

STUDY NUMBER FOUR - II Kings 5:1-27

TEXT:

- v. 1 Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. The man was also a valiant warrior, but he was a leper.
- v. 2 Now the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife.
- v. 3 And she said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy."
- v. 4 And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel."
- v. 5 Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." And he departed and took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten changes of clothes.
- v. 6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy."
- v. 7 And it came about when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me."
- v. 8 And it happened when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent word to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."
- v. 9 So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha.
- v.10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you and you shall be clean."
- v.11 But Naaman was furious 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 wave his hand over the place, and cure the leper.'"
- v.12 "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?"
- v.13 Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, "My father, had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you- 'Wash, and be clean?'"
- v.14 So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.
- v.15 When he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him, he said, "Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; so please take a present from your servant now."
- v.16 But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will take nothing." And he urged him to take it, but he refused.

- v.17 And Naaman said, "If not, please let your servant at least be given two mules' load of earth; for your servant will no more offer burnt offering nor will he sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord.
- v.18 "In this matter may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon the Lord pardon your servant in this matter."
- v.19 And he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him some distance.
- v.20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, "Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Syrian, by not receiving from his hands what he brought. As the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him."
- v.21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw one running after him, he came down from the chariot to meet him and said, "Is all well?"
- v.22 And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Behold, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'"
- v.23 And Naaman said, "Be pleased to take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes, and gave them to two of his servants; and they carried them before him.
- v.24 When he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed.
- v.25 But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant went nowhere."
- v.26 Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you, when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to receive money and to receive clothes and oliveyards and vineyards and sheep and oxen and male and female servants?"
- v.27 "Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave to you and to your descendants forever." So he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

INTRODUCTION:

#1 We have been following the biography of Elisha from the time that Elijah was miraculously taken home in a whirlwind. We have watched him cross the Jordan, miraculously through the way which had been opened up for him, when he struck the waters and raised the question, 'Where is the Lord God of Elijah?' We have seen him purify the waters in Jericho, and also have seen him pronounce a curse on the blasphemous lads in Bethel.

#2 In our second study we see him approached by the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom, as they prepare for conflict against the Moabites, and how the Lord miraculously provides the water for the thirsty troops and the ultimate victory over the Moabites.

#3

In our third study we saw him provide the oil for one of the wives of the prophets who was in real need. We also saw him provide the gift of a son to a very dear spiritual woman who had made provision for his hospitality.

We then saw him restore life to this woman's son at a later time, and also saw him throw meal into the pot of poisonous stew and heal it so that that prophets could eat.

And then the final miracle we saw him perform was the taking of 20 loaves of barley and the fresh ears of corn that had been given and multiply them so that all had plenty to eat, and there was some left over.

We come now to one of the most interesting chapters in the life of Elisha, and there is great typical significance to the happenings in the chapter that is before us.

v. 1 Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. The man was also a valiant warrior, but he was a leper.

We are here in verse 1 introduced to General Naaman. He is the one who is responsible to the king of Syria for all of the military activities. He is called the captain of the army.

He is called 'a great man with his master and highly respected.' He evidently had been very successful in military campaigns, but also been a personal friend of the king of Syria, and their relationship had been one of great blessing to both.

The reason he is so highly respected is "because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria." "Victory comes when the Lord gives it."

It is interesting to note that the Lord can use the men of this world just like he did Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus and Alexander the Great. Here in this situation he used Naaman.

He was not only a great man to his master, he was highly respected because the Lord had given him victory. It goes on to say that he was a valiant warrior. Evidently he had joined the armed forces in his youth and had been promoted through the ranks through numerous experiences in battle and had now the name of being a valiant warrior.

I believe it is altogether significant that he was a great man with his master. The only way this could have been a reality would be seen in the fact that he was ¹submissive, ²supportive and content to be ³servant. ⁴Sensitive

Never be a great leader until first you learn to live w/ authority.

"Saw him
As A Servant
Meeting
Needs..."

*

A+M
Corp.
During
College

The last phrase in verse 1 says, 'but he was a leper.'

The word 'but' forms the contrast and gives us one sad and negative thing about Naaman. Although he was a great man and highly respected, a valiant warrior, all beautiful and positive things, still, from a negative point of view, he was a leper.

In our lifetimes we meet many great men, highly respected, valiant warriors, but there is also something else that is true. Unless this man has come to a relationship with Jesus Christ, he has the incurable leprosy of sin because the Bible says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

God is the only one who can handle the sin problem!!

