

Kings and Prophets 14-05-23a

This is Friday, the 23rd of May, 2014. We are in the Book of Second Kings and we pick up tonight at the, toward the closing portion of chapter seven. You remember the situation where Samaria was under siege and you've got kings walking on walls.

You've got ladies boiling babies. You've got lepers running to and fro. It's pretty, pretty exciting section.

We'll take a moment as is our custom to focus our concentration, dedicate our time of fellowship and exploration of God's word and try to make sure that the time that we spend here will be an investment in our eternal future. Shall we pray? Father, how thankful we are each week as we come before your throne at this time and recognize the grace and the provision and the, the watch care that you have exercised in our lives in the preceding days. We thank you for our fellowship and the encouragement and the motivation that it provides for us.

Thank you for each one that has chosen to spend time this evening when there are many other options to focus on the truth of your word to seek a better understanding to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus and to take the truth of your word and internalize it and have it make a difference in the way we think and the way we act in the time that remains to us in this life. We thank you for this passage. We ask your blessing on us as we study together.

We ask it in Jesus name. Amen. Well, here we are in the Northern kingdom capital of Samaria, Samaria.

The gates are closed. The Syrian army has been besieging outside for many weeks. The people inside have slowly starved and as the King Joram, who is a rascal of the first water, uh, got all of the worst features of his father and his mother, Ahab and Jezebel.

Um, and has had repeated opportunities to benefit from and respond to the word of God communicated by the prophet of God specifically to him, uh, finds himself at his wits end. And after he hears about this woman and her bargain with a second woman to boil one lady's baby the first day and the second one today. But today the lady has hidden the baby and won't bring it out so that they can eat it.

He tears his clothing, revealing the sackcloth underneath and he decides that it is the Lord's fault. And here in chapter six, verse 31 he says, God do so to me and more also if the head of Elisha, the son of Shabbat remains on him today. But Elisha was sitting in his house and the elders were sitting with him and the King sent a man ahead of him.

But before the messenger came, he said to the elders, do you see how this son of a murderer has sent someone to take away my head? Elisha continues. Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, hold him fast at the door is not the sound of his master's feet behind him. Elisha does not want to return a message at secondhand.

He wants King Joram to hear this at firsthand. So he says, shut the door. That'll stop the guy.

This is number three. You remember the guy on whom the King leans. So number three is stymied by the closed door.

It reminds you of the people trying to get into lots home and it just for whatever reason, the closed door is just a complete puzzle. And so he's there, can't get in. The King soon follows while he was still talking with them.

There was the messenger coming down to him. And then the King said, surely this calamity is from the Lord. Why should I wait for the Lord any longer? Then, and it just continues.

Of course, there's no chapter break to chapter seven in the original, but I want you to notice, um, the repetition in verse 33 of chapter six and the first couple and the first verse of chapter seven. This calamity is from whom? The Lord. Why should I wait for who any longer? The Lord.

And what does Elisha say? Hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord. Tomorrow about this time, the prices are going to change.

These ridiculously inflationary prices are going to go away and it will return to near normal. These are still kind of high prices for flour and barley, but nothing like the ridiculously impossible and unobtainable, uh, situation that pertains at that hour. This by the way is near the, near the close of the day.

Uh, it's not, this is in the afternoon that this is taking place. And we know this from several clues, including the fact that the elders have been sitting at Elisha's house for some time. Uh, the women, uh, the woman who is expecting a baby supper, uh, this, this would have been the one main meal of the day, which would have been toward the afternoon, early evening, that, that, that the bargain was broken, so to speak.

And the King hears this on the wall. So all of this is in the late afternoon. Um, and the officer on whose hand the King leaned, this is number three, there answered the man of God and said, look, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, could this thing be? And he's basically saying you would need a miracle on the order of the flood where the windows of heaven were opened and water poured out, uh, for this to happen.

And this, this is a mocking and derisive comment. And there's a couple of things to note here, uh, that, that we didn't really focus on last time, but what is the attitude of King Joram toward the Lord and the word of the Lord? Despite his previous experiences, he's got no use for God or the things of God. And you notice that the officer on whom the King leans shares this attitude.

Was this cause and effect? Did the guy come to this by association or did he reach his position of favor because of that shared attitude, whatever it is, he and the King have a similar attitude toward God and the things of God. What's interesting is that the fate that Elijah pronounces here on number three isn't shared by the King. The King has come with murderous intent to

take the head of the prophet off.

