

## Naaman is Healed

There once was a man named Naaman. Naaman was a captain under the King of Syria. He was a good man who tried to do the right thing, but Naaman had a problem. Naaman had a leprosy. Leprosy was a horrible disease. It caused people to have huge sores all over their bodies and there was no way to get better. When someone had leprosy, they usually died. People were very scared of leprosy and the people who had it because it was very catchy. When someone had leprosy, they had to leave their family and friends and go live in a place with all the other lepers. Naaman knew this might happen to him, but his wife didn't want him to have to move away and neither did the king. They wanted to figure out a way to help Naaman get better, but they didn't know what to do.

Naaman's wife had a young girl who was her maid. This young girl wasn't from Syria, she was from Israel. She had been kidnapped and brought to Syria and now she worked for Naaman and his wife. She heard of Naaman's problem and knew exactly what to do. She knew there was a man in Israel named Elisha who was a prophet of God. She believed God could heal Naaman and God would tell Elisha just how to do it. When the king heard about Elisha, he thought it was a great plan, so he told Naaman to go and find him. The king gave Naaman lots of silver, gold, and fancy clothes to take as presents for Elisha. The king also wrote a letter to the king of Israel asking for his help. He thought the king would read the letter and help Naaman find Elisha. Naaman took the gifts and the letter and headed to visit the king of Israel.

When Naaman arrived in Israel, he took the letter to the king. The king read it and became very upset, so upset that he ripped his clothes off. The letter said, "Please heal Naaman of his leprosy". The king didn't know how to heal Naaman. He didn't think about Elisha at all, he just thought about what he couldn't do. He was afraid the King of Syria only ask him to do this impossible thing because he wanted to start a fight with Israel. Elisha heard what had happened and about how upset it made the king, so he sent a message for the king to send Naaman to visit him.

Naaman went right to Elisha's house excited that he would soon be healed. He stood outside of Elisha's door, but Elisha didn't go outside. Instead, he sent his servant outside with a message. The servant told Naaman to go to the Jordan River and dunk his head under the water seven times. This made Naaman angry. Naaman was mad that Elisha didn't come out and talk to him. He was a very important man, and he wasn't used to talking to servants. Naaman was also mad that he had to get in the Jordan River. The Jordan River with small and muddy. He would much rather dunk in a nice clean river like the Damascus. Elisha's servant said, 'this is an easy thing to do. If Elisha would have told you to do something very difficult, you would have tried to do it. Why can't you try to do this easy thing?'

So Naaman went to the yucky, muddy Jordan River. He got into the water and then dunked his head seven times just as the servant had told him to do. When he came out of the water the last time, his sores were healed, and his leprosy was gone. Naaman was so excited he rushed back to Elisha's house to thank him. He tried to give Elisha the gifts the king had sent but Elisha refused to take them. God healed Naaman, not Elisha. Elisha wasn't going to accept payment for what God had done. Just before Naaman left to return home, he said, "the God of Israel is the one true God."