

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
NAAMAN AND HIS LEPROSY
2 KINGS 5:1-14

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Introduction

When I was growing up my parents had some of those big 33 1/3 r.p.m. vinyl records that had some of the most favorite Bible stories from Scripture. I remember that my brothers and I enjoyed listening to those Bible stories over and over and over again!

One of the stories that was on those records is the story before us tonight! When we read this story it may cause us to wonder—Why is there a story about a Syrian Captain wedged in this continuing story of Israel’s mishaps.

We know when God delivered Israel from Egypt and brought them into the Promised Land, He promised to keep them safe from their enemies as long as they would serve Him! When the kingdom was divided in the days of Rehoboam, Israel’s kings forgot the LORD God of Israel and chose the path of idolatry instead! We have seen that very distinctly in the books of the Kings!

The story tonight is one where one of the heros is a young lady that was taken captive by the Syrians because of Israel’s disobedience. We are not given her name. She is just called **“a little maid.”**

She had been taken her from her family, from her people, and from her nation! She was made to serve the wife of Naaman, the Captain of the host of the Syrian army in the foreign land of Syria.

However, the one thing that no one could take from her was her LORD! Amen! Aren’t you glad that the LORD goes with us wherever we go? He was with Joseph as he was sold into slavery in Egypt! He was with David as he was on the run from Saul! He was with many others we find in Scripture and we find **the LORD was here with this little maid in Syria!**

Though she is nameless to us, make no mistake, this little maid is one of the ones who came shining through in this story. She might seem to be an insignificant part of the story to some, but **without her faithful witness, this story would not have taken place!**

Now, admittedly the story focuses on the Captain of the Syrian host, a man by the name of Naaman and also focuses on the Prophet Elisha.

I. WE SEE THE GREAT CHARACTER OF NAAMAN! (Vs 1)

There are six things we find out in this first verse about this man:

A. Naaman Was “Captain Of The Host Of The King Of Syria!” (Vs 1a)

Having attained this great position in his life! **He would have been considered a success in the world’s eyes!**

He had become **a leader in high places with great responsibilities!** No doubt he had been very **disciplined and trained well** to rise to the top as a warrior and a captain!

B. Naaman Was “A Great Man With His Master!” (Vs 1b)

That word **“great”** means **“great in any way”**.

It means that **he was held in the highest esteem**, by his master! He served his master well! He had a servant spirit!

(i.e. If you had asked the King of Syria, *“Who is the best man in your kingdom that you know you can depend on?”*

No doubt, the answer would have been, *“Naaman!”*)

C. Naaman Was “Honorable!” (Vs 1c)

Again, he had the **peculiar favor and confidence** of his master; and was promoted to the highest of trusts.

You would definitely want someone who was **honorable** in that position! You wouldn’t want someone who was shady in their character being in a position where thy controlled your army!

So we get the idea that Naaman was **well-liked, well respected, worthy of honor and promotion** and that is how he got to where he was in the kingdom!

D. Naaman Was Used Of The LORD To Give Deliverance To Syria! (Vs 1d, 2)

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When the LORD determined to bring judgment against His people, we know that he often would use the heathen.

- E. Naaman Was Also “A Mighty Man In Valor!” (Vs 1e)**
He was brave...he was a man of battle, ...he was a man of action. He was not one that just sent his troops into the battle. He was one to go into the battle with his troops!
- F. But...Naaman Was A Leper! (Vs 1f)**
(Which brings us to the second point.)

II. WE SEE THE GRAVE CONDITION OF NAAMAN! (Vs 1f)
It would be wonderful if we just stop with all we said up to that he was a *“mighty man in valour”* and not say anything else about Naaman!

However, that pesky little *“but”* is there and it was a big one for Naaman! Naaman had a dreadful physical condition known as *leprosy*! Understand some things about *leprosy*:

- A. The Nature Of Leprosy!**
According to Webster’s dictionary, *“It is a foul cutaneous disease, appearing in dry, white, thin, scurfy scabs, attended with violent itching. It sometimes covers the whole body.”*
It makes me itch just talking about it!

There are many varieties of leprosy. The variety of Bible times was characterized by white skin and appalling sores. It was a dreaded disease and resulted in the afflicted one becoming an outcast because nobody wanted to be around them.

- B. In The Scripture, Leprosy Is A Type Or Picture Of Sin And The Recovery From It Is A Type Or Picture Of Salvation!**
- C. What Leprosy Does To The Physical Body Pictures What Sin Has Done To Man Spiritually!**
1. Leprosy made one an outcast in society!
Sin makes one an outcast from God’s presence!

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2. Leprosy deforms and destroys physically!
Sin deforms and destroys physically and spiritually!
3. Leprosy was incurable apart from Divine intervention!
Sin is incurable apart from Divine intervention!
(The Lord Jesus Christ healed many lepers!)
4. The LORD could cure the leprosy problem completely!
The LORD can also cure the sin problem completely!

C. We Can List All Of The Fine Qualities Of Any Person Today, But We Also Have To Add—Oh, But He Or She Is A Sinner!

And, what do we know about sin? The wages of sin is death! In spite of all the accolades that one has attained in life, it is all for naught if sin is reigning in their life!

I don’t care how much one attains in this life or how well respected they are, to die in one’s sin is the greatest of tragedies!
Matthew 16:26—“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

And on top of all that, sin robs one of peace during their life!