This guy just makes a derisive comment about the word of the Lord, right? Yet the officer, number three is going to pay with his life for this attitude and the King isn't. Does, does that seem at all out of balance? You got one guy that wants to kill the prophet and is making every effort to take Elisha's head off. You've got another guy that makes a smirking remark.

The guy making the smirking remark is going to die within 24 hours. The King is not. Why is that? Well, as we, as we go forward, hopefully the answer to that question will become clear.

You shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it. Elisha says in verse two. So then we have the story that we sort of skimmed over last time, beginning in verse three.

And this, this is a zoom. Anytime the focus of scripture zooms in, you, you figure there's a reason. So we have these four lepers and we surmised last time that like some of the things with Elisha, this is a doubling of the two lepers from the last time that we saw a leper story, which is Naaman the Syrian and Gehazi, the officer on whom the prophet leans, if you will, you've got sort of a parallel with Gehazi being the right hand man for the prophet Elisha and his access and his potential for learning and being to Elisha, what he could have been the third generation.

Elisha was the servant and poured waters on the hands of Elijah and Gehazi is in a position to be, you know, like the third generation prophet. But there is the potential either to learn from and emulate the one who leans on you for support or not. And Gehazi, even though he's in this favored and privileged position, didn't learn.

And in the Naaman episode, you saw that despite all of this advantage who in Israel has the potential to learn more about God and the plan and purpose of God. I mean, wouldn't it be cool in that day to be Gehazi to be the daily, this is the disciples with the Lord Jesus. You know, people just covet that opportunity.

Gehazi had it and he wasted it. It was lost on him and he ends up being a leper for life and brings a curse down on his household. And you think this is a responsibility that comes.

Now think about this. And this is our first point this evening. The first thing to think about as we kind of review what we've seen in recent sections of this book, exposure to the word of the Lord creates responsibility, doesn't it? You remember at the beginning of this book, just flip back, keep your finger here in chapter six, but go back to the beginning.

Remember Ahaziah falling through the lattice and he wondered if he would live or die. And so he sends to the priests of Beelzebub over in Ekron to find out if he's going to live or die, which is a denigration of and disregard for God and the presence of God and the man of God in Israel. You remember that? And what happened? When Elijah the Tishbite heard about that, the word of the Lord went to Ahaziah and he wasn't even looking for the word of the Lord, but he got it.

Why? He's the king. He's the king. This is the point of contact between God and the nation.

When God's man, when God's prophet is going to speak, he's prophesying to the king because the king is the authority. This has application. Uh, for example, in families, who is the accountable person in a family? It's the husband.

It's the father. It's the husband in a marriage. It's the father in a family.

He's, he's a point of contact. And God expects that the person holding that position of authority is going to be accountable. And many times God is going to communicate to that authority, not only through his word, but he will draw attention to his word through circumstances.

And sometimes other people in the marriage or in the family are going to suffer to draw the attention of the accountable person to their responsibilities. Uh, just bear that in mind. What happened when, uh, the word of the Lord came in chapter three, when Elisha is accompanying the kings as they go around to, uh, attack the king of Edom, you remember that? Uh, and there is a prophecy of deliverance that preserves the kings and they are privy to that prophecy and they are accountable for what they do with that prophecy.

And what is the purpose of it? Why does God offer them? Is it just, well, we sure don't want you to have Edom rebelling against you. We sure don't want them to not be sending the tribute they should send. Is God preserving a revenue stream? What is God doing in this entire chapter three episode? This is a drumstick on the helmet of the kings, right? God is in his heaven.

God is the God of Israel. God is the God of Judah. Pay attention when he speaks and this word goes to the kings and they represent the nation.

They stand in for the nation. They are the point of contact for the nation. Now at this point, two nations, the Northern and Southern kingdoms.

But isn't it interesting that when they go on this campaign, Elisha is in the train. He's in the, he's in the group, the army and it's, it's supply train that goes all the way around the Southern end of the salt sea around to Edom. Elisha is there.

He is present. The word of God unasked uninvited is there and is available and is proclaimed and its proclamation makes those kings accountable. You remember Elisha and the, the widow's oil and the, the Shunammite son in that chapter and then you have the pot of stew and the, the, uh, and this is important for what's coming up.

Just since you're here, look at four 38 after the Shunammite episode where she has a son, the son gets sick and dies and he is raised. And the, the pertinent part of that whole long story for my purposes this evening is to remind you that when Elisha sends the staff ahead with Ghazi and, and the staff is laid on the child, it doesn't help. And the woman understands this and she says, no, you're coming with me and she grabs Elisha by the necktie and brings him back with her and it is his presence and he stretches himself out on the child.