J. Vernon McGee in his commentary on this passage says, "Leprosy in scripture is a type of sin. One reason is that it was incurable by human means. Only God can cure sin and save the sinner. Naaman had many fine points but he was a sinner. He tried to cover up his leprosy but he could not cure it. Many people today whitewash sin. What they need is to be washed white, and only Christ can do that."

Highly esteemed among men abomination in sight of God.

* * * "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

Pink in his discussion on leprosy, points up ten observations about the disease that help us see its typical significance with regard to sin:

1. Leprosy had an insignificant beginning.
2. Leprosy is inherited.
3. Leprosy works insiduously and almost imperceptibly.
4. Leprosy spreads with deadly rapidity.
5. Leprosy is highly infectious.
6. Leprosy is peculiarly loathsome.
7. Leprosy is a state of living death.
8. Leprosy was dealt with by banishment.
9. Leprosy made its victim an object of shame.
10. Leprosy was incurable so far as the Old Testament was concerned.

v. 2 Now the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

watch The Network !!

What a tragedy this must have been to this Israeli family to have had their little girl taken from them, and to be taken captive into a foreign land. They probably spent many sleepless nights wondering where their little girl was and how it was with her. She, too, probably often experienced homesickness and cried herself to sleep, remembering the fond days with her mother and daddy.

How often times we question God's permissive providence in a set of circumstances only to discover later his ultimate purpose in what is being wrought.

Who would have expected that the leprosy should have been appointed as the first link in that chain of events by which such a display of divine mercy was to be effected.

The second link is one which we should be still less likely to have thought of. During the continuance of the war between Benhadad and the king of Israel, the Syrians had invaded the Israelitish borders in marauding companies and had carried away, probably from some village, a little captive maiden, who appears to have been utterly separated from her parents, and having been made a slave was providentially brought into Naaman's family and waited on Naaman's wife.

Re-run of Joseph being sold into Egypt

Psalm 25:8-10 "Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."

When things do seem dark and unexplainable, we need simply to continue our confident trust in the Lord's ability to work all things together and who will, sooner or later, vindicate himself in acts that will show us the purpose behind the present happenings.

v. 3 And she said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy."

Knowing that she is serving in a troubled household, she only can express a wish and a sigh, and that is, that her master were with the prophet in Samaria, and then he would cure him of his leprosy.

Elisha certainly was well known by the people of Israel, and even by this little maid who had heard of some of his exploits. Perhaps in the previous studies, some of these words and stories had been told to her while she was still living in Israel.

She had obviously been impressed by some of his prior miracles because she knows that if Naaman were with the prophet he would be able to cure him of his leprosy.

This one thing → "There was given me a thorn in the flesh"
II Cor. 12:7
12:9 → "And he said to me: My Grace . . ."

v. 4 And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel."

Evidently, Naaman's wife immediately reported the conversation that she had had with the maid, and Naaman became very excited about the possibility of being cured. So excited, in fact, that he goes to his master, the king of Syria, and tells him exactly what the little girl had said.

v. 5 Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." And he departed and took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten changes of clothes.

The king of Syria was excited with the possibility of healing his commander-in-chief of the armed forces. So he takes some steps immediately to pursue this possibility in Samaria.

The king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." He invites Naaman to leave and he sends a letter to Jehoram, the king of Israel.

When Naaman leaves for Israel, he takes with him 10 talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten changes of clothes.

How much he is like the natural man who wants to purchase his cleansing from sin. But the scripture constantly reminds us that by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is a gift of God not of works, lest any man should boast.

v. 6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy."

You can imagine the feelings of Jehoram as he receives this letter from the king of Syria. The letter is speaking of the fact that he wants Jehoram to cure Naaman of his leprosy.

v. 7 And it came about when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me."

This letter should have really gone directly to Elisha, but Jehoram received it, he tore his clothes and asked the question, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?"

Let's of People looking for cure!!

Kent and Russia

Mayo Clinic M.D. Anderson

Contents of letter

Ahab & Jezebel
Ahaziah
Jehoram

-7-

Jehoram realizes that he does not have the power to kill or to make alive, or to heal, that rests in the hands of God.

