

A GREAT NEED — A GREATER GOD!

TEXT:

2 Kings 5:15b: 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.

This is a statement of faith by a Gentile in Old Testament days. The man was Naaman.

NAAMAN'S BACKGROUND

Commander-in-chief of the Syrian armies about 850 B.C.

- ▶ Famous for military success and courage
- ▶ In high favor with his monarch
- ▶ Wealthy and privileged

He was a man with a desperate need.

- ▶ He was a leper.
 - a. He was powerless to help himself.
 - b. No physician was capable of healing him.



He was willing to admit his need and seek help.



- ▶ An Israelite girl, serving as the personal maid to his wife, told him of a prophet in her country who could help him.
- ▶ Naaman set out on the journey, taking along a letter of introduction from his king, along with much gold and silver to pay for the cure he hoped to find.

NAAMAN'S SURPRISES

- ▶ The King of Syria sent Naaman, his 5-star general, to the wrong place — to the king of Israel.

- ▶ The king of Israel didn't even know of the prophet.
- ▶ The prophet, Elisha, heard of Naaman's arrival at the Capital. He summoned him to come, but did not meet him personally; rather, he spoke through a messenger. Naaman was insulted.
- ▶ The "cure" was not to take place in a dignified, ritualistic manner. Naaman was told to just wash in the Jordan seven times. Naaman was enraged. Hear his angry words:

2 Kings 5:11-12:

11 But Naaman was wrath, 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.

12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

NAAMAN'S LESSONS

- ▶ God's prophet, Elisha, was not impressed with worldly prestige.
- ▶ God's power extended to those outside the nation of Israel. His love and grace is extended to all.
- ▶ The "cure" Elisha prescribed for Naaman had nothing to do with the money a man could pay, nor did it require special talent or intelligence on the part of the seeker.
- ▶ The cure was: **simple faith** and **obedience**, which is living faith in action. We are to trust and obey — there is no other way.

ILLUSTRATION

Elisha directing Naaman to the Jordan River was like Moses holding the brazen serpent and proclaiming God's Word that those who were ill need only "look and live". There were no other requirements but trust and obedience.

Numbers 21:8: And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

Isaiah 45:22: Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.



NAAMAN'S DECISION

- ▶ Even having heard the prophet tell him what was necessary for his deliverance from leprosy, Naaman rejected such a humbling procedure as washing in the Jordan.

2 Kings 5:12: Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

- ▶ God had spoken through His prophet, now He spoke through Naaman's own servants:

2 Kings 5:13: 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 than, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?



- ▶ Naaman's anger, rebellion, and pride melted into humility as he thought of his helpless state, his great need, and the simplicity of the plan that had been given to him.



2 Kings 5:14: 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.

APPLICATION

Are you a person with a need that only God can meet?

Would you like to give God enough money to pay for salvation? Then forget it. God's blessings are free of charge.

Acts 8:20: But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the Gift of God may be purchased with money.

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Would you like to hand God a referral from an important person who could vouch that you were really a pretty fine individual who merited special favor?

Naaman had a letter of recommendation from the king of Syria.

2 Kings 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.

Would you like to do some good works to earn your gift from God?

Naaman was prepared to do great things, but unwilling to become humble.

Are you rebelling against God's plan of salvation, even knowing you have no hope outside of Jesus Christ's atoning death and victorious Resurrection?

You are committing yourself to death from the leprosy of sin. Naaman had a time of rebellion, but then there came a change of heart. With it came submission to God's Word, and the process of healing began instantly. The benefits of faith were obvious.

CONCLUSION

Acknowledge your need.

Offer God your trust and obedience.

Then, like Naaman, be a witness to tell others what He did for you. The best witnessing is just an expression of gratitude before men for what God has done in your life. There is no other God, and He so loves you that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Do you have enough humility to believe and receive the gift of eternal life? Are you willing to obey and be a witness to His saving grace?

2 Kings 5:1-10:



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.

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.

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.

4 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.

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.

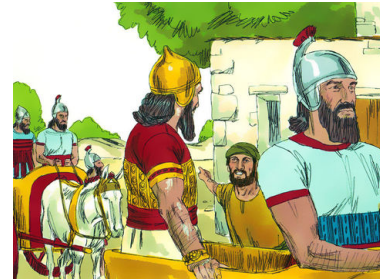
6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

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.

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.



Naaman was the General Pershing or General Eisenhower or General MacArthur of our day, but he was a leper. He came to the king of Israel from Syria to be healed, but made the king of Israel mad.

2 Kings 5:6-7:

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.

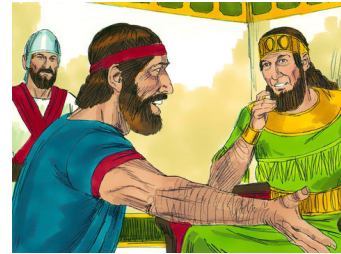


King of Israel

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent [tore] 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.

The man of God — the prophet Elisha — came to his rescue.

2 Kings 5:8: 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.



Divine healing is for today just as it was in Bible days. The elders of the church anointed and prayed the prayers of faith, and people were healed and sins were forgiven them.

James 5:14-17:

¹⁴Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord:

¹⁵ And the prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him

¹⁶ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a Righteous man availeth much.

¹⁷ Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

TODAY WE LAY BLAME ON THE ONE SICK, OR ON GOD. However, it is not God's perfect Will for you to be sick.

- The power of the early Church was traded for “for’s”: Forgiveness of sin was traded for the license to sin again. Prayer for the sick became a consolation or comfort for them to die. They really had no faith.
- Martin Luther¹ taught that eternal life cannot be not earned by good deeds but can only be received through Faith in Jesus Christ. It is the free gift of God's grace, and the Just shall live by faith. He started a Revival.



Habakkuk 2:4: Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but *the just shall live by his Faith.*

Romans 1:17: For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.*

Galatians 3:11: But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, *The just shall live by faith.*

¹Martin Luther was a German monk who began the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, becoming one of the most influential and controversial figures in the history of Christianity. (1483-1546) Biography.com

Hebrews 10:38: Now *the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

Today we are beginning to return to the prayer of faith and to anointing the sick with oil for healing.

- John Wesley² recorded 240 cases of healing in his writing of every class of disease. Wesley said, “*Man’s extremity was God’s opportunity*”. Wesley saw people healed by simple faith. However, we are not healed because of man’s extremity, but because of God’s love, God’s promise, and God’s Word. Sickness is a product of sin which happened in the beginning in the Garden of Eden.



- What is the Will of God?
Nearly 1500 years men have discredited the Word of God to the point that it is surprising to see anyone saved and anyone healed.
- Moses was praying when God told him to get up and go forward. (Moses, thru prayer, doubted God in Exodus 14, 15, & 16). We pray, Lord come and heal.

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²John Wesley was an English cleric, theologian and evangelist who was a leader of a revival movement within the Church of England known as Methodism. (1703-1791) Wikipedia