It is his presence. Why? It's not the symbol of authority. It's not the staff that represents Elisha's office.

It is his presence. It's his personal communication. He is God's mouthpiece and it is that proximity that makes the difference.

He has to be there. He was there in chapter three to speak to the Kings and the water comes and the sight of the water fools the Edomites. Remember that? They think it's blood and it's all very ironic because Edom, Adam, red blood, all of these things, you know, the land of redness, the land of Esau, the red redness and they think they see blood and they, they get spooked and they run away.

And, and this is the basis for this great victory. God basically deceives them into thinking things are not as they really are and, and it's the blood that achieves their salvation, so to speak. But Elisha has to be there for this child and the, the representation isn't enough.

If you think of the nation of Israel now, it and not withstanding Zionists and Israelis and everything in the Middle East, God has not yet regathered those people and they will not be delivered. They will not be gathered and delivered until God gathers them and God delivers them. And how are they delivered? Is it the staff of Moses? Is it the books of Moses? Is it the presence of the law? It is not until God's representative, Elisha is present to lay on that nation and bring it back to life, if you will.

It's his presence that is going to achieve the resurrection and deliverance of the nation. There's, there's a foreshadowing there and it is not enough to have the wooden stick, the staff. It's got to be the personal presence.

That's what brings the child back to life. That's what's going to bring the nation of Israel back to life for the millennial kingdom. So the, there's so much woven into this and the Lord Jesus was intimately familiar with this portion of scripture as, as with the rest of the old Testament.

But I think in his humanity, this is how he knew what was going to happen. He knew he would be going away and he knew he would be coming back and he knew that while he was gone, the nation would perish and it would be his return that would restore it. Uh, that, that child was a child of promise.

That son was a son of promise and Elisha has got to come back and make contact with that child. So then, uh, we had in, in chapter five, Naaman's leprosy and you have the, a Gentile being delivered and you notice that there's no direct contact between Elisha and Naaman in the same way that there's no direct contact between the Lord Jesus and the church. it's, he, he left before the church age began.

And we've, we've seen that. Uh, it is his word that is sufficient. Go dip yourself in the Jordan seven times and you'll be clean.

And, and the, the living death of leprosy is, is healed without any face to face confrontation between Elisha and Naaman. And there's, there's a adumbration. There's a foreshadowing of, uh, Christ's relationship to the church in the sense of, of no actual contact.

Then, uh, but, but here's, here's my particular point in, in rehearsing some of these things. The location of Elisha matters where he is matters where Elisha is matters. Knowing where he is matters.

Well, the King of Israel wants to take Elisha's head much as Herod ended up taking John's head. And you remember when he hears about the Lord Jesus preaching and his disciples baptizing, he says, well, this is John back from the dead. You know, the, the head has been replaced somehow.

There's, you know, John is Elijah. The Lord Jesus is who there's, there are so many connections forward to the time of the Lord Jesus and the time that follows here. Well, as we get into chapter seven, here are the word of the Lord.

And then these lepers, the four lepers, uh, why are we sitting here till we die? If we say we will enter the city, the famine is in the city. We shall die there. This is verse four of chapter seven.

And if we sit here, we die also. So come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live.

And if they kill us, we shall only die. So they rose when at twilight, this is a time of day that is going to be emphasized throughout this story. They arose at twilight.

We, we know from clues that was already late afternoon when, when the King heard about the bargain between the women, when he goes to try to take Elisha's head, this is at the, this is at the close of the day. It's getting on to very late afternoon. Now at twilight, the lepers say, let's go.

You've got to keep this in mind. It's important. It's twilight.

They rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. And when they came to the outskirts of the Syrian camp to their surprise, no one was there for the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses. And oddly enough, we have had that.

As I mentioned last time, in the, back in chapter six, uh, Elisha prayed in verse 17 and said, Lord, I pray open my servant's eyes that he may see the Lord opened the eyes of the young man. And what did he see? The mountain was full of what horses and chariots of fire. And this is in fact going to be the means of deliverance for the siege.

It's, it's not the means of deliverance right away. Elisha isn't going to call on the horses and chariots. He's, he's going to, this is all about what you see and what you don't see, right? What

does the servants not see? And then see what do the armies see? And then not see, then they get to Samaria and they don't see.

