



CHAPTER 7

Key Characters

- **Elisha** – The student of Elijah who replaced his master as the prophet of God.
- **King of Israel** – The king is not named in the chapter, but this was almost certainly Jehoram, son of Ahab.
- **Ben-hadad** – King of Syria. His army besieged the city of Samaria.
- **4 Lepers** - They saved the city of Samaria by reporting the Syrian retreat.

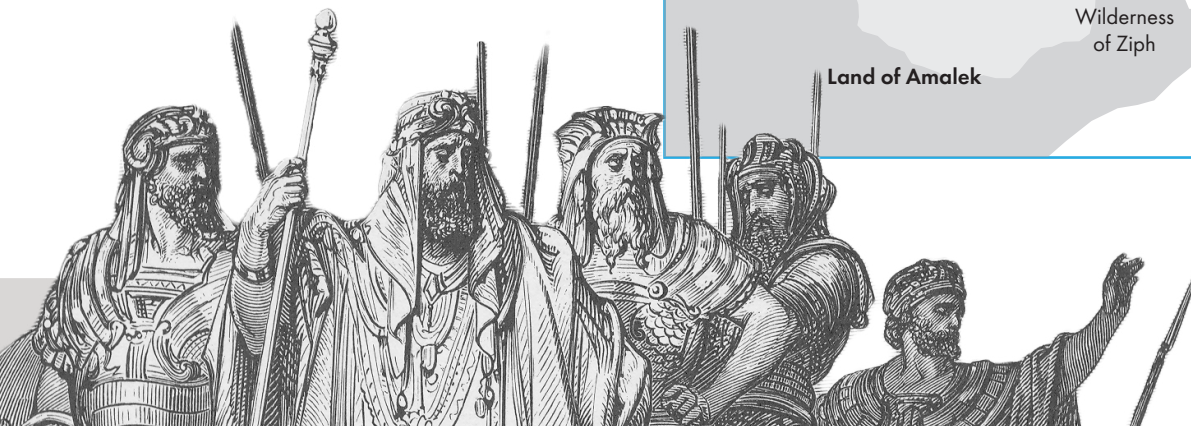
Where

- Samaria was the capital of the kingdom of Israel.
- Israelite scouts searched for the Syrian army from the city of Samaria to the Jordan River.

When

- According to the timeline we are using for this study, the kingdom of Israel and Judah divided in 975 B.C. The period that followed, sometimes called the period of the “Divided Kingdom,” lasted the next few centuries. Israel remained a cohesive nation until 721 B.C. (Assyrian captivity), while Judah lasted until 607 B.C. (Babylonian exile).

- The events of 2 Kings 7 probably took place between 895-885 B.C.



Outline

- FOUR LEPERS SAVE SAMARIA AFTER GOD CAUSES THE SYRIANS TO FLEE (7:1-20):

- + The city of Samaria was in despair and afflicted by starvation due to the Syrian siege (2 Kings 6).
- + The king of Israel had ordered Elisha to be killed, but the order was never carried out, in part because Elisha prophesied that an abundance of food would be available in the city by the next day.
- + The king's captain scoffed at the prophesy. As a consequence, Elisha told him he would see the food with his own eyes, but he would not get to eat any of it.
- + There were 4 men with leprosy at the gate of Samaria, and they decided it was better to surrender to the Syrians, and potentially live, rather than definitely die of starvation.
- + They left Samaria at twilight and walked to the Syrian camp, but when they reached the outskirts of the camp, they were shocked to find no one there.
- + God had caused the Syrians to hear the sound of a great army, and they assumed the Israelites had hired the Hittites and the Egyptians to defeat them, so they fled their camp and left all their possessions behind.
- + The lepers feasted on the food and carried off gold and clothing.
- + But after a while, their consciences began to hurt. They said, "We are not doing right... let us go and tell the king's household."
- + The lepers went back to the city and reported the Syrian retreat to the gatekeepers.
- + The king initially thought it was a Syrian trick to lure them out of the city. He sent two horsemen to scout out the Syrians. They scouted the land all the way to the Jordan River and found evidence of the Syrian retreat.
- + When they brought back the news, the people of Samaria rushed out of the city and plundered the Syrian camp.
- + As Elisha had prophesied, flour and barley were available in abundance, but the king's captain never got to taste it, because he was trampled by the people in the gate of Samaria.

Application

- The lepers decided they would put their hope in the mercy of the Syrians, because death was the only thing awaiting them in Samaria.
- The final result of that decision was better than anything they could have ever hoped for.
- What awaits you in your current state? In this lifetime? Is there any outcome that doesn't lead to death.
- The only choice you have other than death (both physical and spiritual death), is to put your hope in an offer of mercy.
- One thing I can guarantee you, is that if you put your hope in the mercy of God, the outcome of that decision will be better than anything you could have every imagined.