Jehoram, again, has a very negative attitude toward this happening, even as he did in a prior study when the king of Edom and he and Jehoshaphat were in the wilderness without water, when he says that the Lord had brought them there to deliver them into the hands of the Moabites.

reads The
signals wrong
Jumps to
conclusion

A Man without X is Always Suffering From B.A.

Now then he is also negative when he says, "But see how he is seeking a quarrel against me." In other words, the king of Syria is putting Jehoram in an impossible set of circumstances where he will not be able to fulfill the request, and as a result, it will be the basis for a quarrel and ultimate war.

v. 8 And it happened when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent word to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

When Elisha receives a report that Jehoram has torn his clothes and is deeply upset by the request, he tells them, after he first asks the question, "Why have you torn your clothes?", "Now let him come to me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

Elisha speaks with great confidence as to what the Lord is going to do in solving this problem that presents itself to the nation of Israel at this time in the leprosy of Naaman.

v. 9 So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha.

Naaman was from a very rich and powerful kingdom in the north, and he was fully expecting the treatment of a visiting dignitary when he came to Israel. I don't think that it had ever entered his mind that power may be clothed in the simplest of attire, and that it is only emptiness and impotency that needs to decorate itself with pomp and parade. There were also a lot of other things that Naaman was going to need to learn because he was a very proud individual.

Call A
Press
Conference

v. 10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you and you shall be clean."

Elisha doesn't even bother to be impressed with who Naaman is or what he has accomplished, and he does not come himself. He just sends a messenger and he gives him the instructions that will cause him to be clean. These instructions are designed to cut against his pride and to cause him to realize that if he is going to experience cleansing, he must be obedient to God's way of doing things.

"Brought
us out
here to kill
us."

Trying to
start a fight

Having
A bad day
Band new
Suit too!!

Roll out
the red
carpet!!
Where are
the Networks?

Do you
realize who
is here?

There are multitudes in our day who deny truth to be truth because they have determined what is truth before they have become acquainted with it.

Psalm 51:10 "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Titus 3:5 "He served us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to his mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

John 15:3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."

Numbers 21:8,9 "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent and set it on a standard and it shall come about that everyone who is bitten when he looks at it shall live. And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard, and it came about that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent he lived.'"

How many times have we seen the Lord's instructions run so contrary to human reason, and yet when these instructions are followed, the promised result takes place.

So it is, my beloved, with the simplicity of the doctrine of the salvation of a man's soul. We do not fully understand it and cannot completely explain it, but we do know that the scripture teaches that he that has the Son has life, and that he that has not the Son of God, has not life. And that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

v.11 But Naaman was furious 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 wave his hand over the place, and cure the leper.'"

Naaman is furious over the treatment that he has received and with the instructions that have been given. And he cries, "Behold, I thought," and then we have his preconceived notions about how this was all going to take place. He had indulged narrow and haughty ideas of his own, the fallacy of which he soon experienced. "Behold," said he, "I thought he will surely come out to me". And if he had said, 'a person of my rank does not every day stop at his door.' He evidently expected deference to have been paid to his station and quality, and was chagrined at a reception which seemed to lower him down to the meanest common applicant. His high thoughts of himself encountered most unexpectedly a check and mortification, so that he at once shrunk aside with disgust

"Behold, I Thought." - Cry of the ones who did Not respond to Christ in eternity

"Many will say" - "You just can't Afford to miss on this one..."

Gideon
Jericho
Serpent on
A pole

Now we got two guys
Mad
Abra - Ca
dahra

into the conclusion that the prophet was destitute of power. This was a hasty conclusion indeed. Hasty, indeed, and extraordinary, but not uncommon. What is the ordinary reception which a faithful preaching of the gospel meets with from the world? Is it any better than Naaman's notions of Elisha at Jericho? The gospel in respect of its faithful application the conscience knows no distinction of rank or station, of education or moral worth, but addresses itself to all, indiscriminately as fallen children of Adam, born in sin, shapen in iniquity, unworthy of the least of God's mercies, and at best unprofitable servants.

Thus it directs everyone to depend on salvation on free grace alone.

Naaman's pride had been hurt, and as a result, he becomes furious and leaves with the intention of returning home without trying the prescription that had been given.

Problem
+
Pride

The Lord is not only going to deal with Naaman's leprosy, but also with his pride in this situation.

Proverbs 6:16-19 "List seven things that God hates: First on his list are these: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood."

James 4:6 "He gives more grace, wherefore he saith, God resists the proud but gives grace unto the humble."

