

1. We are going to continue this morning with the story of the Siege of the city of Samaria found in 2 Kings chapters 6 & 7.
2. When I first became aware of the changes that Covid-19 would bring in our lives, I just couldn't get away from the similarities that I see here in this passage.
3. Turn with me to 2 Kings chapter 6 and I will recap quickly where we are so far in the story.
4. Beginning in chapter 6 verse 24 we find that the army of the nation of Aram surrounds the city of Samaria in order to cut it off from the outside world and cause the people to surrender.
5. The famine becomes so severe that one day as the king is out surveying things, a mother approaches him with the most horrific of problems.
6. Two mothers of young children made the pact that they would kill and eat one mother's child the first day, and then kill the other mother's child the second day.
7. They carry out their plan on day one, but on day two the mother with the still living child backs out.
8. When the king hears this, he has some very powerful reactions.
9. The first thing he does is tear his robes and put on sack cloth and ashes as a sign of mourning for how desperate things have become.
10. Then he becomes angry. Angry mostly with the Prophet Elisha because Elisha was the one who foretold of all this hardship.
11. His anger quickly turns to blame, and his blame turns into a death threat, but most importantly the king's anger and blame turn toward God.
12. God. You are the one who has caused us all this trouble, and quite frankly God I am tired of waiting on you to fix it.
13. Then in chapter 7 when Elisha declares that God will take care of these circumstances and deliver them, the king's officer refuses to believe because he gets hung up on the who, what, when, where, and how.

14. In his mind how God is going to change this doesn't make any logical sense. And the result is that Elisha tells the officer, you will see God's deliverance, but you won't experience it.
15. We said that God very rarely gives us the who, what, when, where and how. He rarely gives us all the details. What he gives us instead is himself.
16. He himself is the promise. He himself is the answer. He himself is the solution.
17. It seems to me that most, if not all of these reactions are affecting us as it relates to the uncertainty of Covid-19.
18. I feel cut off. We couldn't hold services.
19. And please don't misunderstand this as a complaint against our governmental and denominational leaders who are urging us to abide by the re-opening guidelines because it's not.
20. But last Sunday when we had our first live service in over two months, I still felt cut off. It just wasn't much better.
21. Our staff did what we were asked to do and we worked our fingers to the bone, and it just wasn't much better.
22. It's easy to get angry and see anger and frustration in others.
23. It's easy to fall into the blame game. This country or that government or those people are to blame for the hardship we are experiencing.
24. For sure we don't have any idea, who, what, when, where, and how any of this will ever be over. And all of those things are frustrating to say the least.
25. And if I were to boil all these emotions down to a short description the words "Out of control" best describe how I am feeling.
26. I'm sorry. I know I should be the one with strong faith who is leading you to believe and hope in something and someone better, but I have struggled greatly with this heaving feeling that most everything that gave me security and comfort before has either been removed, or changed drastically.
27. And of all things, for me, a blanket is the symbol of how out of control things have been.

28. Let me explain.
29. All during the wintertime we sleep with a pretty heavy blanket on our bed for warmth.
30. Well, when the temperatures started to rise, we went to change the blanket to a lighter blanket, only to remember that the lighter blanket we took off the bed last year was worn out and needed to be thrown away.
31. So, we started looking for a new blanket for the bed. No one locally had what we were looking for, so we got online and finally ordered a new blanket.
32. And that would have been great, except when I got the confirmation email for the order, I realized that the delivery date they gave us was more than a month away.
33. Well of course I balked at that because prior to Covid-19 we could have things delivered in a few days.
34. So, I thought, I won't put up with this. I will cancel the order.
35. But when I started looking in other places, I found out that all the delivery dates were at least a month out, and some were even longer.
36. So, we kept the order and decided we would make the best of it until the blanket arrived.
37. Our plan for making the best of it was to use two lighter blankets that we used while we were watching TV.
38. We took the blankets up and put them on the bed, but the next evening we didn't have them to watch TV. So, I went up and got them.
39. But that started to get old really quickly.
40. I'm not proud of my reaction, but I must tell you on more than one occasion I became angry about the blanket situation.
41. Numerous times I would stumble up the stairs at 10 at night, ready to fall into bed and collapse, only to get ready for bed and go to turn the covers back to get in and realize I had left the blanket downstairs.
42. Angrily, I would trudge back downstairs. Get the blanket, and trudge back upstairs.

43. I know the bible says to not let the sun go down on your anger, but I missed that commandment several days in a row.
44. Finally, my loving wife, voice of reason said to me. Honey. calm down. **It's just a blanket.**
45. And I screamed, on the inside, it is not just a blanket. It is way more than a blanket. It is a reminder that things that used to be simple are not simple anymore.
46. It is a reminder that things that used to cause me no stress are now stressing me out.
47. It is a reminder that I can't go to church, sit down in a restaurant, shop at whatever hour of the day or night I want. That stupid blanket is a reminder that my life feels out of control.
48. I don't know if anyone else can identify, but I sure can.
49. And I just want to confess, I wasn't handling that out of control feeling very well.
50. And it was at that low point that the Lord started getting my attention.
51. I remember the day like it was yesterday. At about 7 am on a Saturday morning, I drove over to the church.
52. Barely any cars on the road, but on the way there I witnessed a car accident. Car blew through a red light.
53. I was at the church till about 8:30, and on my way back home, still hardly any cars on the road, the lady in front of me, texting rather than paying attention to her driving, pulled out in an intersection on a red light and almost caused a 4 car accident.
54. And with all of that on my mind, the Lord began to speak to me very clearly about this idea of having or feeling like everything is under control.
55. The Lord reminded me, you could be driving your car, minding your own business, and be broad sided in an intersection and be severely injured or killed. You can't control that.
56. And now having my full attention, I started seeing other events and happenings in life that are entirely out of our control.
57. Parents who get a call about a child who has been killed.

