

Friday, June 24, 2022

From Darren:

2 Kings 6:1-7:20 — God sure does find interesting ways to save people from attacking armies

Ps 142:1-7 — “You are my place of refuge. You are all I really want in life.”

Pro 17:24-25 — Children, avoid bringing grief and bitterness

Acts 15:36-16:15 — It is no accident that Lydia’s story is in the Bible...shout out to all of the woman that have introduced Jesus into their family’s life

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2 Kings 6:1-7:20

6 1 One day the group of prophets came to Elisha and told him, “As you can see, this place where we meet with you is too small.

2 Let’s go down to the Jordan River, where there are plenty of logs. There we can build a new place for us to meet.” “All right,” he told them, “go ahead.”

3 “Please come with us,” someone suggested. “I will,” he said.

4 So he went with them. When they arrived at the Jordan, they began cutting down trees.

5 But as one of them was cutting a tree, his ax head fell into the river. “Oh, sir!” he cried. “It was a borrowed ax!”

6 “Where did it fall?” the man of God asked. When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it into the water at that spot. Then the ax head floated to the surface.

7 “Grab it,” Elisha said. And the man reached out and grabbed it.

8 When the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he would confer with his officers and say, “We will mobilize our forces at such and such a place.”

9 But immediately Elisha, the man of God, would warn the king of Israel, “Do not go near that place, for the Arameans are planning to mobilize their troops there.”

10 So the king of Israel would send word to the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he would be on the alert there.

11 The king of Aram became very upset over this. He called his officers together and demanded, “Which of you is the traitor? Who has been informing the king of Israel of my plans?”

12 “It’s not us, my lord the king,” one of the officers replied. “Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in the privacy of your bedroom!”

13 “Go and find out where he is,” the king commanded, “so I can send troops to seize him.” And the report came back: “Elisha is at Dothan.”

14 So one night the king of Aram sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city.

15 When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. “Oh, sir, what will we do now?” the young man cried to Elisha.

16 “Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!”

17 Then Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!” The LORD opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.

18 As the Aramean army advanced toward him, Elisha prayed, “O LORD, please make them blind.” So the LORD struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked.

19 Then Elisha went out and told them, "You have come the wrong way! This isn't the right city! Follow me, and I will take you to the man you are looking for." And he led them to the city of Samaria.

20 As soon as they had entered Samaria, Elisha prayed, "O LORD, now open their eyes and let them see." So the LORD opened their eyes, and they discovered that they were in the middle of Samaria.

21 When the king of Israel saw them, he shouted to Elisha, "My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?"

22 "Of course not!" Elisha replied. "Do we kill prisoners of war? Give them food and drink and send them home again to their master."

23 So the king made a great feast for them and then sent them home to their master. After that, the Aramean raiders stayed away from the land of Israel.

24 Some time later, however, King Ben-hadad of Aram mustered his entire army and besieged Samaria.

25 As a result, there was a great famine in the city. The siege lasted so long that a donkey's head sold for eighty pieces of silver, and a cup of dove's dung sold for five pieces of silver.

26 One day as the king of Israel was walking along the wall of the city, a woman called to him, "Please help me, my lord the king!"

27 He answered, "If the LORD doesn't help you, what can I do? I have neither food from the threshing floor nor wine from the press to give you."

28 But then the king asked, "What is the matter?" She replied, "This woman said to me: 'Come on, let's eat your son today, then we will eat my son tomorrow.'

29 So we cooked my son and ate him. Then the next day I said to her, 'Kill your son so we can eat him,' but she has hidden her son."

30 When the king heard this, he tore his clothes in despair. And as the king walked along the wall, the people could see that he was wearing burlap under his robe next to his skin.

31 "May God strike me and even kill me if I don't separate Elisha's head from his shoulders this very day," the king vowed.

32 Elisha was sitting in his house with the elders of Israel when the king sent a messenger to summon him. But before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "A murderer has sent a man to cut off my head. When he arrives, shut the door and keep him out. We will soon hear his master's steps following him."

33 While Elisha was still saying this, the messenger arrived. And the king said, "All this misery is from the LORD! Why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

7 1 Elisha replied, "Listen to this message from the LORD! This is what the LORD says: By this time tomorrow in the markets of Samaria, six quarts of choice flour will cost only one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain will cost only one piece of silver."

2 The officer assisting the king said to the man of God, "That couldn't happen even if the LORD opened the windows of heaven!" But Elisha replied, "You will see it happen with your own eyes, but you won't be able to eat any of it!"

3 Now there were four men with leprosy sitting at the entrance of the city gates. "Why should we sit here waiting to die?" they asked each other.

