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Naaman's Cleansing / Our CLEANSING

II King 5: 1-14

Introduction

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2 Kings 5: 1-8 - ¹ Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but* a leper.

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² And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. ³ Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy."

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⁴ And *Naaman* went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel." ⁵ Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

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⁶ Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.

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⁷ And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "*Am* I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me."

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

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⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. 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."

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¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, '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 heal the leprosy.' ¹² *Are* not the Abanah and the 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.

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

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¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God;

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and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

A. Naaman was the commander of the Syrian army.

1. An army of the enemies of Israel
2. He was a man who had power, authority and wealth.
3. He lived during the time of Elisha.
4. Elisha was the prophet of God in Israel

B. For our study today, I want to take a look at Naaman's cleansing.

1. And I want us to notice some similarities to the cleansing that we receive in Christ today

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I. First of all - Naaman's Condition

A. As I have already said, Naaman was a powerful man. He was a very wealthy man.

1. But, Naaman had a real problem. Naaman was a leper.
 - a. Leprosy was, at that time, an incurable disease. It was the most dreaded of diseases of that day.
 - b. It caused the body to produce great lesions and was thought to be highly contagious.
 - 1) Much has been learned about leprosy, now called "Hansen's Disease".
 - 2) It can now be completely cured with proper medication.
 - 3) and unbeknown to those in Bible times, it is only contagious for the first two weeks of the infection and only contracted through saliva and touch to the infected area.
 - 4) In fact, it is said that 95% of all humans have a natural immunity to Leprosy.
 - a) Which explains why so few people actually contracted the disease.
 - c. Even though much discomfort resulted from this disease, it was more of a social issue than a medical issue.
 - d. Lepers were separated from society under the law of Moses and under most laws in society.
2. Because there was no doctor in Syria or anywhere else who could cure Naaman, his only recourse was to become an outcast from society like all others who had this terrible disease.
3. No doubt, this was a dire situation for Naaman.

SLIDE 15**II. Condition of Sinners Today**

A. We have a most dreaded disease today. (Far worse than leprosy) (SIN)

1. For you see, All people stand guilty before God-

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a. Paul tells us this in **Rom. 3:23** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

2. Because of sin, we are separated from God and have no fellowship with Him or any part in His covenant-

a. Listen to how Paul describes the condition of the sinner in **Eph. 2:12** - remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

3. What all this is saying is this: Sin brings spiritual death-

a. Ezekiel makes a simple statement of this in **Ezek. 18:20** - The soul who sins shall die. How much plainer can it be? The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

4. And without cleansing, sin will bring the second death-

a. Again, the apostle Paul - **Rom. 6:23** - For the wages of sin is death

b. John saw a vision of this second death in **Rev. 20:14-15** - Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

B. This is far worse than the most debilitating of physical diseases.

SLIDE 17**III. Naaman's Hope**

A. Now, let's go back to Naaman.

1. What was his prognosis?

a) It is said that on average, the Leprosy disease will last from 5 to twenty years in a human.

b) During Bible times, it was considered lifelong.

c. So, Naaman's future was, to say the least, bleak.

B. But then, he received a glimmer of hope.

1. Hope from a little slave girl he had captured from the land of Israel.
2. She told of a prophet of God in Samaria who could heal him- **Vs.3**
3. Naaman believed her words and immediately prepared to journey to Samaria to seek out the prophet.

C. He now had hope of being healed.

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IV. Our Hope of Healing

A. I want to tell you, my friends, we have hope for our disease of sin.

1. Jesus Christ is our hope, our only hope of healing from sin

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- a. Listen to Paul in **I Tim. 1:1** - Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, **OUR HOPE**
2. Through His sacrificial death, Jesus has provided a means of cleansing from sin-
 - a. The apostle John declared this in **I Jn. 2:1-2** - ... if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.
 - b. He saw it in the heavenly vision in **Rev. 1:5** - and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
3. all who would be cleansed must believe In Him as Naaman believed the little girl
 - a. Jesus, Himself said, **Jn. 8:24** - for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."
4. Our faith must be an active faith as Naaman's was.
5. He went to his only source for cleansing, that being God's prophet.
6. And All who would be cleansed today must come to Jesus-

