

"Naaman the Leper"

Part 4

2 Kings 5:15-27

Introduction: The last time we were in 2 Kings we looked at the miracle of Naaman's healing. He was a man who had all that anyone could hope for. He was a man who was at the top of his ladder, but he had leprosy. That was a death sentence in his day and apart from a miracle from God there was no cure. He eventually found his way to Elisha and was instructed to was in the Jordan River seven times. This sent Naaman into a rage for the command stripped him of all his self-righteousness. You see, he had come to Elisha in all of his royal apparel hoping to somehow be able to "win" his cleansing.

Notice 2 Kings 5:9

Naaman was decked out in his royal uniform while riding his royal chariot pulled by his royal horses which would have been arrayed in gold and silver. He was hoping to "earn" his healing by impressing Elisha with his presentation. But God is no respecter of persons. The Bible is very clear that no matter what position a person hold, no matter how much money they have, no matter what their accomplishments, we are all sinners and we are all on the same level. Naaman did not understand this and so when Elisha gave the command to wash in the Jordan seven times it was a slap in the face for it stripped Naaman of all his self-righteousness.

Notice 2 Kings 5:10-12

Elisha never came out to meet Naaman he simply sent a messenger with the command and that combined with the simple command sent Naaman into a rage.

Application:

As we considered before, leprosy was a picture of sin in the Bible. Naaman is a picture of the sinner who is in need of spiritual healing/forgiveness of sin. But no man or woman will find forgiveness in their own self-righteousness. Each person **MUST** see themselves in their **TRUE** spiritual condition before they understand they are helpless and need a Savior. They **MUST** understand they have nothing at all to contribute.

Matthew 19:16-22

¹⁶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

¹⁷ And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

¹⁸ He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

¹⁹ Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

²⁰ The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

²¹ Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Here was a man who desired eternal life, but he could not see himself as a lost sinner. He stood before Jesus Christ in his self-righteousness and his love for the world and for that reason he could not get through the STRAIT GATE.

Luke 13:24

²⁴ Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Jesus said that many will seek to enter into eternal life but will not be able because they see themselves as self-righteous and they cannot accept the truth that they are sinners who have nothing to offer. They come to Jesus with the hopes of buying or somehow earning their salvation. Many times, when they are told they cannot earn eternal life they respond as Naaman and they go away in a rage.

Naaman had some caring friends surrounding him and they would not allow him to walk away.

Notice 2 Kings 5:13-14

They convinced him to follow the instructions of Elisha and he did and was healed.

Now, as we have considered this is all a picture of salvation.

The Aftermath of the Miracle

A. Naaman's Response

Notice 2 Kings 5:15

Naaman gave praise to God but he desired to pay for what he had received.

Notice 2 Kings 5:16

Elisha however would take absolutely no payment for the healing. It was all grace and it is a picture of salvation so for Elisha to take any payment for the healing would be to ruin an Old Testament picture of salvation which is completely by grace through faith.

Let us consider both Naaman and Elisha for a moment to see the applications for our lives.

1. **Naaman**

We cannot fault Naaman for his offer. He has been set free from a death sentence and so it is natural to want to somehow give back to the one whom God used to heal him. This offer of Naaman's can be seen as fruit in the life of the person who is truly saved.

Let me show you the changes that came about by salvation in the lives of different people.

Luke 19:2-8

² *And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.*

³ *And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.*

⁴ *And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.*

⁵ *And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.*

⁶ *And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.*

⁷ *And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.*

⁸ *And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: **Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.***

The NEW LIFE within Zacchaeus was now manifest on the outside. He was now a changed man because he had been saved.

Remember when Paul and Silas were thrown in prison and beaten with many stripes and they sang praises to God and then there was the earthquake and the Philippian jailor came to them and asked to be saved?

Acts 16:29-34

²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

³² And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

³³ And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

³⁴ And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

This man now cared for their wounds and he provided food for their nourishment. Here again we see the NEW LIFE manifest on the outside.

Naaman had been changed on the inside and the joy is showing on the outside.

Application:

This joy should also be evident within our lives also.