Proverbs 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Proverbs 11:2 "When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom."

Proverbs 29:23 "A man's pride shall bring him low, but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit."

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

Impatient of delay for any further inquiry, he will have his orders instantly obeyed. His servants mounted on their camels, and his whole train on the march. But do we not feel as though we could have seized the bridles of the horses and have closed the gates of Jericho to prevent the departure of this deluded stranger?

Should we not have shed tears of compassion at beholding the unhappy man turning away from the very door of mercy? And ready to carry home to a deathbed his burden of loathsome disease and wretchedness. With such a burden he would certainly have returned as he came, had not the

providence of God mercifully interposed, to rescue him from the delusive imaginations of pride and prejudice.

This is just what the great author and finisher of our faith has done for recovering many a proud person from the leprosy of sin, and how unnecessary have such interpositions been.

Alexander Whyte points out that "but leprosy and all, Naaman was still a very proud man, for all the leprosy in the world will not make a proud man meek and lowly in heart. When Naaman was told how he could be made clean because the prophet's counsel did not fit in with Naaman's prejudices and his sense of his own importance, he was wroth at Elisha and went home, leprosy and all, in a rage.

Here you can see the reasoning of the natural man, "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" And from a human point of view, you have to say yes, they are excellent rivers. And from a human point of view, better than all the waters of Israel.

But that does not take away the fact the Lord has given very specific instructions that it is not Abanah and Pharpar, but it is the Jordan River where you go and dip seven times to experience the miracle of cleansing.

How many are the vast hosts of people today who say that there are many ways to get right with God. And we still have that spoken word of the Lord Jesus in John 14:6 who says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me." And Isaiah the prophet says, "I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior."

v.13 Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, "My father, had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

The servants, risking the wrath of their leader, come with very humble address, speaking to him softly, and asking him a question that should reveal his own pride, "My father, had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it?" In other words, is it the fact that he has given you something so small and insignificant and repulsive to human nature that has caused you to become furious and to go away in a rage?

They then say, "How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

Naaman realizes that his answer to the first question has to be 'Yes' if it would have been some great thing, he would have done it. And the answer to the other is 'Yes' he should do this: wash and be clean,

He has A Point

You can dip in the clay in the Abanah and Pharpar. And you are going to get wet!

because it is the simple instruction of the man of God as to the way to be restored and made clean from his leprosy.

v.14 So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

He listened to his servants as he began to calm down, and realized that his anger was over the fact that he was not treated the way he thought he should be and his wisdom is seen in the fact that he responds to the counsel of his servants, and goes down and dips himself seven times in the Jordan. And as a result, his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean.

Krummacher comments on this by saying, "Now view the waters of Jordan as typical of the blood of Christ and you may discern a process which must be repeated on you all. In this healing and miraculous flood you must all bathe or die and perish in your sins. In the cleansing and atoning efficacy of that precious blood, you behold the last, the only resource for sinful man. Why do we then neglect to apply an earnest to this fountain of living waters? Why accumulate vows and resolutions of self-amendment, only to break them? Why drudgingly follow a self-righteous course of action which after all is but a shining impurity? God invites and commands you to approach him to draw nigh unto him with implicit faith in the blood of his Son. To this you must conform with all your heart and soul, or you are counted rebels, whatever may be your supposed excellence. Till then, think not that you are obeying the will of God. You are leprous in his sight, be such in your own. And thus feel your absolute need of that cleansing from all sin, which is by the blood of Jesus Christ alone, and by none of your own deservings."

Whatever he commands and ordains perform it and submit to it with all humility of mind, with all simplicity, and without dispute. Does what he has prescribed appear too easy? Why should you desire difficulty? Does it appear too simple? Why should human arts be employed? Does it appear dangerous? The responsibility is His. Does he counsel you to a simple method whereby you may become enlightened and clear-sighted and healthy and clothed and in your right mind and rich and free and triumphant and righteous and without spot and without fault before His throne.

Enter then in at that straight gate by believing on him who justifieth the ungodly. Does not Naaman know these things now? And would he not were it possible thus plead with you.

v.15 When he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him, he said, "Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; so please take a present from your servant now."

Seems Silly! A Grown Man dipping in A River

Broad & Narrow way!!

There is a fountain
Filled with blood
Drawn from
Immanuel's side
+ sinners
beneath the cross
Their guilty
stains

I Thought.
I Know

"None but
His loved ones
Know..."

