

20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning Week 29 (July 14-20, 2013)

We will continue to look at the miracles of God performed through the prophet Elisha. Last year, I covered the 5th chapter of 2 Kings in week 44, so I will skip over Naaman's story in this series.

Sunday -- July 14 (2 Kings 4:38-44)

Today's text contains two miracles of God. During a time of famine, Elisha's servant prepares a stew for the company of the prophets to eat (v. 38). One of them gathers an unknown wild vine and cuts it up in the mix. The vine is apparently poisonous causing much distress in the camp (v. 39-40). Elisha simply adds some flour and God takes care of the problem. Don't try this at home; it is a miracle, not a recipe! Next, our Lord multiplies twenty small barley loaves to feed the entire group (v. 42-44). This miracle is a forerunner to Jesus feeding 5,000 men and their families (see Matthew 14:13-21) and 4,000 men and their families (see Matthew 15:29-39). Our current inventory plus God's power equals enough for everyone.

Monday -- July 15 (2 Kings 6:1-7)

This is one of my favorite miracles in the Old Testament. The meetinghouse is too small for the prophets so they approve a building program (v. 1-2). They invite Elisha to accompany them to the Jordan River to obtain poles for the new building (v. 3-4). During the process of cutting the trees, one of them loses his borrowed iron axhead in the river. Elisha cuts a stick and places it in the location where the axhead fell in and the iron object floats to the top. I believe this stick is a picture of Calvary. Whenever you lose your **cutting edge**, simply go back to Calvary and the power will return. Nothing you will ever face can compare to our Lord's suffering on the cross.

Tuesday -- July 16 (2 Kings 6:8-15)

God constantly tells Elisha about the movement and location of Israel's enemy, the king of Aram (v. 8-10). The king is furious and suspects treason within the ranks (v. 11). An officer tells his boss that Elisha knows all his secrets through the power of God (v. 12). The angry king finds out that the prophet is in Dothan so he sends out a strong unit by night to bring him in (v. 13-14). When Gehazi awakens the next morning, he sees that they are surrounded by the mighty army of Aram and exclaims (v. 15), "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" I would probably say, "Oh, my Lord" too if I awakened to the sight of the enemy surrounding me. We will see tomorrow what Elisha sees today.

Wednesday -- July 17 (2 Kings 6:16-19)

Elisha sees what **God** is doing; Gehazi sees only what the **enemy** is doing. The prophet informs his servant, "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (v. 16). The New Testament equivalent to this can be found in 1 John 4:4: "You, dear children are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." Elisha then turns to his Lord in prayer. First, he prays that Gehazi's eyes may be opened so that he can see the hills full of horses and chariots of fire (angels) all around them (v. 17). Next, he prays that the enemy soldiers may be struck with blindness (v. 18). Then he leads the blind men into Samaria where the king of Israel is located (v. 19). Are you able to trust God in the midst of your problems? Are you able to see what nonbelievers cannot?

Thursday -- July 18 (2 Kings 6:20-23)

Elisha maintains his direct contact with God by sending up one final prayer (v. 20). It is great to start each day with prayer, but it is better still to maintain an open line to the Lord all day long just as we see in this story. The king of Israel has a large part of Aram's army helplessly standing before him in Samaria. What is he to do? His first instinct is to slaughter them (v. 21), but Elisha, due to his constant contact with God, has a better plan (v. 22). This is a preview of Jesus' difficult teachings in Matthew 5:43-48 on how to deal with your enemies. The king listens to God's prophet and sends his enemies home with full bellies. At least for a time, Aram allows Israel to live in peace (v. 23).

Friday -- July 19 (2 Kings 6:24-7:2)

Israel's enemy forgets the kindness shown to them earlier and sets a siege on Samaria (v. 24). The rest of today's text describes the horrible conditions of the citizens inside the walls of Samaria. The king vows to kill Elisha, perhaps blaming him for his advice given in yesterday's study (v. 31). God has already made His prophet aware of the threat so Elisha sits quietly in his house with the elders of Israel (v. 32). The king is aware that God has allowed this disaster, but he is not willing to wait for the Lord's solution to the famine (v. 33). Elisha delivers the Lord's word to the king and prophesies an end to the famine (7:1). An officer is doubtful that God can perform such a miracle (v. 2). We will see how this doubt leads to his downfall in tomorrow's devotions.

Saturday -- July 20 (2 Kings 7:3-20)

Read this entire story to see how God uses four lepers to initiate the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. These men are forced to live as outcasts outside the city gate because of their dreaded disease (v. 3-11). Don't miss the fact that God is orchestrating the entire miracle (v. 5-6). Israel's king thinks Aram is setting a trap for him, but he is willing to risk a few men to check out the story (v. 12-14). The horsemen verify the departure of the enemy and God's Word is fulfilled (v. 15-16). Unfortunately for the doubting officer, the rest of the prophecy is fulfilled as well (v. 17-20). Are you learning to claim and pray the promises of God? If so, today claim the promise in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 and live victoriously in the Lord!