And then they see. And what does the King in Samaria, King Joram not see? And then see you are responsible for what you see. You are responsible for what you hear.

Edom, the Kings saw the Edomites saw and didn't see here. The Syrians see and don't see the King doesn't see. And sees and there's, there's accountability.

What are the Syrians going to do with this deliverance of their raiding band? Are they going to recognize that there is a God in Israel and leave them alone? Or are they just going to regroup and come back and besiege Samaria? Well, they besiege Samaria. They, they don't benefit. They don't learn from what they don't see.

And then see neither does the King of Samaria benefit and learn from what he doesn't see. And then sees when Elisha shows the power of God to deliver and demonstrates his covenant fidelity. Even when they have been unfaithful, God remains faithful.

He cannot deny himself. Well, again, here in chapter seven, they rose at twilight and went to the camp of the Syrians. But the Syrians, the Lord had caused the army, the Syrians in verse six to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses.

These in my view are the horses and chariots of fire that had been revealed long before to the servant of Elisha to Gehazi. What does Gehazi mean? What does his name mean? The one who sees the one who sees the servant sees and Gehazi is accountable for what he sees. Gehazi is with the prophet Elisha as he delivers the word of the Lord and Gehazi is responsible for what he hears.

He's, he's another instance of the responsibility that the king of Northern Israel has that the king of Judah has in that Edomite situation. But, but the, the Syrians heard this great army and they said to one another, the king of Israel has hired against us, the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us. I mentioned who the Hittites actually are.

This is, this is a group that is to the north of the, I'm sorry, it's the Hittites and the Egyptians. This is not the Mitsrayim. This is the, the Mutserim.

This is another group and what they basically think that they've been pinched, that they've got the Hittites on one side and they've got these Mutserim on the other. And they, they think they've been, been pinched kind of like Joshua. So they arose and fled at twilight.

Notice again in verse seven, the time is important at twilight. They flee at twilight. These guys have been out there all day long at the time when they're expecting to rest.

They have to flee and the darkness is a part of their panic. What happens at twilight? What happens if you're over say 45 or 50 at twilight? What happens to your vision? I can tell you what

happens to my vision at twilight. It gets a lot worse.

I don't need glasses during the day, but I need glasses at twilight and after, because as your, as your vision deteriorates, the light level is important. And it's just like, you know, during the day, bright sunlight, F 16, the aperture is closed down. Your little irises and your vision is sharper.

At night your iris opens and you're down to, you know, your F stop is down to 2.3 or people don't even know what an F stop is anymore. But that's the aperture behind the lens and your eye and a camera work the same. And when you open the aperture, your depth of field and your focus is really fuzzy and very limited.

And this is at twilight. Visibility is getting worse all the time. What they hear panics them and they can't see to confirm otherwise.

If it was broad daylight noon, they would look and say, well, I see no army. Let's send out some scouts. Well, they don't think of sending out scouts.

It's twilight. They say, well, I, you know, unless they're right upon us, we aren't going to see them. And so they think it's a sneak attack.

It's a, it's a surprise at twilight and they flee and they're just shedding armor and weapons and goods and food and stuff along the way they're running for their lives. By the way, when did Gideon attack with his 300 men daylight or darkness? That's why they got lamps and pitchers and, and there's sound involved and all they see are these, they see the lamps, they see the pictures, they hear the noise and the armies panic. Well, God incites this panic at twilight and these guys are running for their lives.

And by the way, they don't panic until twilight. It is at twilight that they panic. And as they are fleeing one edge of the camp, the other edge of the camp, you know, they're, they're not fleeing towards some area.

They're fleeing the back of the camp. They're fleeing out the back and toward the Jordan, which is 25 miles away. It's 25 miles from Samaria to the Jordan.

And these guys are running 25 miles at dusk fleeing for the Jordan. They're wanting to get into the valley so they can go up north. That that's the, that's the route at twilight left their camp intact.

Their tents, their horses, their donkeys fled for their lives. They believe they're going to die. And mortal fear creates a kind of panic where reason doesn't pertain.

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sobriety, self-control, sound mind. God has not given us a spirit of fear. When you're operating in fear, you can't think straight.

A big part of military training is training you to think and to function in the face of that, which in

normal mortals creates fear. Bullets are coming at me. Grenades are going off.

Artillery shells are impacting and creating havoc. I have to think I can't seize up. I can't vapor lock.

I've got to think under pressure. Christian life is learning to think under pressure. Think in spiritual terms under pressure.

