

INTRODUCTION

On this past Sunday evening we dealt with the matter of **CONTENTMENT AND THE BELIEVER**. I believe the LORD had me deal with that subject for a reason...He always does! I did not think about our Scripture tonight as I prepared that message, because although I had read the verses that we are dealing with here, I had not prepared the message on it yet.

But Sunday evening's message fits nicely with what we see here in this passage. We are going to see a Believer, Elisha's servant Gehazi, who **brings upon himself and his family a world of hurt because he was not content!**

This is one of several stories in the Bible where someone wanted that which wasn't their's to have. It began in the Garden of Eden when **Eve coveted the forbidden fruit** and brought sin and death into the world.

We know the story of how **Achan coveted some gold, silver and expensive garments** and brought death to 36 Israelites in a failed battle at Ai and then eventually brought death to himself and his family.

We saw in the Book of 1 Kings how **Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard** and committed murder in his attempt to grab what belonged to another.

In the New Testament, **Judas was motivated by a covetous heart** in his betrayal of Jesus and wound up dead and in hell.

Annias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost because they were covetous. And both went to an early grave as a warning to others.

So, the story tonight picks up where we left off last week. Naaman has finally been obedient to the Word of the LORD given to him by Elisha and he has been healed of his leprosy! (Let's read **verse 14** and see that again.)

I. WE SEE NAAMAN RETURNED TO ELISHA! (Vs 15-19)
Naaman saw that the hand of the LORD was upon Elisha. He felt gratitude for his cleansing! And so he came back to acknowledge, in the most public way, his obligation to God and His servant Elisha.

- A. Notice Naaman's Confession! (Vs 15a)**
The LORD did this great work of healing Naaman of that awful and incurable disease. But greater than that, this experience had brought Naaman to faith in God!
- B. Notice Naaman's Offer! (Vs 15b)**
Naaman had been blessed and wanted to be a blessing! Remember what all he brought with him on this trip? (Vs 5) He came ready to pay handsomely for having his life spared of this disease!
- C. Notice Elisha's Refusal! (Vs 16a)**
Had he accepted the gift, it would have ruined the lesson of salvation by grace and would have robbed God of all the glory.

Elisha did what he did as part of the LORD's ministry for Him! He was not in the ministry for filthy lucre...i.e. to get gain! Sadly today, there are many that are in the ministry for gain by both deceiving and robbing people to live their lavish lifestyles!

(e.g. *The Carny in Parker City, Indiana who was a follower of Rod Parsley and the World Harvest Church*)
- D. Notice Naaman's Urging! (Vs 16b)**
Naaman really wanted to do something for Elisha and that's a good way to be! There was nothing wrong with that!

But understand when you insist on always giving back something to someone who has given for you, you can rob them of a blessing!
- E. Notice Elisha's Second Refusal! (Vs 16c)**
The LORD, no doubt, was behind Elisha's refusal to receive anything in order to teach Naaman of His grace!

- F. Notice Naaman's Request! (Vs 17a)**
It appears here that Naaman is asking Elisha for enough dirt that two mules can carry. (Why?)
His request seems to be in line with a pagan superstition about how no god could be worshiped in a proper and acceptable manner except in his own land, or upon an altar built of the earth of his own land.
- So, he appears to be asking for dirt from Israel to build an altar to worship the LORD God Jehovah in the land of Syria!
- G. Notice Naaman's Commitment! (Vs 17b)**
This statement denotes a heart change in Naaman!
- H. Notice Naaman's Request! (Vs 18)**
Part of Naaman's civic duty in Syria appears to have involved assisting the King as he worshiped his god Rimmon and helping the King get back to his feet after kneeling down in worship. He is wanting the LORD to pardon him for his part in having to assist his king in this manner.
- I. Notice Elisha's Words To Naaman! (Vs 19)**
Go in peace...That is different than the way Naaman came!
When Naaman first came, there was no peace because of his leprosy!
- Before we came to know the LORD, we had no peace because of our sin!

- II. WE SEE GEHAZI'S WRONG DESIRES GETS HIM IN DEEP TROUBLE WITH ELISHA AND THE LORD! (Vs 20-27)**
What is sad here is that up to this point, from all that we have seen outwardly from Gehazi, he has been a help and faithful servant of Elisha and the LORD! But something in his heart works its way out!

