

WHICH SHOULDER ARE YOU LEANING ON?

In 2 Kings 7:2, we read, "Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, saying, 'Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?' And Elisha replied, 'Behold, you shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.'"

During the time of the prophet Elisha, Israel was enduring a severe famine. In his desperation for relief, the king sought guidance from Elisha, who shared a prophetic message filled with hope. However, an officer who leaned on the king's shoulder displayed skepticism toward Elisha's prophecy, questioning its feasibility by saying, "If the LORD would make windows in heaven, could this be possible?" (2 Kings 7:2, KJV). This sermon will delve into this pivotal moment and the valuable lessons about trust, belief, and the consequences of our choices.

Understanding the Famine's Context

To grasp the officer's doubt, we first need to consider the harsh reality of the famine in Israel. As stated in 2 Kings 6:25, "And there was a great famine in Samaria: and behold, they besieged it until an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver." With silver priced at approximately \$25 per ounce, an ass's head amounted to about \$1,600, and dove's dung to about \$100. The famine was so dire that people resorted to unspeakable measures. Against this backdrop of despair, Elisha delivered a message of hope: "Tomorrow at this time, a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria" (2 Kings 7:1, KJV). If fine flour costs around \$0.40 and two measures of barley about \$0.80, this predicted price drop signified an end to the famine.

The Officer's Mockery and Its Consequences

The officer's response to Elisha extended beyond mere disbelief; it embodied a mockery of divine possibility. Leaning on the king represented his trust in human authority and systems rather than in God, the ultimate source of provision. This reliance on worldly wisdom can lead to a form of spiritual blindness, causing us to overlook God's transformative interventions. Today, many still lean on government support for their needs, often neglecting God's promises. Reflect on the rising inflation—how often do we look to political solutions instead of trusting the Lord? Isaiah 31:1 warns, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who

rely on horses and trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or seek the LORD!”

The Certainty of Prophecy and Immediate Provision

Elisha's prophecy would soon manifest, but the officer's mockery came with grave consequences. In 2 Kings 7:17, we read, “The king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate; and the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had said.” This stark truth reveals that disbelief can lead us to miss out on God’s blessings. The faithful, who responded with “Amen,” were rewarded with abundance, while the skeptical witnessed fulfillment from the sidelines.

Miraculous Provision and Divine Economics

Jesus illustrated heavenly economics when He fed the 5,000 with just five loaves and two fish. He commanded, “Give them something to eat” (Matthew 14:16, KJV), multiplying seemingly insufficient resources. This testament of divine provision stands in contrast to worldly economic uncertainty. Consider Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus and stole funds (John 12:6). Despite his greed, God’s work continued remarkably, underscoring a divine principle: His ministry is not dependent on human resources but on His infinite supply. “But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19, KJV).

Leaning on Jesus: The Example of John

In contrast to the officer, let us reflect on the apostle John, who rested against Jesus' breast (John 13:23, KJV). In that posture, he found true security, comfort, and revelation that comes from intimacy with Christ. Rather than leaning on human frailty, John relied on divine wisdom. As we navigate today’s tumultuous world—political upheaval, economic challenges, and social turmoil—we must ask ourselves: Who are we leaning on? The kingdom of God operates on principles that often contradict worldly systems. Those who trust in God’s promises will experience blessings, while those who lean on human authority may miss out.

The Call to Faith

Faith is essential for navigating life's uncertainties. Hebrews 11:1 (KJV) teaches us, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The officer's skepticism created a barrier that prevented him from experiencing the miracle firsthand. Faith allows us to rise above our immediate circumstances and trust in God's provision, even when challenges abound. Today's culture often pushes us to rely on visible outcomes and concrete evidence, much like the officer relied on kings and worldly systems. However, God calls us to be a community of believers who trust in His infinite possibilities despite our circumstances. Consider Abraham, who "against hope believed in hope" (Romans 4:18, KJV). He obtained the promise despite his old age, serving as an example for us to reflect on our own reliance: Are we leaning on worldly understanding, or are we embracing God's boundless potential?

The Reality of Spiritual Blindness

The tragic fate of the officer serves as a sobering reminder of the dangers of spiritual blindness. Many today witness miracles but remain disengaged due to disbelief. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18, KJV). The officer was shrouded in a natural perspective, unable to see past his immediate reality, thus missing the profound truths God was revealing through Elisha.

Leaning on Christ

As we draw to a close, let us examine the foundations of our trust. In moments of distress, do we lean on the shoulders of government, societal norms, or human wisdom, or are we resting on the secure embrace of Christ, trusting His word above all else? As inflation rises and uncertainty grows, we are called to remain steadfast in our faith. We must base our lives on the Word of God. Elisha's prophecy came to pass, and once again, bread became plentiful. Those who believed—and acted on that belief—received the rewards of their faith.

Let us strive to emulate John, who leaned closely on Jesus, assured that His strength is sufficient to meet our needs. We must reject the skepticism that characterized the officer and wholeheartedly embrace the promises of God. As we internalize these truths, let us heed the words of James: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22, KJV). Our lives should reflect a deep trust in God, showcasing a faith

that transcends the visible and confidently embraces the unchanging love and provision of our Lord Jesus.

As we navigate a world filled with challenges, pause to consider: Who or what are you leaning on today? May we choose to rely not on the kings of this world but on the Lord of Heaven. Trust in His word, and you will not only witness miracles but also partake in the abundance that flows from Him. Let us boldly affirm our faith in God's promises and declare with confidence, "Amen!" May the Lord bless you, guide you with His word, and grant you the security and strength that comes from leaning on Him, our everlasting King. Amen.