These guys are in abject fear. Now watch what happens. So when the lepers came verse eight to the outskirts of the camp, notice they're coming into the outskirts just as the last of the Syrians are leaving the outskirts on the other side.

This all happens at twilight. And you remember the similarity of the word leper and the term Mutraim? That it's virtually the same consonants. It's almost an identical word.

And it's this is this is tongue in cheek. This is you remember the promise of God? One of you will put to flight a thousand. Four lepers are coming in one edge of the camp.

And because of the action of God, the entire army has fled dropping things so they can run faster. Four lepers, you know, in God's sense of humor, have put to flight the entire Syrian army. So, as it were, so they came to the outskirts.

They went into a tent and ate and drank and carried from it silver and gold and clothing. Remember, this this is a picture of the of the booty and the bounty. Remember in the days of David, when they would conquer and take spoils and the wealth.

That Solomon inherited came from victories such as this in the days of David. This is sort of a mock victory where lepers are coming in and taking the spoils. And it's it's this is being played for comedy.

Where is everybody actually inside the city still scrapping around? You know, where's that baby? You know, we're at suppertime. And the lepers, the off-scouring who aren't even allowed in the city where they could go in and joint starve with the king and everybody else are out here feasting and gaining all the bounty they can carry. Ate and drank, carried clothing, gold, silver.

By the way, when's the last time you saw a leper in this account? And what did he have? Remember what he brought back from Naaman, what Gehazi brought back? Changes of clothing. Ingots, remember that it's the same that believe me, there's a connection back. You had two lepers in that story.

You got four lepers here. But these are the days of Elisha. What happened to Gehazi when he glommed on to the clothing and the metal? He became a leper.

These lepers are clothing and all the rest of it. And does anything happen to them? These are the days of Elisha. This is double portion blessing time.

These guys and Gehazi goes wrong in his episode. These guys and think all the way back to Achan. Remember Achan taking spoils and putting them in his tent? And these guys are convicted.

These lepers have got more going on spiritually in their very limited leprous existence than anybody in the city or Gehazi or Achan. They're in a similar situation, but they came back and entered another tent and carried some from there also and went and hid it. How many tents have they entered now? Four lepers.

How many tents? How many, how many spoils have they collected now? Whose days are we in? This is the double portion days of Elisha. Everything happens in pairs. It's the second tent.

Does there need to be a second tent in the story? Would it make any material difference? Yes, it makes material difference because it reminds us we're in this double portion, hey, wake up day where God leads with blessing, not judgment. And these lepers get a double blessing. They get everything in the first tent.

They get everything in the second tent. And there's four of them. Then they said to one another, now pay attention.

Verse nine is so important. This is what God wants to happen in Northern Israel. They are lepers.

Why? In these days, this is viewed as a judgment. You've done something wrong, you know, that, that you would be leprous. Remember even down in the days of the disciples, what, what sin did this man commit or his parents commit that he's blind affliction in Israel? God said, I will drive the diseases out and the plagues out along with the inhabitants of the land.

But if you become disobedient, if you forsake the covenant, I will bring upon you specifically go back and read it in Deuteronomy. We don't have time to go there, but he says, I will put the plagues of these people on you. Well, here's four lepers, but God blesses them.

They're the first people in the city to get these blessings. And what do they do? They say, this day is a day of good news. We remain silent.

If we wait till morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Therefore come, let us go and tell the King's household. Well, these lepers can't go straight in.

They have to, they have to relay the information. So they went and called to the gatekeepers of the city. Now these guys live just outside the gates because they're lepers.

And so the gatekeepers know them. They, you know, Oh, there's, you know, winking, blinking, linking and nod, you know, that I know these four guys that the gatekeepers know them. And when they, when they hail the gatekeepers, the gatekeepers know who's hollering and they say, look, we went to the Syrians camp and surprisingly no one was there, not a human sound,

only horses and donkeys tied and the tents intact horses and notice horses and donkeys and tents intact.

This is all right now. Everybody's thinking food, you know, no more doves, dung horses, donkeys. Uh, so the gatekeepers called out and told it to the King's household inside.

The gatekeepers don't leave their post. They're manning the gates. They're under siege.

They're, you know, could be attacked at any time. So they call out to the King's household. It's a relay.

