

# The Healing of Naaman

2 Kings 5:1-17

## Introduction:

1. Some people steadfastly refuse to read any of the OT because they think it is so old that it cannot possibly be relevant in the 20<sup>th</sup> cent
2. The story that we read here is as up-to-date as today's newspaper.
  - a. It is a simple story about a man named Naaman, a four-star general in the country of Syria who was afflicted with leprosy.
  - b. On the advice of the prophet Elisha he goes to bathe in the river Jordan seven times, and his leprosy completely disappears.
3. Now to show you just how relevant this story is to you...
  - a. In verse one substitute your name for Naaman.
  - b. Substitute the word sinner for the word leper.
  - c. Then in vs 10 substitute the phrase blood of Jesus for Jordan
4. Unless you are completely in spiritual blindness you will see very quickly how this story relates to you and to me.
5. Let's dive into this story and see what God has for us today

## I. A Great Man - vs 1

### A. His Magnificence – vs 1a

**1** Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was a leper.*

1. Position - "captain of the host of the king of Syria"
  - a) *He was a valuable citizen*
  - b) *He was a four-star general in the most powerful army of the day*
  - c) *He had all the prestige that went along with such a powerful pos.*
2. Praise - "honorable"
  - a) *He was a virtuous man and highly respected by the people*
  - b) *His name was a key that could unlock any door in the country*
3. Performance - "he had delivered Syria"
  - a) *He was a victorious captain and war hero – like Swartzkopf*
  - b) *He probably had the Syrian Congressional Medal of Honor*
  - c) *Everyone likes a winner and Naaman never lost a battle*
4. Prowess - "mighty man of valour"
  - a) *He was a valiant commander – known for courage / bravery*
  - b) *He had not earned his awards sitting at some desk pushing buttons, but he led men into combat*

## **B. His Malady – vs 1b - "but he was a leper"**

**1 ... but he was a leper.**

1. Note the little "three-letter" word "but"
  - a) *You would not think that Naaman would have any problems at all*
  - b) *Everything looked good on the outside but the problem was inside*
  - c) *As valiant / victorious as Naaman was, he was still a leper*
  - d) *No doubt he had tried every ointment, medicine, doctor, hospital, cure, remedy but to no avail.*
2. In the Bible, leprosy is a picture of sin
3. Leprosy was not cured or healed, it was cleansed
  - a) *We are never cured or healed of sin, we are cleansed*
  - b) *This is not just the story of a healing of a leper, it is also the story of the cleansing of a sinner*
  - c) *His problem was not just his leprous skin, but also his lost soul*
  - d) *Naaman was not just sick, he was sinful*
  - e) *His body was eaten with leprosy and his soul was rotten with sin and he needed to be cleansed*
4. Jim Valvano, former N.C. State basketball coach who died of cancer several years ago said, "Cancer may touch my body, but it cannot touch my mind, it cannot touch my heart and it cannot touch my soul."
  - a) *But that is exactly what sin has touched in you and me*
  - b) *Sin touches our body and it also effects one's heart, soul / mind.*

## **II. A Great Message - vs 2-3**

### **A. Her Placement by God - vs 2**

**2 And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.**

1. The Pain of Providence
  - a) *A lot of pain / drama that placed this girl where she was*
  - b) *The Syrians were not really big enemies of Israel but occasionally bands of Syrians attacked border towns and took plunder / slaves*
  - c) *Imagine the terror, pain, suffering and heartache of this little girl forcefully taken from her land*
  - d) *It turned out that she was really in better shape than Naaman*
    - (1) He was the captain and she was the little maid
    - (2) He was the general and she was the slave
    - (3) Naaman didn't know the cure, but she did
2. The Purpose of Providence
  - a) *The slave girl suggested to Naaman's wife that he go to Israel to a prophet of God to receive a cure*
  - b) *Normally Naaman would not have paid much attention to her*
  - c) *Naaman was not just a diseased man, but also a desperate man*

- d) *God's purpose was to bring the pagan general to a knowledge of the true God*
- e) *God received the honor and glory in that healing*

## **B. Her Performance for God - vs 3**

**3** And she said unto her mistress, **Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.**

1. This was a divine message
  - a) *It was the message that God had given this little maid*
  - b) *It was a message of faith*
  - c) *This message could only have been delivered by faith*
  - d) *She had never witnessed the prophet of God healing anyone of leprosy, but she believed that he could heal*
2. This was a message of truth
  - a) *It was the God of the prophet that was in view here*
  - b) *She knew that God could heal*
  - c) *Naaman found this out and said so in vs 15*
3. This was an effectual message
  - a) *This message came from a little insignificant maid*
  - b) *Perhaps Naaman and his soldiers had been disappointed in the spoils of the battle. All that work and danger for a little maid*
  - c) *Yet the message made it way from the maid to the wife of Naaman to the king of Syria*
  - d) *What makes this even more amazing is that this was a healing unheard of in Syria*
4. The gospel is a divine message
5. The gospel is an effectual message
6. The gospel a message of truth

