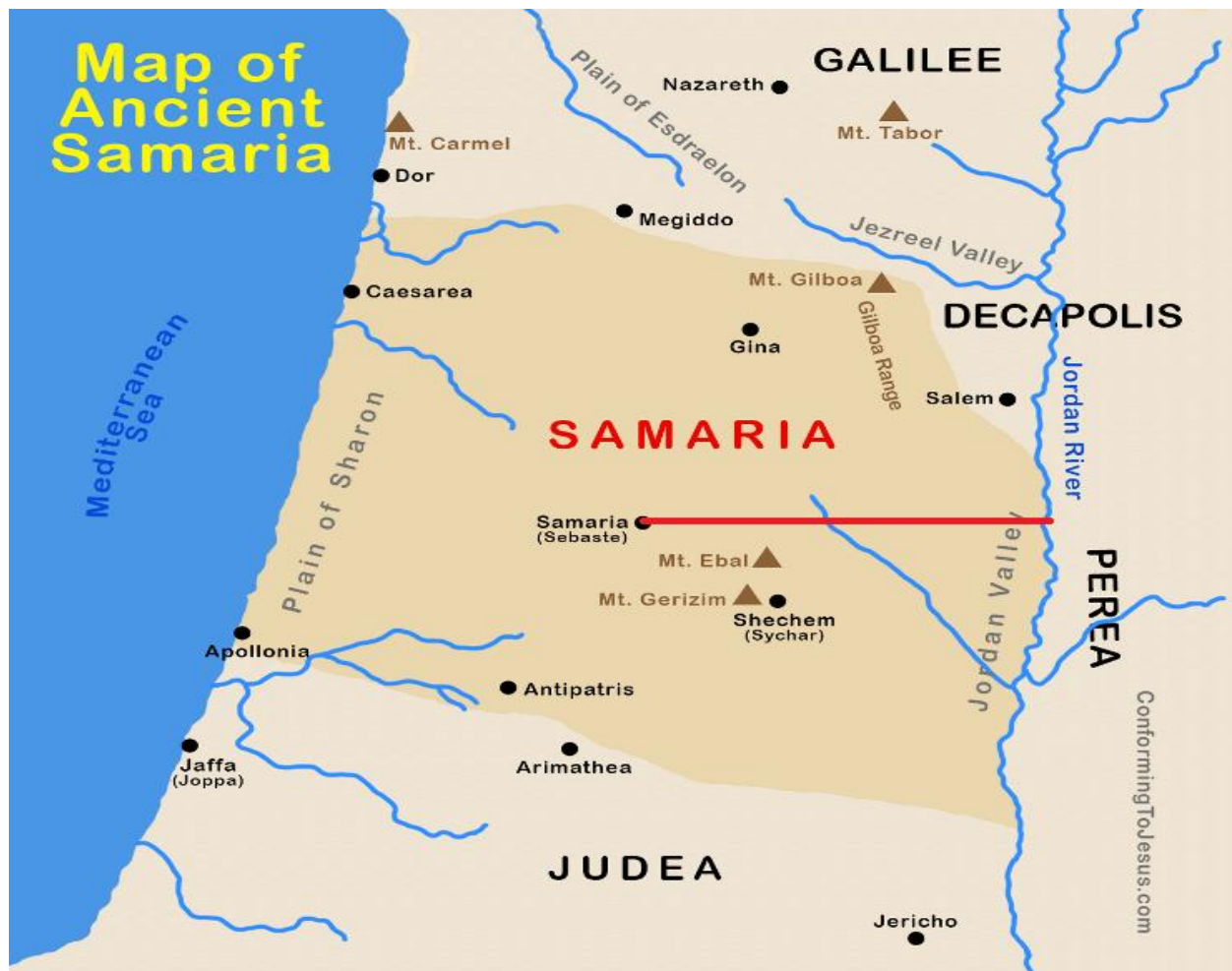
¹⁴ Therefore they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent *them* after the army of the Arameans, saying, “Go and see.”

Despite the terrible famine in the city there were some horses that remained. These would have been saved in order to provide a means for the king and a few of his body guards to attempt an escape when the city was about to be taken over.

¹⁵ They went after them to the Jordan, and behold, all the way was full of clothes and equipment which the Arameans had thrown away when they fled in a hurry. Then the messengers returned and informed the king.

We don't know how men made up this detachment of the Syrian army, but it must have been substantial considering the fact that it left a trail of items over an area of 15 miles.

See Map 710



Verses 16-20

¹⁶ So the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. Then a measure of fine flour *was sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in accordance with the word of the Lord. ¹⁷ Now the king appointed the royal officer on whose hand he leaned to be in charge of the gate; but the people trampled on him at the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him. ¹⁸ So it happened just 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, will be *sold* about this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria.” ¹⁹ *At that time* the royal officer had responded to the man of God and said, “Now even if the Lord were to make windows in heaven, could such a thing as this happen?” And he had said, “Behold, you are going to see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.” ²⁰ And this is what happened to him, for the people trampled on him at the gate and he died.

¹⁸ So it happened just 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, will be sold about this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria.” ¹⁹ *At that time* the royal officer had responded to the man of God and said, “Now even if the Lord were to make windows in heaven, could such a thing as this happen?” And he had said, “Behold, you are going to see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.” ²⁰ And this is what happened to him, for the people trampled on him at the gate and he died.

The two prophecies that were made by Elisha in verses 1& 2 of this chapter came true within 24 hours.

1. The famine turned into an overabundance as Elisha had predicted.
2. The royal officer died when the people of the city heard the good news and made a mad dash for the city gate.