

The Little Captive Maid

The Healing of Naaman

By the Editor

(Stenographically reported – word for word as delivered)

You find the story in the fifth chapter of the second book of Kings. Let me read the introduction: “Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.” We started out as though we were going to get the biography of a great man. He was undoubtedly as good and as moral as any man in this community. He stood high in the estimation of his fellow citizens. He was captain of the host of Syria, and had led the army into battle on more than one occasion. His conduct was exemplary.

And then we come to a little word “*but*” at the end of this wonderful biography. It seems to change the whole character of the story. There are many people in the communities where we live of whom it could be commendably said they are good citizens. They always head the lists when subscriptions are put before them. But there is something missing in the lives of these men. They have never surrendered their lives to God. Men have certain obligations to God; and they cannot fulfill their obligations to God by fulfilling their obligations to man. They are fine citizens and fine fellows to meet, fair in their dealings, and always have a smile and a hearty handclasp, but there is *something* missing even in the lives of these men.

We come to that “*something*” at the end of the verse, “but he was a leper.” Leprosy has always been a type of sin in the Bible. I presume that is because there is only one cure for leprosy, and that is a divine cure. In the day of Naaman there was no doctor or scientist that could bring healing to this man. And like leprosy, when you see the stains of sin you will know there is only one cure. Nothing can ever remove the stain, but the blood of the Lamb.

We find that Naaman had been walking in the darkness, and had never heard of the prophet down in Samaria, who could heal him of his leprosy. He was like a drowning man, grasping at a straw. A little servant girl gave a testimony. She had been brought from the land of her nativity into the land of captivity. But she brought her religious experience with her. She hadn't lost the faith of her fathers. She was not afraid to give her testimony. When people seek a change of environment, they often leave their religion behind, and forget the God of their childhood days. But this little girl preached the gospel by her testimony. Let me say this: “You may preach the gospel and not seem to bring results, but you can't preach the gospel and not get results. A man can be true to God, even in a strange land, and the seed, which is

sown, shall return unto him multiplied. We have the promise of the Lord that it shall prosper in the thing whereunto it was sent, and shall not return unto Him void. I used to worry a great deal about the results of my campaign, and it used to incapacitate me for the services. But I have learned this: I can do what God would have me do, but I must leave the results with Him. I trust the Lord to bring the results. Just a little girl spoke that word.

I knew a man who was addicted to liquor. Many times he was brought home drunk, and thrown on the back porch like a sack of meal. His wife, Jessie, would have to drag him in. Sometimes when he was in that drunken state of mind, he would strike heavy blows on her face, and she used to have to take the children and come down to her father's place, and stay there. They were fairly well fixed, but he was rapidly going through his fortune through this habit. When he was sober, he was a splendid type of fellow. He would look at his wife and say, "Jessie, did I do that? I'm sorry. You know I love you, and would not do it were I in my right mind." That very night he would go out again, and be brought home drunk. He couldn't resist the temptations that companions brought to him. One night he came home a little earlier than usual. His wife had tucked the two little children in bed. Every night it was customary for them to look to the Lord in prayer before going to bed. This night little Dorothy jumped out of bed and said, "I must pray another prayer for daddy, and ask God to save my daddy." She began to pray in an audible voice. At that moment the old drunk stood at the door eavesdropping, and little Dorothy was saying, "Lord, make my daddy more like other daddies. Lord, save my daddy, and take all the drink away." And as he listened, it broke his heart, and he dropped down on his knees. That little girl put her arms around his neck, and the poor fellow said, "Daughter, teach your daddy how to pray. Talk to Jesus about your daddy." And they prayed. He went to bed, and the following morning he said, "Jessie, I have taken my last drink." "I wish I could believe that. I have almost given up hope, Harry." But he said, "This time it's true." Then he told how as his little daughter prayed, into that room there came Jesus Christ. He said he was conscious of a radiance, although he couldn't see a person. He heard a voice saying, "Thy sins which are many are forgiven thee," and a great peace came into his soul. Today that man is out telling the story of Jesus and His power to save, and finishes his testimony with, "A little child shall lead them." He has been a gospel preacher now for ten or twelve years. It wasn't a great preacher that brought that man to God. It was the testimony of a little girl.

