

Lessons from Naaman

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Naaman is a Bible character we all know. Naaman was considered a great man of war and well revered in Aram. He was captain of the army of Aram and so the king wanted to help Naaman with his condition. Naaman's wife had a servant who was from Israel and knew of the prophet dwelling in Samaria. The king sent Naaman to the king of Israel to be cured along with great treasures. When Naaman finally comes to the prophet, he is upset with the news he hears. He expected a great miracle, not to bathe in filthy water. After being persuaded by his servants, he is washed and cleaned of his leprosy. In 2 King 5:15 he states: "I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." Let's look at some of the lessons we see in Naaman.

First, Naaman is in a miserable state. Leprosy was painful, and it caused sensory loss. The disease was considered a sign of an outcast as lepers were not to dwell with everyone else in many places. Leprosy could cause nerve damaging and was a terrible blight on a person. Naaman was a man who needed help. He'd been carried down by this disease, and needed help! His servant girl told him where to go, but that leads to the second lesson.

Naaman sought the wrong person. After talking with the King of Aram, he went to the king of Israel. Remember that the young girl told of the prophet. When the king of Israel receives the king of Aram's letter, he is distressed. He understands that he does not have the power to take life or restore it. Elisha sends for them to come to him and see that there is a prophet. Often, people look in all the wrong people to solve their problems. People put faith in man instead of God. Man can disappoint and betray, whereas God is just and faithful.

The third lesson we see if Naaman believed he could be healed with the wrong price. Naaman understood enough to know that he must pay something for his healing. He

and the king of Aram believed great riches would suffice. Look at the great amount he has brought with him: ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothes. Assuming standard weights of the talents and shekels, but not including the clothes, today's value would be nearly \$3.3 million. What Naaman eventually learned is the price was not monetarily, but submitting his will and own ideas to what was told to him by the prophet of the Lord.

The fourth lesson is described best as Naaman looked for the wrong procedure. He was upset that he'd traveled this way to be told to dip seven times in murky water. His servants reveal this best when they say, "had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it?" He was expecting something grand, of great measure, etc. He was not expecting some smaller task. We can find ourselves similar to Naaman here as well. We often look for some great thing we are to do, and overlook the smaller tasks told to us.

Next, we also see he was looking for the wrong location. He was already unhappy about what he was told to do, but the Jordan River was a dirty, murky water. He believed many other waters were much cleaner. Think of his disease again, it effects the skin greatly and yet he is to dip in unclean water? He wanted to choose everything for himself, he did not want to submit his own will to that of the Lord.

Once his servants bring him to his senses, he is washed and cleansed. This proved to him that there was a true God, the God of Israel. He understood that he was his own stumbling block to healing in this regard, because he did not want to do what was told of him.

Thought to consider

Are we as guilty as Naaman sometimes? We let sin get us caught and we get ourselves into a miserable state. When we are ready to be healed, we often look in the counsel of men and not the counsel of God. We need to be helping and praying for one another, but the answers themselves come from the word of God. We often don't submit our own will to God and may even try to barter in prayers. (If you do this for me, I'll do this for you). We must realize the price of healing is total submission. We sometimes look for some grand way to prove we want to be cleansed. Many times, we overlook so many

small tasks that show to God every day we are living for Him. Finally, we try to put everything on our own terms. If we don't fix it, we will not be healed. —**CW**