Naaman now returns to Elisha with all of his company. And he comes in a humble spirit and with gratitude of heart. And as he stands before Elisha, he gives his testimony, and it is recorded, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; so please take a present from your servant now."

He is expressing his gratitude of heart for the work which God has done in his life, by giving a present to his servant.

v.16 But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will take nothing." And he urged him to take it, but he refused.

Elisha says the Lord lives and he stands before him, and he is the one who is responsible, and therefore he will take nothing.

v.17 And Naaman said, "If not, please let your servant at least be given two mules' load of earth; for your servant will no more offer burnt offering nor will he sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord."

Since Elisha will not accept payment for what God has done, Naaman does have a request. If not, that is, if you will not receive the gift that I bring to you, please let your servant at least be given two mules' load of earth, for your servant will no more offer burnt offering, nor will he sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord.

Naaman is manifesting the fact that he truly has a relationship to God in that he is doing away with his idolatry and the worshipping of false gods.

Naaman's chief concern is to be a worshiper of the God of all grace--the God of Israel. And to this end he requests permission to take home with him sufficient soil of the land of Israel to build an altar.

He first that he is a cleansed leper, or a sinner saved by grace. Then he is an assured saint, I know - in verse 15. And now a voluntary worshiper.

v.18 "In this matter may the Lord pardon your servant: When my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon the Lord pardon your servant in this matter."

Naaman can already see some consequences to his new-found faith, and he is going to need to be extremely careful in his conduct with his master. And so he is mentioning these matters to Elisha here that he might have wisdom.

He doesn't hammer Him with All
Kinds of Rules + Regulations !!

Boy! I wish
there were
more of this

cleansed - leper
Assured - I know
Worshipping

v.19 And he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him some distance.

The fact that Elisha says, "Go in peace." does not indicate that Elisha approved of Naaman's intention. They mean nothing more than goodbye. The inconsistency between Naaman's belief in God and proposed behavior must be left to his judgment.

Elisha is leaving to God to deal and work in the area of convictions as far as Naaman's personal life is concerned. And as Romans 14:5 says in these areas: "Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

The major issue has transpired. Naaman has become a believer in God and now these other matters will begin to take care of themselves as he is aware of a deepening relationship with God.

v.20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, "Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Syrian, by not receiving from his hands what he brought. As the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him."

Gehazi is moved by greed in this situation, and sees an opportunity for personal material gain.

Gehazi's philosophy is 'you never look a gift horse in the mouth.' And so he wants to go and acquire some things for his own personal advantage.

v.21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw one running after him, he came down from the chariot to meet him and said, "Is all well?"

Naaman notices that Gehazi is pursuing him and stops with the greeting, "Is all well?"

v.22 And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Behold, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'"

Here Gehazi uses deception for his own personal advantage. He misrepresents Elisha in the request and makes it a very pious one for the sons of the prophets.

v.23 And Naaman said, "Be pleased to take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes, and gave them to two of his servants; and they carried them before him.

Gehazi allows the servants of Naaman to carry these things for him back to the dwelling place.

So concerned
+ about conviction
+ conduct when
the deepening
of the relationship
is primary

v.24 When he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed.

After they had carried the gift back to the hill, Gehazi then takes them so they won't be seen by Elisha and he stows them away. Then Gehazi rushes back to work and acts as though nothing has happened.

v.25 But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant went nowhere."

*I lie
gives birth
to a second*

Here he lies the second time. First to Naaman, and now to Elisha.

v.26 Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you, when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to receive money and to receive clothes and oliveyards and vineyards and sheep and oxen and male and female servants?"

Elisha sounds just like exactly like the Lord Jesus when he is talking to the woman at the well, when she says, "I have no husband." And he said, "You spoke rightly. You have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the man that you are now living with is not your husband."

*** Hebrews 4:13 "Behold, all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

v.27 "Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave to you and to your descendants forever." So he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

As we look at these tragic consequences of greed, we need to recognize the bitter fruit that is born by nursing of a covetous spirit. "For the love of money is the root of all evil. While some coveted after that, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." I Timothy 6:10

*Taking
Unfair
Advantage*

There is a second lesson here too, and that is a most solemn warning against putting a stumblingblock in the way of a babe in Christ. Naaman had only recently come to know Jehovah as the God of all grace, and that was another reason why he dealt so severely with Gehazi.