Here was a little Israelitish maid, who was testifying about her Lord in Samaria. She said what God wanted her to say, and when he wanted her to say it. "I'm only a little slave girl; but I would to God that my master knew of the prophet down in Samaria, who would heal him of his leprosy." The mistress looked at the little waiting maid. Then she told Naaman the story. Why, the very fact that Naaman went to the wrong place proved that he didn't understand it. But he walked in the light he had. He said to the king of Syria, "One of the little captive girls says that if I go down to see

the prophet in Samaria, He will heal me of my leprosy.” And he asked the king for a letter of introduction. And the king of Syria said, I will send a letter unto the king of Israel.” He departed, and took with him shekels of silver and gold, and went to the palace of the king to find healing for his leprosy. Poor Naaman. He didn’t understand. You will never get it from the palace of a king. When you go to psychology, philosophy, science, morality, and the things of culture to try to wash your sins away, you go to the wrong place. You can’t find healing for your body, or peace for your soul, in the palaces of this world. You can’t get that which your heart craves. There is only one place in Samaria where healing could be found. Come to Him. Hallelujah! We have a great High Priest, and I believe you can come to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ your Lord, and in Jesus you can find all you need. So the little captive maid had done her duty, and it commenced to bear fruit.

Naaman drew up in front of the palace of the king. *He was walking in all the light he had.* He may not have come to the source of all true power, but he will come ultimately. Friends, don’t come in my light. *Do what God wants you to do,* and what you believe he wants you to do. You can’t cry unto God and be led into paths of doubt. Naaman doesn’t go to the door himself, but he sends one of his servants to knock at the door. The king of Israel receives on a platter the letter of introduction. Immediately he flies into a rage. “Am I a God that I’m possessed of the power of healing a man of leprosy? He is seeking a quarrel and a war. He wants more slaves.” I can see the king in his rage, admitting that he couldn’t do the thing that was requested of him. He sends his servant out to say, “The king can’t heal you. The little girl is mistaken.” It was noised abroad over the town, and at last in another part of the city Elisha, the prophet of God, heard and said, “Go and tell him to come. Bring him to me. Bring him down to the mercy seat at the foot of the cross.” There is only one place. It isn’t the university. I believe in spirit filled education. I believe in equipping ourselves so that we can be workmen that can lightly divine the word of truth. I believe men should read and look to the Lord, but there is only one place for a leper. *Down at the mercy seat,* at the foot of the cross where you find forgiveness. Send him to me. Oh, the horror of it! *Me!* The captain of the king’s host sent to that place! This man doesn’t live in a palace. I’m used to Persian rugs. Kneel on a cement floor at an altar? I know men who would rather pay ten thousand dollars cash than to come to an altar. I know men that try to purchase their way into Heaven by buying pipe organs. Very commendable, but you can’t buy what Jesus purchased on the cross of Calvary. I imagine that Naaman had to humble himself a little bit. I believe that the reason so many people refuse to come to the altar is because of the sense of a false and a foolish pride. ‘Why, bless you! Who are you anyway? You may be something in your own estimation, but in the eyes of God you are a lost soul unless you have found Jesus. Poor, lost, degenerate humanity; only for the grace of God you would be lost through all eternity.

So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of Elisha. Elisha didn't come out. Healing doesn't come from the man who lays his hands on you, but from the God of the man who lays his hands on you. It was not Elisha, but Elisha's God. And Elisha just gave him God's prescription. Seven dips in Jordan. He didn't bother to talk to him. And all any preacher can do, is *tell you what to do*. All he can do is give you the recipe and tell you what God tells you to do, and leave it between you and God. We must leave it to the Holy Spirit to burn conviction into your soul.

Tell him to dip seven times in Jordan, and his flesh shall become as the flesh of a little child. And when Naaman heard he had to get rid of his leprosy *one way*, he got sore and started to argue. Just like some of you folks. He argued with God's recipe. That is the most unreasonable thing I have heard of. "I'll prove I'm as good as any Christian." Naaman said, "Why can't I go to the rivers of Damascus? Why can't I wash in there and be clean? Isn't it just as good as this dirty, old, turbulent stream? I have a private bathing place, and can enter in style, and get the same results." But when God says Jordan, *He means Jordan*, and some other way won't do. You can wash ten thousand times in another way without results, but you have to get to the place where you are willing to do what God wants you to do, in the way that He wants you to do it, and then you will get what God has promised.

Naaman said, "I won't go into that stream. The people will stand on the banks and laugh at me. Dip in Jordan' No, sir. I'll go back to Damascus where I can sneak in the back way." God chooses the base things of the world to confound the wise. Naaman turned to go. Then his servants turned to him and said, "Master, if he had told you to do some great thing, wouldn't you have done it? Master, how much rather than when He says, wash and be clean." He turned it over in his mind, and seemingly he thought it was logical and finally said, "I'll try it once anyway." People are not always convinced in the chariot, but *they are in Jordan*. The only way to tell, then, is to try it. And it's a foolish man who doesn't try it. You are just as foolish if you don't try it.

