

Haftarah for M'tzora

II Kings 7:3-20

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh

³ There were four men, lepers, outside the gate. They said to one another, "Why should we sit here waiting for death? ⁴ If we decide to go into the town, what with the famine in the town, we shall die there; and if we just sit here, still we die. Come, let us desert to the Aramean camp. If they let us live, we shall live; and if they put us to death, we shall but die."

⁵ They set out at twilight for the Aramean camp; but when they came to the edge of the Aramean camp, there was no one there. ⁶ For the Lord had caused the Aramean camp to hear a sound of chariots, a sound of horses — the din of a huge army. They said to one another, "The king of Israel must have hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Mizraim to attack us!" ⁷ And they fled headlong in the twilight, abandoning their tents and horses and asses — the [entire] camp just as it was — as they fled for their lives.

⁸ When those lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into one of the tents and ate and drank; then they carried off silver and gold and clothing from there and buried it. They came back and went into another tent, and they carried off what was there and buried it. ⁹ Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. This is a day of good news, and we are keeping silent! If we wait until the light of morning, we shall incur guilt. Come, let us go and inform the king's palace." ¹⁰ They went and called out to the gatekeepers of the city and told them, "We have been to the Aramean camp. There is not a soul there, nor any human sound; but the horses are tethered and the asses are tethered and the tents are undisturbed."

¹¹ The gatekeepers called out, and the news was passed on into the king's palace. ¹² The king rose in the night and said to his courtiers, "I will tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are starving, so they have gone out of camp and hidden in the fields, thinking: When they come out of the town, we will take them alive and get into the town." ¹³ But one of the courtiers spoke up, "Let a few of the remaining horses that are still here be taken — they are like those that are left here of the whole multitude of Israel, out of the whole multitude of Israel that have perished — and let us send and find out."

¹⁴ They took two teams of horses and the king sent them after the Aramean army, saying, "Go and find out." ¹⁵ They followed them as far as the Jordan, and found the

entire road full of clothing and gear which the Arameans had thrown away in their haste; and the messengers returned and told the king. ¹⁶ The people then went out and plundered the Aramean camp. So a seah of choice flour sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel — as the Lord had spoken.

¹⁷ Now the king had put the aide on whose arm he leaned in charge of the gate; and he was trampled to death in the gate by the people — just as the man of God had spoken, as he had spoken when the king came down to him. ¹⁸ For when the man of God said to the king, "This time tomorrow two seahs of barley shall sell at the gate of Samaria for a shekel, and a seah of choice flour for a shekel," ¹⁹ the aide answered the man of God and said, "Even if the Lord made windows in the sky, could this come to pass?" And he retorted, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it." ²⁰ That is exactly what happened to him: The people trampled him to death in the gate.