In this particular passage, we have seen the great sin of Naaman as being pride and the great sin of Gehazi was greed.

And it is J. Vernon McGee who says, "My beloved, greed is leprosy of the soul."

13 Lessons

CONCLUSION:

There are a number of lessons that we can gain from this particular passage.

Great because He was submissive, supportive, SINCERE servant
LESSON #1: It is possible to be a great man, highly respected and a valiant warrior, and still to be a leper. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

LESSON #2: Sometimes those things which by themselves seem to be a tragedy, even as the taking captive of a little girl from Israel, eventually is used in a providential plan of God for the accomplishment of a good result in the life of a man like Naaman.

LESSON #3: Naaman is assuming that he can purchase the cure from the prophet.

LESSON #4: Naaman's pride is brought to the surface through the cure that is prescribed.

LESSON #5: Naaman had preconceived notions as to how God was going to work this miracle in his life.

LESSON #6: When Naaman was obedient, the God-promised results took place.

LESSON #7: His departure from idolatry is an indication of his new-found joy in the relationship to God.

LESSON #8: Progress in our spiritual relationship will take place as we are submissive and obedient to God. He will deal with us in the personal areas of our lives.

LESSON #9: Gehazi's sin is the sin of greed, wanting temporary and material gain.

LESSON #10: One lie leads to another. First to Naaman, and then to Elisha.

LESSON #11: All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Lesson #12 Victory comes when the Lord gives it.

Lesson #13 We can get so concerned about conversations + conduct that we forget the deepening of a relationship is primary.



ILLUSTRATION

Man Forced to Accept Paid Debt

Send to printer

Topics: Assurance; Atonement; Choices; Dependence on God; Double-mindedness; Doubt; Faith; Gift of Righteousness; Grace; Grace, salvation by; Help from God; Imputation of Righteousness; Promises; Salvation; Salvation, gift of; Substitution; Trust

Filters: Christian Culture; Editor's Choice★; Stories

References: Exodus 32:30 , John 3:16 , Romans 3:24-25 , Romans 5:11 , Ephesians 1:7 , Ephesians 2:8-9 , Titus 3:3-7 , 1 Peter 1:17-19 , 1 John 1:9

Tone: Commend

I was having breakfast with my dad and my younger son at the Real Food Café on Eastern Avenue, just south of Alger in Grand Rapids. As we were finishing our meal, I noticed that the waitress brought our check, then took it away, and then brought it back again. She placed it on the table, smiled, and said: "Somebody in the restaurant paid for your meal. You're all set." And then she walked away.

I had the strangest feeling sitting there. The feeling was helplessness. There was nothing I could do. It had been taken care of. To insist on paying would have been pointless. All I could do was trust that what she said was actually true and then live in that—which meant getting up and leaving the restaurant. My acceptance of what she said gave me a choice: to live like it was true or to create my own reality in which the bill was not paid.

That is our invitation—to trust that we don't owe anything. To trust that something is already true about us, something has already been done, something has been there all along.

To trust that grace pays the bill.

Rob Bell, Repainting the Velvet Elvis (Zondervan, 2005), p. 151-152; submitted by Chris Maxwell, Royston, Georgia

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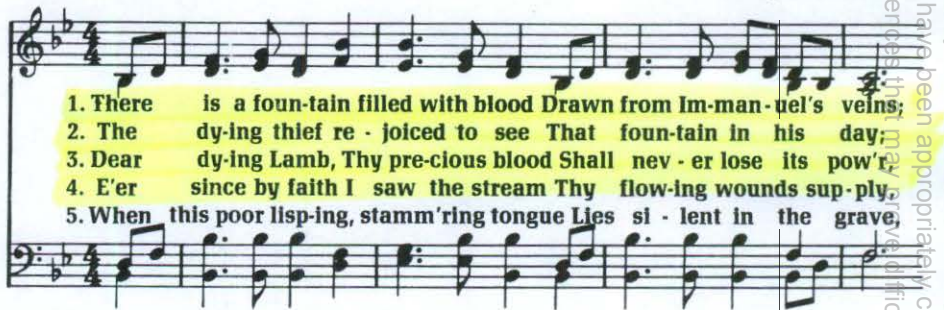
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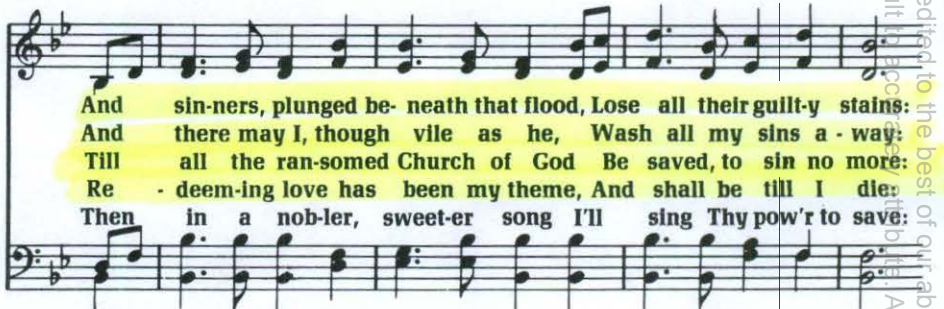
There Is a Fountain