D. We Live In A Day That People Delight In Digging Up Dirt On Great Men Of History!
(e.g. Columbus, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Jackson. etc.)

If they threw out of office every politician that has had a problem with sin at some point of time in their life, no one would qualify to run our country!

Man at his best state is still just a sinner! Some of us are sinners saved by grace and all the glory goes to Jesus!

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If you're trying to dig up dirt on somebody else, just understand when that favor is returned, we all come out sinners!

Isaiah 64:6 – “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

So of all the great things that could be said and were said about Naaman, we've got that qualifying “...*but he was a leper.*”

III. WE SEE THE GREAT IMPACT OF THE LITTLE MAID ON NAAMAN! (Vs 2-4)

We must take notice that Naaman's life here was greatly influenced by the witness of this little insignificant maid! Don't you know that is probably how she was normally viewed!

Now understand that this little maid could have had an attitude being a captive in a foreign land, but she didn't! She could have just said in her heart, “*Yeah, I could help you, but why? Just go ahead and suffer and die! That'll teach you to carry me away!*”

But no, she was God's faithful witness here in this foreign land. She allowed God to use her as a missionary if you will! In the heathen land of Syria, she was Naaman's best hope and he probably didn't even know it! But he and his king were grasping at straws of what to do! What did they have to lose by listening to her?

Naaman was under the death penalty without her brave testimony. And all she did was point him in the right direction.
Vs 3–“Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! For he would recover him of his leprosy.”

IV. WE SEE THE KING AND NAAMAN TRIED TO ACT UPON THE TESTIMONY OF THE LITTLE MAID! (Vs 5-6)

But they didn't listen very well and went to the king of Israel rather than to the prophet Elisha who she was talking about!

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It is kind of like when you talk to someone and point them to Jesus and they just run to some Church instead thinking that a Church is going to save them! Salvation is not in a Church! It's in the Lord Jesus Christ!

V. WE SEE THE KING OF ISRAEL THOUGHT THIS WAS JUST A PLOY FOR THE KING OF SYRIA TO HAVE A QUARREL AGAINST HIM! (Vs 7)

VI. WE SEE ELISHA HEARD ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON AND TOOK UP THE MATTER PERSONALLY! (Vs 8)

This is another one of those “*not a coincidence*” coincidences! I don't believe in coincidences, but I do believe in the hand of God!

VII. WE SEE NAAMAN WENT TO THE HOUSE OF ELISHA AND STOOD AT THE DOOR! (Vs 9)

The LORD only know's what was going on in his head here.

VIII. WE SEE ELISHA SENT A MESSENGER WITH A DISTINCT MESSAGE! (Vs 10)

The messenger did not stutter. He delivered the message the way it had been delivered to him! (And that's what we are to do!)

Naaman initially looked at this message with disdain the same way that many people look at the message of the Gospel!

1 Corinthians 1:18 “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

IX. WE SEE NAAMAN HAD A PROBLEM WITH THE MESSAGE! (Vs 11)

He shows he has some **anger issues** as he got mad at the man of God and left Elisha's house because things didn't go the way HE thought it ought to go.

In fact he said here, “*Behold, I thought...*” And that was his problem!

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HE had it figured out in his mind the way this thing ought to go. And in HIS mind things didn't happen the way HE thought they would.

What did he have a problem with?

A. Elisha Didn't Come Out!

Naaman didn't even get a glimpse of the Prophet! Elisha sent his messenger out to deliver to Naaman his message!

Maybe he thought, *“Well, this Elisha fellow must not know who he's dealing with! Maybe he doesn't know who I am?”*

But listen, the man of God wasn't going to defile himself with this heathen leper!

B. Elisha Didn't Put On A Performance!

It appears Naaman was looking for Elisha to do some abracadabra, hocus-pocus magic trick!

You know, something on the order of the present day faith healing shysters!

C. Elisha Disrespected Him With What He Asked Him To Do! (Vs 12)

You think one of Naaman's sins might have been the sin of PRIDE? Yep! We see his PRIDE rear its ugly head!

He wasn't wanting to wash in the muddy Jordan River when there were cleaner rivers in Damascus than any of the rivers in Israel!

And we see the anger issues again here in the latter part of the verse, *“So he turned and went away in a rage.”*

Listen, the *“BEHOLD I THOUGHT”* mentality will be one of the reasons many will wind up in hell!

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They've got it figured out in their own minds the way this salvation thing ought to be! And when you tell them that the LORD has only one way and it is His way or no way, they can't handle that!

X. WE SEE NAAMAN'S SERVANTS TALKED SOME SENSE INTO HIM! (Vs 13)

XI. WE SEE NAAMAN FINALLY OBEYED THE PROPHET AND WAS HEALED FROM HIS LEPROSY! (Vs 14)

He was cleansed because he was obedient. There was nothing magical about the Jordan River. This was simply a matter of obedience to the LORD's Word by the mouth of the Prophet Elisha.

Don't you imagine that every dip in the Jordan was an offense to Naaman?

CONCLUSION

The cross is an offence to the natural man and to his reasoning.

When a man comes to God by the cross he has to say, *“I can do nothing by myself. Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.”*

It is an offense to this carnal nature to bow before God and say, *“Just As I Am Without One Plea But That Thy Blood Was Shed For Me!”*

There are millions who would come to God if they could come on their own terms. If they could bargain with God and offer something for their salvation.

But man has nothing to offer God except absolute surrender to His way! The Gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!