

Naaman

SCRIPTURE: II Kings 5:1-19; Luke 4:27

AIM: to teach my students that sin and leprosy both can be cured by God

POINT OF CONTACT: Tell the story of Naaman, the captain of the armies of Syria, who was probably the man who killed Ahab and brought deliverance to his people. The Syrian armies had captured a young Israelite girl who was probably in her early teens. Naaman, though a leper, was a mighty man in the kingdom. The Syrians had no regulations against lepers having a standing in the community. One day, because of the kindnesses of Naaman to the little maid, she said that she knew a way that he could be healed.

I. MIGHTY MEN HAVE PROBLEMS. JUST THE SAME AS OTHERS DO.

Read II Kings 5:1. Consider for a moment the exalted position of Naaman: a great warrior, a man who was highly respected by his king, a man who had been a great blessing to untold thousands of Syrians and a man who was kind enough to his servant (who was really a slave) that she was interested in his welfare.

Wealth, fame, fine clothing, exalted position are not cures for a broken heart. We seem to think that just because a man is outstanding in the community he is not as badly in need of God as the fellow from the "wrong side of the tracks." Here is an exception to that rule!

II. THE FACT THAT GOD BLESSES SOME DOESN'T MEAN THAT THEY ARE ALL THAT GOD WANTS THEM TO BE.

See II Kings 5:1. Naaman had been blessed by God. Verse 1 says that God had especially used him to bring deliverance to the Syrians. With all of these blessings, he was still not what God would have him to be. God did not intend for him to be a leper. The world seems to think that the more wealth and more fame they receive the more it is an indication that God has blessed them and is satisfied with them.

III. A YOUNG CHRISTIAN COULD BE A BLESSING TO A GREAT GENERAL.

Notice II Kings 5:3. This young lady, perhaps 13 years old, had been carried away as a slave to a strange land. The only teaching that she had was that which she had received at home prior to her abduction. She remembered enough that when the time came that she was the only Christian in the kingdom, she could tell the greatest man in the kingdom something that he did not know. The youngest Christian in our church who will do so and will be sweet in doing it can impart information to college presidents who do not know Jesus Christ.

IV. A YOUNG CHRISTIAN HAD THE RESPECT OF THE KING.

Consider what would have happened had this little Christian girl been frivolous, irreverent and disobedient. Never would she have had the privilege of being the great blessing that she was. (Teacher, stress proper behavior!)

V. THIS LITTLE CHRISTIAN BELIEVED HER PREACHER COULD DO ANYTHING.

Read II Kings 5:3. She saw that her master had a loathsome disease. She had never seen a leper cleansed; at least, we have no record of there having been others cleansed. We definitely know from Luke 4:27 that Naaman was the only Syrian ever cleansed, so we know that she had not seen Syrians cleansed of leprosy. She could still say, "If this fellow could just get to my preacher, my preacher would know what to do." May God grant that the parents and teachers of our children will teach them such deep respect for the man of God.

VI. THE KING HATED TO LOSE A WORKMAN.

See II Kings 5:5. The king knew that, in time to come, Naaman's disease would gradually run its course and would cause him to be less and less useful. When the king heard that there was a possibility of his great general being healed, he set out to arrange for his general to meet the prophet. What a beautiful example of a workman having the respect of an employer! This is a good place for us to impress upon our own students that a Christian should be the best worker in any plant. Even a lost man should work for the money he gets.

Certainly a Christian should be worthy of his wage.

VII. THE PREACHER DIDN'T SAY. "MAYBE."

Notice II Kings 5:10. Naaman came to the preacher. The preacher said, "Go...wash...and thou shalt be clean." The water of the Jordan River had no peculiar power. This was God's method of bringing Naaman to his knees and making him admit the superiority of God's way. The preacher had enough trouble getting Naaman to submit to the will of God in being as definite as he was. If he had ever said, "I think that this might work," Naaman most certainly would not have dipped in the water. May we teach our students never to be afraid to say, "God will do it!"

VIII. NAAMAN WOULD LISTEN TO REASON.

Read II Kings 5:13.

IX. NAAMAN COULD CHANGE HIS MIND.

In II Kings 5:12, we see that Naaman had publicly stormed away from the house of the prophet when the prophet would not work in the way that Naaman wanted him to work. His servants spoke to him and said, "If the prophet had told you to do something hard, you would have done it. Could you not try to do this simple thing?" Naaman saw that perhaps he had been hasty, and he changed his mind. See II Kings 5:14. Sometimes we need to change our minds.

X. GOD'S BLESSINGS BROUGHT A DESIRE TO SHOW APPRECIATION.

See II Kings 5:15. He had brought several thousands of dollars to give to the prophet. When the prophet refused to take the money, Naaman said, "...for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the lord." We see this in II Kings 5:17.

XI. NAAMAN KNEW THE LEPROSY WAS CLEANSED.

Read II Kings 5:15. We could elaborate here a great deal upon those who say that one cannot know that he is saved. Everything else that God ever did in the Bible, men knew had happened. The dead knew that he had been raised from the dead. The leper knew that he had been cleansed. The demoniac knew that his demons had left him. The youngster who was continually being thrown to the ground and falling in the fire knew that now he could walk upright.

Why do we suppose that if God lets everything else be known for a certainty that we would have to guess that we were saved?

XII. NAAMAN'S DISEASE WAS A TYPE OF SIN.

THE DISEASE

1. It starts small.
2. For awhile it's not too disagreeable.
3. It can be hidden temporarily,
4. Once started, it constantly increases,

LEPROSY

It starts with spots on the eyelids and the palm of the hand.

In the initial stages, it does not cause real illness.

A small amount of makeup could hide the tiny skin blemishes,

The disease moves from the surface of the skin to the tissues, then to the joints; eats into the internal organs, comes again to the surface through the eyes, nose and the body openings until gradually the body extremities fall off, and death comes either because of the disease or because of complications.

SIN

It starts with one small sin, one little drink, one little flirtation.

In the beginning, there is a slight amount of pleasure.

small amount of care could keep sin hidden from those you would not want to see it.

One drink leads to another; one sin it leads to another.

5. The disease brings on other diseases,	Infection; tuberculosis; eye, ear, nose and throat diseases; and a general debility result because of the lack of resistance in the body.	The alcoholic becomes a liar to hide his sin; the narcotic addict becomes a thief to pay for his sin; the female narcotic addict becomes a prostitute to pay for her sin with each sin bringing on another.
6. It is contagious.	The children of lepers invariably are lepers with the disease being in the bloodstream.	The child of an alcoholic normally becomes an alcoholic. Most of the sins in which we indulge were learned at home or among our companions.
7. It makes one have to	It renders one ceremonially unclean. separate from the community.	It puts one in the penitentiary, the hospital, or makes one loathsome to the community.
8. High position in the community doesn't help it.	Silk and satin covering a leprous body does not eliminate the leprosy.	A narcotic addict who is mayor of the town is still a narcotic addict.
9. Wealth won't buy a cure.	There was no known cure.	Families have exhausted fortunes trying to change wayward children.
10. The prophet couldn't cure him by himself.	The prophet told him what God would have him to do.	The prophet can only point the sinner to Christ.
11. The man couldn't get cured on his terms.	Naaman wanted the prophet to come to him and go through some magic or ritual,	The sinner usually wants to determine how he is changed.
12. Even the most sinful could be cured just as he was.	Anyone could go to the Jordan River.	Anyone can come to Christ.
13. Only God can cure it.	Even today with all of our so-called know-how in medicine, we still have not discovered a cure for leprosy,	With all of our education, all of our we have still not sociological advances, not cured sin.