William Cowper

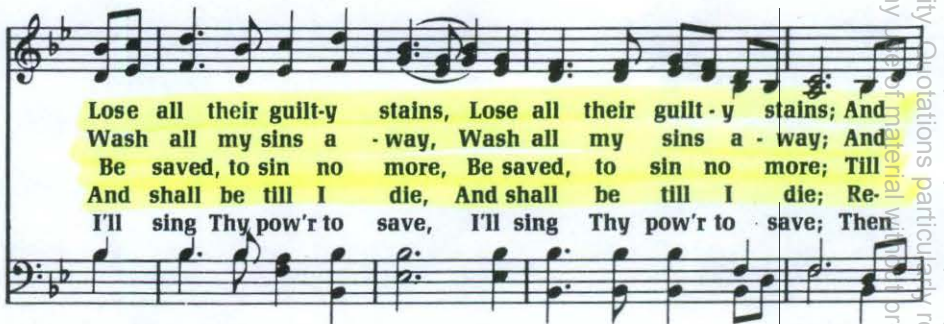
Traditional American melody
Arr. by Lowell Mason



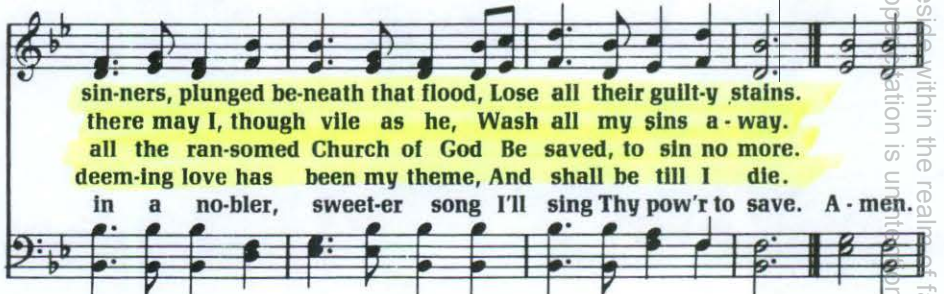
1. There is a foun-tain filled with blood Drawn from Im-man-uel's veins;
2. The dy-ing thief re - joiced to see That foun-tain in his day;
3. Dear dy-ing Lamb, Thy pre-cious blood Shall nev - er lose its pow'r;
4. E'er since by faith I saw the stream Thy flow-ing wounds sup-ply;
5. When this poor lisp-ing, stamm'ring tongue Lies si - lent in the grave,



And sin-ners, plunged be- neath that flood, Lose all their guilt-y stains:
And there may I, though vile as he, Wash all my sins a - way:
Till all the ran-somed Church of God Be saved, to sin no more:
Re - deem-ing love has been my theme, And shall be till I die:
Then in a nob-ler, sweet-er song I'll sing Thy pow'r to save:



Lose all their guilt-y stains, Lose all their guilt-y stains; And
Wash all my sins a - way, Wash all my sins a - way; And
Be saved, to sin no more, Be saved, to sin no more; Till
And shall be till I die, And shall be till I die; Re-
I'll sing Thy pow'r to save, I'll sing Thy pow'r to save; Then



sin-ners, plunged be-neath that flood, Lose all their guilt-y stains.
there may I, though vile as he, Wash all my sins a - way.
all the ran-somed Church of God Be saved, to sin no more.
deem-ing love has been my theme, And shall be till I die.
in a no-bler, sweet-er song I'll sing Thy pow'r to save. A - men.