58. A person who visits a doctor's office and gets a diagnosis that changes their life.
59. The person who is sitting at their desk, only to have the boss come in and tell them they no longer have a job.
60. Car breaks down. Furnace goes out. Any number of things you could think of or name. All of them completely out of our control.
61. Now. That is not to say that life is 100% out of control. We have a free will. God gives us the freedom to make choices. He also gives us the freedom to reap the consequences of those choices.
62. Every area of our life is not spinning out of control, but I believe there are a lot more aspects of our life that always have been and always will be out of our control.
63. And so there I am, still haven't made it the few minutes home, and the Holy Spirit says to me, any sense of peace, or calm, or control that you experience is not because everything is under your control.
64. Any peace, calm, strength, or comfort that you have ever felt is because a gracious, loving, heavenly father has chosen to give you those as wonderful gifts.
65. The problem when circumstances surround us and change right before our eyes is not that before everything was under our control and now it isn't. The problem was that before all the chaos we may have been living under the illusion that we had everything under control in the first place.
66. And the changing times, circumstances chaos serve to remind us that we never really had it all figured out or under control at all.
67. So, let's move now to 2 Kings chapter 7.

TEXT: **2 Kings 7:1** Elisha replied, "Hear the word of the LORD. This is what the LORD says: About this time tomorrow, a seah of the finest flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria."

1. So, the scene is this.
2. City surrounded and cut off from help.
3. People are desperate and doing desperate things.
4. People are mad, want someone to blame, are impatient and tired of

waiting on God, ready to strangle someone, and this was God's reply through the prophet Elisha.

5. Forgive me for oversimplifying the message here, but sometimes my thick head needs things made simple.
6. God's response was. **I got this.** What is, is not what will be.
7. I am able. Able to change the circumstances. Able to do things you can't comprehend. Able to make what seems hopeless hopeful.
8. I've got this. You may feel out of control, but none of this has ever been out of my control.
9. And that is the whole message today. No more no less. Regardless of what is going on around you. Regardless of how out of control your life seems right now. Regardless of how confused, anxious, angry you may feel.
10. **God's message is, I have got this all under control. 2 Kings 7:3-8**
 Now there were four men with leprosy at the entrance of the city gate. They said to each other, "Why stay here until we die? **4** If we say, 'We'll go into the city'-- the famine is there, and we will die. And if we stay here, we will die. So let's go over to the camp of the Arameans and surrender. If they spare us, we live; if they kill us, then we die." **5** At dusk they got up and went to the camp of the Arameans. When they reached the edge of the camp, no one was there, **6** for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!" **7** So they got up and fled in the dusk and abandoned their tents and their horses and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives. **8** The men who had leprosy reached the edge of the camp, entered one of the tents and ate and drank. Then they took silver, gold and clothes, and went off and hid them. They returned and entered another tent and took some things from it and hid them also.
11. I beg you not to miss this. It is dusk. It is getting darker.
12. Not only are the circumstances inside the city dark and bleak, but the actual atmosphere was getting darker by the moment.
13. And inside this dark, dank, desolate city, thousands of people can see nothing but gloom and doom.
14. But outside the city. Right on the other side of those walls. Right out there, not very far from where they were, God had already put in motion a miraculous, mind boggling, life changing, series of events that proved beyond proof that He had this thing under control all along.

Conclusion:

1. I believe with all my heart that right around the corner. Right around the bend. Just on the other side of that obstacle that seems impossible, your God already has your solution, your miracle, your answer. God has got this all under control.
2. I believe that right around the corner, the bend, on the other side of all these obstacles we are facing, God already has the solution, the miracle, the answer that America needs and the world needs.
3. And what I am asking you to do today in response to this truth is to trust in the Lord. To put your faith in him.
4. To declare with me, not out of emotion or hype. But to declare, heavenly father. I believe you've got things completely under control.
5. Not because things look good, feel good, or seem good. But because the God in whom you put your hope is good.
6. I believe that is the absolute best hope you and I will ever have. And the reason I say that is because the alternative is pretty hopeless.
7. If we don't trust in the Lord that He has everything under control; we can either...
 - a. Continue to live under the delusion that everything is under our control, only to have reality remind us the hard way that it is not. Or...
 - b. Accept that many things in life are out of our control, and choose to respond to that truth by worrying, fretting, fearing, and falling down to never get back up. Or...
 - c. We can choose to trust the Lord.
8. I choose to trust the Lord.
9. Will you stand with me this morning and by faith begin to declare to the Lord that you love Him, and trust Him, and believe he has everything under control.