LESSON 5

THE SIEGE OF SAMARIA



Aim: **To show the children that God honoured Elisha because he served God faithfully in extremely difficult times.**

Scripture Reading: **2 Kings 6:24 – 7:2**

Memory Verse: **Exodus 20:5 (the Ten Commandments) "You shall not bow down to … [other gods] or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God …"**

Presenting the Lesson

Starting point

Most people in Africa today know what it feels like to be hungry. Today's story is about a town where the people went hungry for so long that many were dying. They could not afford to buy food. Give some examples of how food prices have risen over the past few years.

Main Points of the Lesson

1. Some time after last week's story the king of Syria again went to war with Israel. His army surrounded the capital of Israel, Samaria. This caused a terrible famine in the city, because no one could go out to fetch food from the fields. Therefore the price of anything that could be eaten grew sky high. There is very little to eat on a donkey's head, yet people paid almost a kilogram of silver for it (2 Ki 6:24–25)!
2. The king of Israel went for a walk all along the city wall. **Describe how he met two women and heard about the terrible thing they had done.** They were so hungry they had eaten a child. People had begun to behave like animals. The king started to wear uncomfortable clothes made out of sackcloth underneath his royal robes to remind him of his people's suffering (6:26, 28–30). **Show Picture 5.** Do you see the Syrian army camped beyond the town wall?
3. The king was terribly upset (v 30). He blamed God for the situation his people were in (v 27). Because God had not saved them from the Syrians the king decided to kill Elisha, God's servant. He sent a messenger to do it (6:31–32).
4. Elisha was at home and the town's elders were with him, probably discussing the serious situation. God revealed the king's evil plan to Elisha before the messenger even arrived. The elders watched in amazement as the angry king arrived there right after his messenger, just as Elisha had predicted. The king had decided to do what many others have tried to do: to go ahead without God. He couldn't wait for God to act any longer, so he was taking matters into his own hands (6:32–33).
5. Elisha was ready with an unbelievable message from God. It meant that 24 hours later the city would no longer be surrounded by the Syrian army. They would all be gone and food would be plentiful as well as cheap. Three kilos of grain would cost only one coin (7:1)!

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6. The officer who was with the king could not believe that God could accomplish that. His unbelief earned him a terrible warning (7:2).

Our Response to the Story

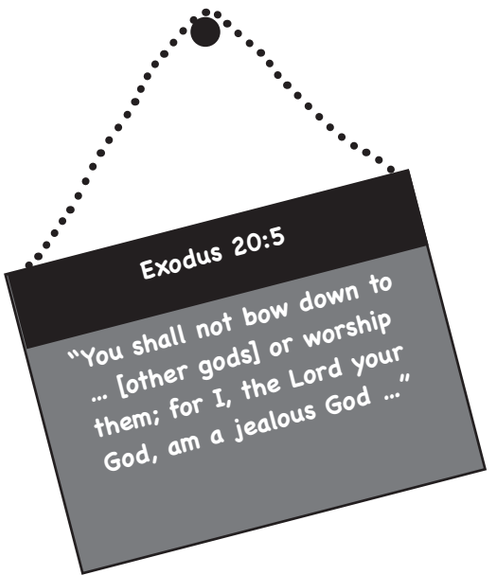
The situation in Samaria brought out the worst in people. Elisha, however, trusted in God even in that terrible time. He had the courage to face a threat from an earthly king as well as the unbelief of a royal officer.

William Carey was an Englishman who lived 200 years ago. His parents were too poor to send him to school, so he taught himself and became a pastor. He said, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." By the time he died he had (among other things), founded a missionary society, established churches in India, and translated the Bible into several Indian languages.

Instil the Memory Verse

Elisha obeyed this command even in very difficult times.

Review all the verses of Exodus 20 learnt so far.



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