

~NAAMAN 2 (240)

(Na'a-man) [from a root meaning, be pleasant]

.. Cured Of Leprosy

.. Becomes Worshiper Of Yehowah

- A Syrian army chief of the Tenth Century B.C.E, during the reigns of Jehoram of Israel and Ben-hadad II of Syria. **Naaman**, a great, valiant, mighty man held in esteem, was the one by whom Yehowah had given salvation to Syria.

- Now a certain **Naaman**, the chief of the army of the king of Syria, had become a great man before his lord and held in esteem, because it was by him that Yehowah had given salvation to Syria, and the man himself had proved to be a valiant, mighty man, though a leper. (2 Kings 5:1)

- The Bible gives no details as to how or why **Naaman** was used to bring this salvation to Syria. One possibility is that **Naaman** headed the Syrian forces that successfully resisted the efforts of Assyrian King Shalmaneser III to overrun Syria.

- Since, by remaining free, Syria formed a buffer state between Israel and Assyria, this may have served the purpose of slowing down Assyria's aggressive push in the West until Yehowah's due time to allow the northern kingdom to go into exile.

.. Cured Of Leprosy

- **Naaman** was a leper, and while the Syrians did not demand his isolation as Yehowah's Law required of lepers in Israel, yet to learn how he might be cured of this loathsome disease was indeed welcome news.

- Such news came to him through his wife's Israelite slave girl who told of a prophet in Samaria who could cure leprosy. Immediately **Naaman** set out for Samaria with a letter of introduction from Ben-hadad II.

- However, Israelite King Jehoram, after receiving him with coolness and suspicion, sent him to Elisha. Elisha did not meet **Naaman** personally but, instead, had his servant tell Naaman to bathe seven times in the Jordan River.

- His pride hurt, and apparently feeling he had unceremoniously and fruitlessly been run from one place to another, **Naaman** turned away in a rage.
- Had his attendants not reasoned with him and pointed out the reasonableness of the instructions, **Naaman** would have returned to his country still a leper.
- As it turned out, he bathed the seven times in the Jordan and was miraculously cleansed, the only leper whom Elisha was instrumental in curing.
- Now a certain **Naaman**, the chief of the army of the king of Syria, had become a great man before his lord and held in esteem, because it was by him that Yehowah had given salvation to Syria, and the man himself had proved to be a valiant, mighty man, though a leper. (2 Kings 5:1)
- And the Syrians, for their part, had gone out as marauder bands, and they got to take captive from the land of Israel a little girl, and she came to be before **Naaman's** wife. (2 Kings 5:2)
- In time she said to her mistress; If only my lord were before the prophet that is in Samaria! In that case he would recover him from his leprosy. (2 Kings 5:3)
- Subsequently someone came and reported to his lord, saying; It was like this and that that the girl spoke who is from the land of Israel. (2 Kings 5:4)
- Then the king of Syria said; Get going! Come, and let me send a letter to the king of Israel. So he proceeded to go and take in his hand ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of garments. (2 Kings 5:5)
- And he came bringing the letter to the king of Israel, saying; And now at the same time that this letter comes to you, here I do send to you **Naaman** my servant, that you may recover him from his leprosy. (2 Kings 5:6)
- And it came about that as soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he immediately ripped his garments apart and said; Am I

God, to put to death and to preserve alive? For this person is sending to me to recover a man from his leprosy, for just take note, please, you men, and see how he is seeking a quarrel with me. (**2 Kings 5:7**)

- And it came about that, as soon as Elisha the man of the true God heard that the king of Israel had ripped his garments apart, he at once sent to the king, saying; Why did you rip your garments apart? Let him come, please, to me that he may know that there exists a prophet in Israel. (**2 Kings 5:8**)
- So **Naaman** came with his horses and his war chariots and stood at the entrance of the house of Elisha. (**2 Kings 5:9**)
- However, Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying; Going there, you must bathe seven times in the Jordan that your flesh may come back to you, and be clean. (**2 Kings 5:10**)
- At this **Naaman** grew indignant and began to go away and say; Here I had said to myself; To me he will come out all the way and will certainly stand and call upon the name of Yehowah his God and move his hand to and fro over the place and actually give the leper recovery. (**2 Kings 5:11**)
- Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe in them and certainly be clean? With that he turned and went away in a rage. (**2 Kings 5:12**)
- His servants now approached and spoke to him and said; My father, had it been a great thing that the prophet himself had spoken to you, would you not do it? How much more, then, since he said to you, Bathe and be clean? (**2 Kings 5:13**)
- At that he went down and began to plunge into the Jordan seven times according to the word of the man of the true God, after which his flesh came back like the flesh of a little boy and he became clean. (**2 Kings 5:14**)
- Also, there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed, but **Naaman** the man of Syria. (**Luke 4:27**)