I presume as he got up to go to the river Jordan, he felt ridiculous and thought and wondered what people were saying. And the devil was there, and he always plays a prominent part when a man takes a stand for the Lord. How can those old dirty waters take away the spots? I can't tell you how, but I know it's done. The devil was there, even as he was in the case of the blind man. The skeptics came to criticize and say, "Isn't this the man that was born blind?" He got a little impatient when they asked how, when, and where, and said, "These things I don't know, *but one thing I do know* that whereas once I was blind, now I can see. Hallelujah! *If it work's, that is enough for me*; I've got a message tonight! Hallelujah! *It works!!* It is the only thing that does work. There is nothing in the world that will take you out of sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ. Listen friend, when you get the real thing, which works, you will enjoy a real Holy Ghost prayer meeting more than a circus.

Remember He said “seven times.” Naaman takes his first dip. Remember, it takes real courage to be dipping in the Jordan River when there are people on the banks, but I’ve got a promise. I know that God never failed yet. If you do the thing that God wants you to do, in the way that He wants you to do it, He will never fail you. Naaman dipped the second time. The fellows on the bank said, “How does it feel, Naaman?” Naaman dips the third time. Now don’t give up. We better sing a chorus now.

I’m going through, Jesus; I’m going through.

I’ll pay the price, whatever others do.

Don’t give up until the leprosy is all gone. Keep on. Dip and do what God tells you to do. Down he went the fourth, fifth and sixth time, and he was still a leper. His heart was pounding, and down Naaman went the seventh time, and up he came the seventh time. Hallelujah! It’s done! His skin is like the skin of a child. It’s God’s recipe, and it works. It’s His word. It’s God’s word, and it’s the only way, and the rivers of Damascus will never do. God will never go back on his own word. The Lord will give you the victory every time, and if you will do it in the way that God wants you to do it, He will always see you through. Remember Canaan.

When you look at the giants, don’t forget that they live in the land of grapes and it takes two men to carry one bunch. Remember Jericho! God told the Israelites He would give them the city! He told them to march around seven days, once each day, and seven times on the seventh day. They might have said, “Where do you get that?” That is contrary to all science, psychology, and reason. But reason or no reason, *God’s word is true*. From the standpoint of the world it is the most irrational, inconsistent thing I know. I mean it. There is not a philosopher in the world that can define the new birth. There is not a scientist that can do it. The only thing you can do is to EXPERIENCE IT. Hallelujah. Glory! Glory! Glory! The power that will take a man steeped in sin and make him a new creature in Christ Jesus, and the power that will make a Paul out of a Saul of Tarsus, is the power you *must experience*. From the standpoint of the knowledge and wisdom of this world it is foolishness. Jesus Himself said it would be. It is the most irrational thing from the standpoint of science. The battle is between faith and reason. Modernism says, don’t take anything by faith that is amenable to reason. If you can’t prove it scientifically, throw it out of the windows of your theology. So they pitched out the virgin birth and miracles because they could not explain them. If I can understand a thing it is self-evident, but I believe God for the things I can’t mentally appreciate, but it proves itself in the results it brings. Blessed be the name of the Lord. March around Jericho! Go ahead, the city is yours if you believe. Go around seven times on the seventh day, and make a big noise, and watch the walls fall down. “Go ahead, you crazy Israelites,” shouted the giants inside as they climbed the wall the second time. The next day they did the same thing. We are not fighting with the weapons of the world, but we are marching around with the word of God, around the walls of Jericho, and sometimes we get impatient before the

seventh time around. I presume it gets to be an old story on the sixth day. They have marched around for the fourth time. It seems you aren't getting anywhere, I know. Haven't you thought the same things? Poor, crazy people! Do you imagine they are getting any joy out of that? Can't go to the theaters any more, can't play cards. My, I wonder where in the world they get their pleasure. But you know, "he laughs best, who laughs last." There's coming a time when you will see God's methods are right methods. Then on the seventh day after they had gone around seven times and made a big noise, the irrational, the unscientific and unreasonable thing happened. The walls fell down. They do every time when God says they will. God's word cannot lie. *God's promises are sure.* Hallelujah!

Naaman was a happy man as he went on and was giving God the glory. Rushing to the little maid he said, "God bless you. I'm so glad you gave me that word of testimony. I did what you told me to and I found healing for my body. Oh brother, sister, do you want something from the Lord? There is one way to receive it, and that is God's way. He alone can bring the victory into your life.