- A. Let's Notice The Illicit Desire! (Vs 20)**
Elisha, Gehazi's master may have refused the treasures that Naaman brought and offered, but **Gehazi coveted them! He desired them! He could not believe that Elisha had not taken anything of what the Syrian brought with him!**

Life as a Prophet of God took **living by faith day in and day out!** We get the idea that Gehazi wasn't real fond of the continual need to live by faith! He longed for something more!

This desire came from within his heart! It always does! It was an illicit, unrestrained desire from within!

A fellow preacher, Dr. Ken Trivette, shared this story. "On the night of November 16, 1930, Mrs. Henrietta Garret, a lonely 81 year old widow died in her home in Philadelphia, and, unwillingly, started the most fantastic case of inheritance litigation in history. She had failed to leave a will, or no will was found to her \$17,000,000 estate; a mystery still unsolved. She had expertly handled her financial affairs since her husbands death in 1895 and therefore many felt that she must have realized that without a will, her fortune would become involved in legal battles. Although, Mrs. Garret, at the time of her death, had only one known relative, a second cousin, and less than a dozen friends; attempts to prove relationship to her and claim a part of her estate was made by more than 26,000 persons from 47 states and 29 foreign countries, represented by more than 3,000 lawyers. In their efforts to obtain her estate, there were those that committed perjury, faked family records, changed their own names, altered data in Family Bibles and concocted absurd tales of illegitimacy. As result, 12 were confined, 10 received jail sentences, 2 committed suicide, and 3 were murdered."

I wonder how many would have admitted they were **guilty of covetousness? Or greed.**

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
GEHAZI'S GREED
2 KINGS 5:15-27

The Illicit Desire...

B. Let's Notice The Immoral Decision! (Vs 21a)

So, Gehazi, without talking to the LORD and without talking to Elisha his master, secretly followed after Naaman!

Gehazi's desire was to obtain or to take away from Naaman something that belonged to Naaman alone! Understand that when Elisha refused to take anything from Naaman, what Naaman brought with him remained Naaman's and Naaman's alone! It was not for Gehazi's partaking!

C. Let's Notice The Ignorant Deception! (Vs 21b-22)

When Naaman got off his chariot to meet Gehazi, **Gehazi told him a deliberate lie**, by saying that his master sent him. Why?

Well, he ignorantly thought that no one would know! **We may successfully deceive others, but we cannot deceive God!**

D. Let's Notice The Impassioned Decree! (Vs 23)

His story no doubt yanked at the very heart strings of Naaman who was all too willing to do something for these made up sons of the prophets in Gehazi's story!

Naaman was gracious for what the Prophet of God had done for him so he didn't question the need or the details of the story in the slightest bit!

E. Let's Notice The Inquiring Demand! (Vs 24-25)

After receiving the treasure, Gehazi hid his bounty and sent Naaman's servants away and then went in to see Elisha.

Now, he thought he had been discreet! He didn't think anyone else would know! But the LORD knew and Elisha knew what had happened, even though Gehazi had tried his best to keep his secret!

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
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His master asked him where he had been and **he lied yet again**, by claiming that he hadn't gone anywhere. **One lie commonly begets another lie! Gehazi is piling sin on top of sin here!**

Gehazi hadn't been spiritually alert and because he hadn't, it had caused him to do evil. **And then he had to do more evil to cover up the evil he had done!**

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave...when first we practice to deceive." — Sir Walter Scott, in his poem "Marmion"

F. Let's Notice The Immediate Declaration! (Vs 26)

Can you feel Gehazi's face go flush here as his sin was revealed?

Had Gehazi yet to learn that prophets had spiritual eyes? Did he really think he could hide any thing from a seer, from him with whom the secret of the LORD was?

It was foolish for Gehazi to do what he did. Sin blinds people to the real circumstances and consequences with which they have to deal. Above all, it destroys their power of sensing the presence of God.

What Gehazi assumed about Elisha, that is, that he would not find out, many sinners also assume about Almighty God! **But God does find out, and lying always leads to disgrace!**

G. Let's Notice The Immediate Defilement! (Vs 27)

Naaman's leprosy falling on Gehazi was an outward sign of his inward spiritual condition! Gehazi's integrity and his moral nature had been permanently damaged!

Gehazi would never again be able to regain what he lost that day! He carried his leprosy with him to his family and to his grave!

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
GEHAZI'S GREED
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And so Gehazi became an outcast according to the law of God!
He went to live with the lepers and to mourn for a lifetime the
folly and the wickedness which led him to throw away the
fellowship and confidence of so great a friend as Elisha.

Conclusion

We must lookout for greed and a covetous spirit in our lives as Believers lest it
cause us and those we love trouble in the end!