.. **Becomes Worshiper Of Yehowah**

- Now filled with gratitude and humble appreciation, the Syrian army chief returned to Elisha, a distance of perhaps 50 kilometers (30 miles), and offered him a most generous gift, which the prophet insistently refused.
- **Naaman** then asked for some of the earth of Israel, the load of a pair of mules, to take home, that upon Israel's soil he might offer sacrifices to Yehowah, vowing that from then on he would worship no other god. Perhaps **Naaman** had in mind offering sacrifices to Yehowah upon an altar of ground.
- Then he went back to the man of the true God, he with all his camp, and came and stood before him and said; Here, now, I certainly know that there is no God anywhere in the earth but in Israel. And now accept, please, a blessing gift from your servant. (2 Kings 5:15)
- However, he said; As Yehowah before whom I do stand is living, I will not accept it. And he began to urge him to accept it, but he kept refusing. (2 Kings 5:16)
- Finally **Naaman** said; If not, please, let there be given to your servant some ground, the load of a pair of mules, because your servant will no more render up a burnt offering or a sacrifice to any other gods but to Yehowah. (2 Kings 5:17)
- An altar of ground you are to make for me, and you must sacrifice upon it your burnt offerings and your communion sacrifices, your flock and your herd. In every place where I shall cause my name to be remembered I shall come to you and shall certainly bless you. (Exodus 20:24)
- And if you should make an altar of stones for me, you must not build them as hewn stones. In the event that you do wield your chisel upon it, then you will profane it. (Exodus 20:25)
- **Naaman** next requested that Yehowah forgive him when, in the performance of his civil duties, he bowed before the god Rimmon with the king, who evidently was old and infirm and leaned for support upon Naaman.
- If such was the case, then his bowing would be mechanical, being solely for the purpose of dutifully supporting the kings body and

not in personal worship. Elisha believed **Naaman's** sincere request, replying, Go in peace.

- In this thing may Yehowah forgive your servant. When my lord comes into the house of Rimmon to bow down there, and he is supporting himself upon my hand, and I have to bow down at the house of Rimmon, when I bow down at the house of Rimmon may Yehowah, please, forgive your servant in this respect. (**2 Kings 5:18**)
- At this he said to him; Go in peace. Accordingly he went away from him for a good stretch of the land. (**2 Kings 5:19**)
- After leaving, **Naaman** was overtaken by Elisha's covetous servant Gehazi, who lyingly made it appear that Elisha had changed his mind and would, after all, accept some gifts.
- **Naaman** gladly granted him gifts of silver and garments. But for this greedy and lying act in which he tried, by misusing his office as Elisha's attendant, to profit from the work of Yehowah's spirit, Yehowah punished him by inflicting leprosy on him and on his offspring to time indefinite.
- Then Gehazi the attendant of Elisha the man of the true God said; Here my master has spared **Naaman** this Syrian by not accepting from his hand what he brought. As Yehowah is living, I will run after him and take something from him. (**2 Kings 5:20**)
- And Gehazi went chasing after **Naaman**. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he at once got down from his chariot to meet him and then said; Is all well? (**2 Kings 5:21**)
- To this he said; All is well. My master himself has sent me, saying; Look! Just now there have come to me two young men from the mountainous region of Ephraim from the sons of the prophets. Do give them, please, a talent of silver and two changes of garments. (**2 Kings 5:22**)
- At that **Naaman** said; Go on, take two talents. And he kept urging him and finally bound up two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and gave them to two of his attendants, that they might carry them before him. (**2 Kings 5:23**)

- **When he came to Ophel, he immediately took them from their hand and deposited them in the house and sent the men away. So off they went. (2 Kings 5:24)**
- **And he himself came in and then stood by his master. Elisha now said to him; Where did you come from, Gehazi? But he said; Your servant did not go anywhere at all. (2 Kings 5:25)**
- **At that he said to him; Did not my heart itself go along just as the man turned to get down off his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept silver or to accept garments or olive groves or vineyards or sheep or cattle or menservants or maidservants? (2 Kings 5:26)**
- **So the leprosy of Naaman will stick to you and your offspring to time indefinite. Immediately he went out from before him, a leper white as snow. (2 Kings 5:27)**