

DELIVERANCE THROUGH OBEDIENCE

TEXT: (II Kings 5:1-14, NIV)

¹ Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

² Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴ Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. ⁵ "By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

⁷ As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

¹³ Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!" ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

KEY VERSE: "So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy" (II Kings 5:14, NIV).

INTRODUCTION

1. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:22, NIV).
2. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:26, NIV).

I. A WELL-KNOWN MAN

A. Naaman's Position and Reputation

1. "He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram" (II Kings 5:1, NIV).
2. "He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy" (II Kings 5:1, NIV).

B. Naaman's Condition

1. "The LORD said to Moses, 'Command the Israelites to send away from the camp anyone who has an infectious skin disease'" (Numbers 5:1-2, NIV).
2. "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2, NIV).

C. The Maid's Testimony

1. "Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, 'If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy'" (II Kings 5:2-3, NIV).

II. A MIRACLE IN THE MAKING

1. "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy" (II Kings 5:3, NIV).

A. A Detour

1. "As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, 'Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!" (II Kings 5:7, NIV).
2. "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love" (I John 4:18, NIV).
3. "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (I John 4:4, NIV).

B. Right Place, but Wrong Expectation

1. "Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel" (II Kings 5:8, NIV).
2. "Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, 'Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed'" (II Kings 5:10).

C. The Wrong Response

1. "'Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?' So he turned and went off in a rage" (II Kings 5:12, NIV).
2. "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6, NIV).

III. A MIRACLE GOD'S WAY

1. "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9, NIV).
2. "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (Proverbs 16:25, NIV).

A. First Step—A Change of Heart

1. “Naaman’s servants went to him and said, ‘My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, “Wash and be cleansed”!’” (II Kings 5:13, NIV).
2. “So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy” (II Kings 5:14, NIV).

B. Second Step—The Water Way

1. “God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also” (I Peter 3:20-21, NIV).

CONCLUSION

A. Obedience to the Word

1. “You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone” (James 2:24, NIV).
2. “Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins’” (Acts 2:38, NIV).
3. “And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16, NIV).
4. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9, NIV).