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- a. Jesus gives us a personal invitation to come to Him. - Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light." **Mt. 11:28**

SLIDE 21**V. Naaman's Misconceptions**

(Now, back to Naaman)

A. Naaman, no doubt, had great expectations on being cleansed

1. His expectations about being cleansed were based on a past life of idolatry and they were wrong

B. He thought he would need gifts to be healed-

1. We read in **vs. 5** of our text where he collected **ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.**

- a. Items which were, in that day, quite valuable.

2. And in **vs. 16** when Elishah would not take the gifts, Naaman urged him again to take them.

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C. He had another misconception. He thought the prophet would be in the king's palace - according to **Vs 6 of our text.**

1. Notice that Naaman's letter was sent to the King of Israel, no doubt thinking that Elisha would be found there.

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D. Then, He thought the prophet would perform some impressive healing ceremony- **Vs. 11.**

1. Calling on the name of God or striking the leprosy from him

E. But, none of these things happened or were true.

SLIDE 24**VI. Religious Misconceptions**

A. There are many religious misconceptions today.

1. In the days of the early Church, a dying Savior was a stumbling block to many Jews.

- a. Paul records this in **I Cor. 1:23.**

2. Some are looking for physical healing.

- a. Many came to Jesus looking for physical healing, not spiritual healing.

- b. Many today seek out the church for only physical needs, with no interest in spiritual things.

3. Then, we have those today who, like Naaman, want cleansing on their terms.
 - a. Many today think they are cleansed by “faith only” and scoff at baptism
 - b. But, we must understand that all who would be cleansed must submit to Christ’s terms
 - c. Saving, cleansing faith is an obedient faith

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VII. Naaman’s Cleansing

A. Let's look at Naaman's cleansing.

1. At first, Naaman was offended at Elisha’s instructions.
 - a. He was angry that he had sent a messenger out to him instead of coming himself.
 - b. He was angry at the simplicity of the command.
 - 1) He wanted pomp and circumstance.
 - 2) He wanted flare and a high profile healing
 - c. He was angry at the location of the healing.
 - 1) He thought that the rivers of Damascus were better than the Jordan.
2. And guess what? He left with leprosy.

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B. His servants reasoned with him and persuaded him to do what the prophet had told him - **V13**

1. When Naaman obeyed, he was completely cleansed.
2. Naaman’s cleansing changed his life.
3. And according to **vs. 17**, He became a worshipper of the true God.

SLIDE 27**VIII. Now, let's look at The Cleansing Jesus Provides**

A. Jesus' blood can cleanse the vilest of sinners

1. Many of those who heard Peter on the day of Pentecost were guilty of murdering Christ- **Acts 2:36**
 - a. Peter literally pointed his finger at them and said, "YOU DID IT"
2. And when they became pricked in their hearts and obeyed the commandment of the apostle Peter, **THEY WERE CLEANSED. THEIR SINS WERE FORGIVEN.**
3. Jesus' cleansing removes the guilt and punishment of past sins.
4. Not only that, His blood provides continued cleansing.
 - a. **I Jn. 1:7** - But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. **Vs.9** - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
5. Those who have been cleansed, have a new life in Christ-
 - a. **II Cor. 5:17** - Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 - b. They have a new goal, a new purpose, a new direction and a new hope
 - c. And best of all, a new life here and an eternal home in Heaven.

Conclusion

A. In closing this lesson, let me say that God has not changed-

1. He required an obedient faith from Naaman to be cleansed of his leprosy.
2. He requires an obedient faith from us today in order to be cleansed from our sins.

B. Those who truly realize their condition will do all that the Lord requires to be cleansed.

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C. Have you received His cleansing?

D. All you need to do is act in simple obedience.

E. Give your life to Him if you are not a Christian.

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