## **III. Some Great Mistakes**

### **A. God Could be Bought – vs 5**

**5** And the king of Syria said, **Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.**

1. Naaman gathered a king's ransom
2. He presumed that God could be bought
  - a) *Some commentators say that Naaman had \$4 million of treasure to take with him*
  - b) *He was sure that the healing would have a great price*
  - c) *Many today think that God has his price*
3. God is not for sale
  - a) *The richest person in the world does not have enough money to buy one square foot of heaven*

- b) *You can't buy what is not for sale*
- c) *Naaman didn't realize that healing was not for sale, it was being given away*

## **B. The King Could Help – vs 5a, 6-7**

5a And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. . . 6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. 7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

1. Naaman obtained a king's letter
  - a) *If Naaman did not have enough prestige himself, then maybe a letter from his king would add some support*
  - b) *I wonder what was in the letter of recommendation from the king*
    - (1) Naaman was voted Syrian "Man of the Year"
    - (2) He has been in "Who's Who of Syria"
  - c) *He has medals, trophies, awards, ribbons and now a letter from the king*
2. All of this was absolutely useless
  - a) *You can't buy God with money*
  - b) *You can't bribe God with morality*
3. A recommendation from the president won't get you into heaven
4. You need a recommendation from the king of king - the Lord Jesus
 

**Joh 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

## **C. The Pride of Naaman**

1. Elisha Should Have Done More – vs 8-11
 

**8** And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. **9** So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. **10** And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. **11** But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

  - a) *Elisha's Absence*
    - (1) Elisha sent a servant to the door to speak to the great general

- (2) He thought that at least Elisha should have made an appearance
- b) *Elisha's Prayerlessness – vs 11*
- (1) Elisha did not appear and make some impressive prayer
  - (2) There was no flashy show – no magic no hocus pocus
- c) *Elisha's River*
- (1) Naaman's paralyzing pride
  - (2) Naaman wanted to be healed but on his own terms
  - (3) He didn't mind washing in a river, but he wanted it to be his river
  - (4) The Jordan is dirty and muddy much of the time and the rivers of Syria are clear and blue
  - (5) He wanted to be clean, but he wanted to do it his own way
  - (6) A little boy named Richard hated to take baths. He despised the soap and water. Every time his mother would give him a bath it was WWII. Well, one day she thought that she would take a different approach and be more positive. "Son, don't you want to be a nice, clean, sweet-smelling little boy?" He said, "Yes, mom, but can't you just dust me off." There are so many people who want to be simply dusted off. They want to be white-washed instead of being washed white.
  - (7) Naaman thought that God ought to do things his way - Naaman knew better than God
  - (8) When it comes to salvation - God only has one way - His way
  - (9) His ways are different from our ways
  - (10) His ways are above our ways
  - (11) Only one thing was keeping Naaman from complete cleansing - his stinking pride
  - (12) He could either die of leprosy in his pride
  - (13) Or he could die to his pride
- d) *When the Word of God is preached, some will be wroth*

#### **IV. A Great Cure - vs 13-14**

##### **A. The Advice of the Servants – vs 13**

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

1. Naaman's servants talk to him
2. If the prophet had asked you to do some great thing, you would have done it
3. He asked you to do a simple thing, why not do it?

##### **B. The Humiliation**

14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

1. "dipped himself seven times in Jordan"
2. When Naaman did exactly what God told him to do, then God did exactly what He promised to do
3. God has told us exactly what to do to be saved - Rom 10:9

## **V. A Great Change - vs 15-19**

### **A. Naaman's Assurance – vs 15-16**

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said Behold, **now I know** that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant. 16 But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

1. See the assurance
2. After the healing Naaman makes a profession of faith in God
3. “now I know” – not “I guess” or “I hope so”

### **B. Naaman's Acceptance of God – vs 17**

17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer **neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD.**

1. Naaman wanted to build an altar and worship God when he gets back to Syria
2. A newly saved person will have a desire to be in God's house to worship God
3. He had been a pagan, an idolater, but here Naaman said that he would worship no other Gods but the Lord
  - a) *Naaman was clean*
  - b) *Naaman was complete*
  - c) *Naaman was converted*
  - d) *Naaman was committed*
4. Naaman learned the greatest lesson that you will ever learn - when it comes to God, it pays to obey
5. It pays every day
6. It pays every step of the way