1 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

2. Elisha

Now considering Elisha I am reminded that he had to be very careful. There was nothing wrong with the prophet receiving support from those whom he ministered to because he needed to survive. But Elisha needed to teach to Naaman the freeness of God's grace and he had to be sure when Naaman returned to his land that his testimony was that the God of Israel had healed him and had taken nothing from him but his leprosy. Elisha wanted Naaman to go back and declare to all whom he knew that his gold and his silver and his position were useless when it came to dealing with the God of Israel who gave all for nothing.

Let me show you the words of **Scott** on Elisha's discernment in all of this:

"Gratitude to the Lord will dictate liberality to the instruments of His mercies. But different circumstances will render it necessary for them to adopt different measures. The "man of God" will never allow himself to covet anyone's gold or silver or apparel; but be content with daily bread and learn to trust the Lord for tomorrow. Yet sometimes he will

understand that the proffered kindness is the Lord's method of supplying his necessities, that it will be fruit abounding to the benefit of the donor, and that there is propriety in accepting it as a token of love; but as others, the gift will be looked on as a temptation, and he will perceive that the acceptance of it would degrade his character and office, dishonor God, and tend exceeding to the injury of the giver. In this case he will decidedly refuse it. This is particularly to be adverted to in the case of the great, when they first turn their thoughts to religious subjects. From knowledge of the world, they are apt to suspect all their inferiors of mercenary designs, and naturally suppose that ministers are only carrying on a trade like other men; while the conduct of too many so-called confirms them in the sentiment. There is but one way of counteracting this prejudice, and that is by evidencing a disinterested spirit, and not asking anything, and in some cases refusing to accept favors from them, until they have attained a further establishment in the faith; and by always persevering in an indifference to every personal interest."

Let me show you what Paul wrote to the Corinthians;

1 Corinthians 8:1-12

Am I am not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

² If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

³ Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

⁴ Have we not power to eat and to drink?

⁵ Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

⁶ Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

⁷ Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

⁸ Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

¹⁰ Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

¹¹ *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?*

¹² *If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.*

As an Apostle Paul had every right to accept finances from the Corinthians and God's Word support that very Truth. But in the case of the Corinthians he refrained. They were babes in Christ and he wanted to be sure he did not do something that would hinder the message of the Gospel which is "Salvation is by GRACE and GRACE alone".

B. The Change

The Bible is very clear that after a man or woman is saved their lives are forever changed.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Naaman is a picture of this change which happens to those who are true believers.

1. A love for God.

Notice 2 Kings 5:16-17

Elisha would receive no payment from Naaman so Naaman requested that he be given stone and dirt which two mules could carry. This would be like requesting two wheelbarrows full of dirt and stone. What was the purpose of this?

Notice 2 Kings 5:15

Naaman saw God as the God of "Israel" and He was but Naaman did not understand that He was the God of all the earth. When Naaman requested the two mules full of the dirt and stones it was his plan to return home and build an altar, so he could worship the God of Israel.

Notice 2 Kings 5:17 again.

Naaman was forsaking idolatry and he was now determined to worship the True and Living God.

Let me show you what happened at Ephesus when the Gospel was brought to the city.

Acts 19:17-20

¹⁷ *And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.*

¹⁸ *And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.*

¹⁹ *Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.*

²⁰ *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

2. Sensitivity to sin.

Notice 2 Kings 5:18

As Naaman prepared to return home it came to his mind one of his responsibilities and that was to accompany the king of Syria into the temple of the false god Rimmon (the god of wind, rain and storm). Naaman was his right-hand man and his body guard so he was responsible to travel with the king even into this temple to Rimmon. Before Naaman's healing he had no problem with this but not that he had met the True God of Israel he was sensitive to being exposed to the worship of a false deity.

This is what happens to a person when they are saved today. This is one of the evidences of True salvation. Remember Peter's brokenness after his denial?

Matthew 26:73-75

⁷³ *And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.*

⁷⁴ *Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.*

⁷⁵ *And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.*

Conclusion:

Naaman was no longer the same man for he had met the True God who changed his life forever. I will leave you with Paul exhortation to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*