



Lesson 135

Elisha and the Siege of Samaria

Story Elements

- **Text:** 2 Kings 6:24-7:20
- **Setting:** circa 800 B.C., at Samaria
- **Main Characters:** God, Elisha, Jehoram, and 4 unnamed lepers

- **Plot:** The Syrian siege of Samaria ends with divine deliverance.
- **Key word(s):** “ _____ ”
- **Climax:** 2 Kings 7:2 ...*Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.*

The Horrors of War

1. (6:24-25) During Jehoram's reign in northern Israel, Ben-hadad the king of Syria invaded Samaria.
 - a) The subsequent siege caused a severe famine within the city – so severe that a _____ head and dove dung¹ were highly prized commodities.
 - b) (6:27-30) As the siege wore on, the impoverished and starving Samaritans turned to _____. King Jehoram was shocked to learn of two women who agreed to eat each other's children.
2. (6:31) Jehoram mourned the atrocities in his city. In his anger, he blamed God and wished the prophet Elisha was dead. Why do you think Jehoram would want Elisha dead? _____
3. (6:32-7:1) Later, when Jehoram had sent a messenger to Elisha's house, Elisha prophesied that God would send deliverance to Samaria: the very next day, 7 quarts of flour would sell for about two-fifths of an ounce of silver, and 14 quarts of barley would sell for the same amount. The drastic drop in prices spoke of a massive inflow of _____ and supplies.

The High Cost of Unbelief

4. (7:2) One of Jehoram's lieutenants scoffed at Elisha's remarkable prophecy. The prophet retorted, “*Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not _____ thereof.*”
5. (7:3-7) That night, four desperate lepers who lived just outside the city decided to take their chances and seek assistance from the Syrians encamped nearby.
 - a) As they entered the camp, they were shocked to find it _____. Apparently, the Syrians fled when they heard the sound of a great army advancing on their position (the LORD had made them hear it). In their haste, they left everything behind - equipment, supplies, and all.

¹ Many commentators speculate that “dove’s dung” was a nickname for some type of nearly unpalatable grain or lentil. Others believe it was used for cooking fuel.

- b) (7:4-16) For a while, the lepers _____ and pillaged the camp before they realized they needed to share the good news with their starving city. At first, Jehoram did not believe the lepers' report, but after scouts confirmed what they said, the city gates were opened, and the citizens of Samaria rushed to the spoil.
6. (7:17-20) The city gate was in the charge of Jehoram's lieutenant – the same one that had earlier scoffed at Elisha's prophecy. As the people rushed to the spoil, he was _____ underneath their feet. Both of Elisha's prophecies had come true.

Application

7. The stomach-turning events of the siege of Samaria were nothing less than the fulfillment of the warnings that Moses had given Israel thousands of years previously. Israel had been given yet another sign that they would soon be removed from the land for their _____.

Deuteronomy 28:52 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst... 53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

8. The four lepers understood the sin of hiding the means of salvation from their city. Likewise, how sinful is it for the Christian to be silent of the eternal treasure and the spiritual feast that awaits the dying sinner in the _____ of Jesus Christ?
9. The problem with city walls is that they not only keep the enemy out, but they keep the citizens in; thus, the means of deliverance becomes the means of destruction. So it is with man's efforts to save himself: instead of trusting in God, he trusts in himself, and thus he is _____. (Psa. 118:8)

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): "eat" • 1. a) donkey's; b) cannibalism • 2. Many possible reasons. One example may be that he probably believed Elisha could of his own power bring a miraculous deliverance but was refusing to do so. • 3. food • 4. eat • 5. a) deserted; b) feasted • 6. trampled • 7. apostasy • 8. gospel • 9. condemned

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.