

## THE GENERAL & GEHAZI. 2 KN. 5:15-27. 09/10/23. #11.

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16And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that *there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel*; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant." 17But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take it, but he refused. 18So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. 19Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing." 20Then he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance. 21But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him." 22So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?" 23And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.' " 24So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him. 25When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. 26Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere." 27Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? 28Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.  
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### 1. Change of heart

- a. Naaman had left in a huff, but returned in humility & gratitude to Elisha
  - a1. Naaman was a converted man
  - a2. Unlike most of Israel, Naaman truly understood the implications of his healing
- b. Like Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4), Naaman became a worshipper of God
  - a1. There is no God on earth but the God of Israel (rejection of Syrian's idols)
  - a2. Na. will no longer sacrifice to any other god
- c. Unlike the priests & Pharisees who saw Lazarus raised from the dead, Naaman concludes that only the one true God could heal leprosy
  - a1. vs. 1-2 Na. was of a noble character
  - a2. The priests & Pharisees were wicked
- d. Na. asks for a dispensation
  - a1. He desires to take some dirt from Israel to make an altar to God on (from God's land)

- a2. When he goes into the temple of Rimmon & bows down with the king to the idol, he asks to be pardoned, for this is his duty
- e. Na. recognizes that to worship God alone, he can't worship an idol at the same time
  - a1. Elisha tells him to go in peace
  - a2. Na. is new to the faith & if he is asked to go beyond the custom of accompanying the king, he will have to decide what to do
- f. Many cases of accommodating customs: Paul eating meat offered to idols, Daniel using the phrase 'O, King, live forever', Paul circumcising Timothy...
  - a1. A difference between custom & compromise
  - a2. We must decide when to accommodate custom & when to stand for faith (Dan. 2)

### 3. Greed & consequences

- a. Naaman insisted that Elisha take a gift for himself (called a *seer's fee*)
  - a1. Elisha refused to receive a gift (to do so would be to take credit for the miracle, as Moses had done at the rock)
  - a2. Only God receives glory for His work
- b. Elisha's servant, Gehazi, is appalled
  - a1. Elisha was passing up gold, silver, & fine clothing offered freely
  - a2. Gehazi is determined to obtain some of the wealth for himself (like Aachen)
- c. Gehazi chases down Na. & makes up a story
  - a1. Geh. claims that 2 prophets had just come to Elisha & they needed clothes & \$
  - a2. Naaman gladly allows Geh. to take gifts
- d. After Geh. hid the gifts, Elisha asks him where he was
  - a1. Geh.: "Nowhere in particular."
  - a2. Elisha said that his spirit was with Geh. when he met Naaman
- e. It was not time for \$, clothes, & servants
  - a1. Naaman's leprosy was put on Gehazi
  - a2. Geh. leaves the presence of Elisha
- f. Geh. had stolen some of God's glory