



In 1953 at Westminster Abbey Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup> was crowned Queen of England and the Commonwealth. Dressed in royal robes she was adorned with the crown jewels which included the star of Africa, the largest cut diamond in the world valued at £400,000. She was presented a book and told this is the most valuable thing the world affords, that book was a plain copy of the bible. One like yours and mine. She would say in later years this book is – a treasure trove of wisdom and that it was a framework she tries to use as she lives her life. When we open the bible we open something of great worth. What it reveals, has true value.

The people of the Northern Kingdom of Israel had compromised themselves with the surrounding nations and religions; including the practices of El, Asherah and Baal.

Their sinful nature and compromise now brings the community to their present reality- famine.

You may be thinking; I wouldn't do that. However when one is hungry one doesn't know what choice may be taken. This community even ate donkey heads and participated in cannibalism. They seek help from a human king who does not honour God.

They had forgotten they are God's chosen people; they no longer walk in fear of the Lord. Israel has compromised, this is planned failure.



Physical actions in the old testament often have a spiritual meaning in the New testament.

Eph 6;12 states "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

Israel compromised with surrounding nations the commandments set for them by God We can easily compromise ourselves with the things modern society see as normal.

In our text this compromise moves Israel into a physical famine, for us compromise with any number of things may move us to a spiritual famine. E.g. reading the bible, prayer and putting God in the centre of our lives because of other desires. When we compromise and fail, remember we have a God who will forgive us through the blood of Jesus.



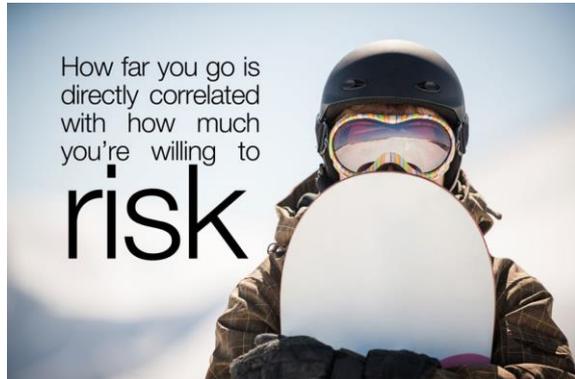
Elisha's presence brings the word of the Lord 'there will be food tomorrow'. Does God speak into your life? Do you let the resurrection power of Jesus guide you,

speak through you and give your life vision?

When Jesus was in the garden of gethsemane, at a time of anguish for our Lord, it says He went a little further to pray. Are you prepared to go a little further? Further than others, further than you thought you could, further than the world says is reasonable?

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus' Philippians 3;24

The mercy of God's words through Elisha are met with unbelief.



'Even if the Lord should open the floodgates of heavens could this happen?' Unbelief that God could do it or would do it. This man makes the biggest mistake of his life. He doesn't fear God. He's an idiot;

he doesn't believe God will act and he doesn't believe that what God will do will be enough.

The problem is some of us think the same way. We say the right things, but when was the last time you put it on the line? When did you last move in faith to a degree that it's all on?

4 lepers spoke these three comments, which applies to you?

- If we go **back** into the city- we will die. Are you living in the past? It may be safer but you won't live.
- If we **stay** here outside the gate- we will die. Our you happy just to keep things as they are.
- If we go **forward** to our enemy's, we will probably die. Do you want to go forward, yeap the enemy is there but you know what Jesus is to.

God had gone ahead of the lepers and their enemies had run away. The lepers could have been selfish, thought about themselves, been millionaires.

They were wise enough to fear God, and act on this straight away. They knew if they waited until daylight, they would talk themselves into taken all the riches for themselves and punishment would overtake them. They feared God.

The King and his advisors did not believe what was being said to them, that the riches, food, horses and everything had been delivered by God.

Fear of circumstance and people may blind you to Gods word and provision.

1 Cor 1; 30: He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,



The man died and did not receive the blessing, he could see it, but he wasn't going to receive any of it as his unbelief brought death to him.

We forget the bible teaches very clearly the wages of unbelief is sin

and death.

If you struggle with unbelief and compromise, ask forgiveness from God and help in strengthening your belief. He is slow to anger and abounding in love for you.

**Proverbs 14:27**<sup>27</sup> The **fear of the LORD** is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.

**Luke 1:50**<sup>50</sup> His mercy extends to those who **fear** him, from generation to generation.

**Psalm 112:1**<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD. Blessed are those who **fear the LORD**, who find great delight in his commands.

**Isaiah 41:10**<sup>10</sup> So do not **fear**, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

**Proverbs 3:7**<sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your own eyes; **fear the LORD** and shun evil.

**Psalm 33:8**<sup>8</sup> Let all the earth **fear** the LORD; let all the people **of the world** revere him.

**Psalm 25:14**<sup>14</sup> **The LORD** confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.