Now, when's the last time something went to the wall? You remember the, the King walking along the wall and he looked inside and, and these two women are arguing over who's going to eat the next baby outside. You get the Syrians munching down, just like the King saw them weeks earlier when Elisha brought them in blind and he said, feed these guys. Well, now you've got the good news relayed from the ground of the lepers to the wall, to the gatekeepers, the watchman on the wall.

Remember the whole thing, the watchman on the wall. There's a people named sermons after that. And then that is relayed into the city to the King's household.

So the King arose in the night and said to his servants, let me now tell you what the Syrians have done to us. This King stood outside the door of the prophet Elisha. He knows Elisha is the prophet of the Lord.

That's why he wanted to take off his head. Elisha said about this time tomorrow. Now it'd be one thing if this had happened and there was no word of the Lord.

Hear me carefully because we're going to break the difference. This, this might be a prudent and thoughtful thing for the King to strategize about and be careful about being fooled. What makes this wrong? He has the word of the Lord.

The prophet told him, and this is obviously the breaking of the dawn, the breaking of salvation, the breaking of deliverance and provision from God according to the word of the Lord. But in the same way that he was ready to kill the prophet of God, he is not willing to believe the word of the Lord. This King is accountable for what he heard.

He heard the word of the Lord and when the fulfillment is communicated, he will not believe it. No, this is a trick. This is a subterfuge.

The Syrians are fooling us. This would have been maybe a healthy thought except for the fact that he heard the word of the Lord. And there was a confirming prophecy that his number three is going to see it, but not partake of it.

And if he would stop and think, and this is what we fail to do so often, stop and think about what you have heard. He doesn't apply what he just got through hearing just hours earlier at

the doorway of Elisha. This is the application I would suggest to you as we go to the break here, because we're going to come back and finish this out after the break.

Do we consider our circumstances and the forward progress of our lives in the light of what we have heard? This is the challenge. This is the accountability. This is the responsibility.

As goes the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, so goes the believer in the new. What does the king represent? The king of the nation to whom these things keep returning. What's the king in our soul? Who's the king of our kingdom? Who's the, what is our soul as the nation? Who's the king? This is our reason.

This is our decider. This is our, you know, we talk about volition, like it's some magic box that spits out yeses and nos. We decide yes or no as a part of our reason.

We choose because we think something is reasonable or not reasonable. We say yes or we say no, but it is inextricably linked with our faculties of analysis and choosing and reasoning. The king is our mind.

Our soul is the country and we determine what's going to happen to the country by what we think about and what we choose based on those thoughts. That's the king. Our king, our reason, our mind has received the word of the Lord.

We determine the fate of our soul nation, if you will. It's probably like a dance show or something, you know, soul nation, soul train, but we seriously do. God appeals to us at the gate of reason.

There is information coming over the wall to the king's household saying, look, if you're in a bad way, the deliverance of God is out here. What are you going to do? And the king says, I don't believe it. I'm not willing to act on it.

God has already provided the deliverance. The army is gone. The siege is over, but the king in this night can't accept it.

That would be reasonable if there was no word of the Lord involved, but it's not reasonable for the king of Israel with a covenant relationship with God and the word of the Lord has been spoken directly into his ears. Elisha wouldn't let it go by proxy. He waited until the king was outside the door and told it to him at firsthand.

God's spirit comes and speaks to us the word of the Lord at firsthand, and we are accountable for what we do with it. And the message here is don't be foolish King Joram. Well, I need more evidence.

I need more verification. People are going to starve for several more hours because this king won't throw open the gates and go have a supper, you know, paid for by the Syrians, so to speak. It will not be until the next morning.

People are going to spend a whole nother night of darkness because the king does not believe the word of the Lord. It's twilight. There's, there's time to go out and have a banquet and a feast.

To revel in the evening hours, by the way, this is the same period of time where the Passover meal is eaten, where the lamb, the sacrificial lamb is eaten. They eat it, you know, after dark. These people are going to starve and have nothing because the king will not believe the word of the Lord.

Will there be people who die of starvation that night? I don't know. It doesn't say, but we are accountable for what we hear. We are accountable for what we see.

And God continually appeals to this king in this day of grace, this age of Elisha, if you will. God leads with deliverance. He leads with salvation.

Why will you die, O house of Israel? All day long, I make this appeal. I hold out my hands to this disobedient and stiff-necked king who represents a disobedient and stiff-necked people. Let's learn from this example and not follow in that bad pattern.

Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to finish out this chapter and hopefully I can move fast enough that we'll get into chapter eight because we really need to get to chapter eight tonight. Let's pause here and take our break.