4 "We will starve if we stay here, but with the famine in the city, we will starve if we go back there. So we might as well go out and surrender to the Aramean army. If they let us live, so much the better. But if they kill us, we would have died anyway."

5 So at twilight they set out for the camp of the Arameans. But when they came to the edge of the camp, no one was there!

6 For the Lord had caused the Aramean army to hear the clatter of speeding chariots and the galloping of horses and the sounds of a great army approaching. "The king of Israel has hired the Hittites and Egyptians to attack us!" they cried to one another.

7 So they panicked and ran into the night, abandoning their tents, horses, donkeys, and everything else, as they fled for their lives.

8 When the lepers arrived at the edge of the camp, they went into one tent after another, eating and drinking wine; and they carried off silver and gold and clothing and hid it.

9 Finally, they said to each other, "This is not right. This is a day of good news, and we aren't sharing it with anyone! If we wait until morning, some calamity will certainly fall upon us. Come on, let's go back and tell the people at the palace."

10 So they went back to the city and told the gatekeepers what had happened. "We went out to the Aramean camp," they said, "and no one was there! The horses and donkeys were tethered and the tents were all in order, but there wasn't a single person around!"

11 Then the gatekeepers shouted the news to the people in the palace.

12 The king got out of bed in the middle of the night and told his officers, "I know what has happened. The Arameans know we are starving, so they have left their camp and have hidden in the fields. They are expecting us to leave the city, and then they will take us alive and capture the city."

13 One of his officers replied, "We had better send out scouts to check into this. Let them take five of the remaining horses. If something happens to them, it will be no worse than if they stay here and die with the rest of us."

14 So two chariots with horses were prepared, and the king sent scouts to see what had happened to the Aramean army.

15 They went all the way to the Jordan River, following a trail of clothing and equipment that the Arameans had thrown away in their mad rush to escape. The scouts returned and told the king about it.

16 Then the people of Samaria rushed out and plundered the Aramean camp. So it was true that six quarts of choice flour were sold that day for one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain were sold for one piece of silver, just as the LORD had promised.

17 The king appointed his officer to control the traffic at the gate, but he was knocked down and trampled to death as the people rushed out. So everything happened exactly as the man of God had predicted when the king came to his house.

18 The man of God had said to the king, "By this time tomorrow in the markets of Samaria, six quarts of choice flour will cost one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain will cost one piece of silver."

19 The king's officer had replied, "That couldn't happen even if the LORD opened the windows of heaven!" And the man of God had said, "You will see it happen with your own eyes, but you won't be able to eat any of it!"

20 And so it was, for the people trampled him to death at the gate!

Psalm 142:1-7

142 1 I cry out to the LORD ; I plead for the LORD 's mercy.

2 I pour out my complaints before him and tell him all my troubles.

3 When I am overwhelmed, you alone know the way I should turn. Wherever I go, my enemies have set traps for me.

4 I look for someone to come and help me, but no one gives me a passing thought! No one will help me; no one cares a bit what happens to me.

5 Then I pray to you, O LORD . I say, "You are my place of refuge. You are all I really want in life.

6 Hear my cry, for I am very low. Rescue me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me.

7 Bring me out of prison so I can thank you. The godly will crowd around me, for you are good to me."

Proverbs 17:24-25

17 24 Sensible people keep their eyes glued on wisdom, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth.

25 Foolish children bring grief to their father and bitterness to the one who gave them birth.

Acts 15:36-16:15

15 36 After some time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back and visit each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are doing."

37 Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark.

38 But Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in their work.

39 Their disagreement was so sharp that they separated. Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus.

40 Paul chose Silas, and as he left, the believers entrusted him to the Lord's gracious care.

41 Then he traveled throughout Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches there.

16 1 Paul went first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where there was a young disciple named Timothy. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek.

2 Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium,

3 so Paul wanted him to join them on their journey. In deference to the Jews of the area, he arranged for Timothy to be circumcised before they left, for everyone knew that his father was a Greek.

4 Then they went from town to town, instructing the believers to follow the decisions made by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem.

5 So the churches were strengthened in their faith and grew larger every day.

6 Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time.

7 Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there.

8 So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas.

9 That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!"

10 So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there.

11 We boarded a boat at Troas and sailed straight across to the island of Samothrace, and the next day we landed at Neapolis.

12 From there we reached Philippi, a major city of that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. And we stayed there several days.

13 On the Sabbath we went a little way outside the city to a riverbank, where we thought people would be meeting for prayer, and we sat down to speak with some women who had gathered there.

14 One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying.

15 She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. "If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my home." And she urged us until we agreed.