

WHEN YOU ARE DESPERATE FOR HEALING

2 Kings 5:1-15

ATTENTION: We continue our series “CHOOSE YOU STORY”

Your life is your story:

- It begins with birth and soon moves to the daily: encounters, events, choices, and reactions to the circumstances of life that come our way.

PROJECT: Our series:

- Each week we have considered the stories of either real people – Philippian Jailor, Fictitious people – Prodigal Brothers, Designation of people – Disciple of Jesus,
- Today we will consider the story of a man named Naaman from 2 Kings 5:1-14

BODY/STORY:

(Discuss the story as read)

¹ Naaman, commander of the army for the king of Aram, was a man important to his master and highly regarded because through him, the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man was a valiant warrior, but he had a skin disease. ² Aram had gone on raids and brought back from the land of Israel a young girl who served Naaman's wife.

³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his skin disease."

2 Kings 5:1-3

- Naaman was the military leader of one of the region's most powerful nations
 - Definitely a man of prestige and power!
 - Among the elite.
 - commander of the army for the king of Aram, was a man important to his master and highly regarded because through him, the Lord had given victory to Aram
 - Great - Highly regarded – Victorious – Valiant
 - A man with power – position – prestige
 - He was successful – wealthy - a hero – respected - admired
- **BUT** he had a skin disease — **leprosy**
 - Part of his life's story!
 - Having the skin disease – leprosy:
 - He was isolated, humiliated - outcasts – untouchables

- Maybe he had concealed it up to this time.

APPLICATION

- By the way, what is your leprosy?
 - What problem do you feel you must conceal?
 - What hurt are do you feel you need to cover up?
 - We, too have our disfigurements
 - We, too, become very proficient in covering up our problems.
 - We, too, need God's healing.
 - Like the spiritual, “Standing In the Need Of Prayer, says, *"It's not my brother or my sister, but it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer."*
 - Much of each of our stories is made of this reality in our lives.
- Let's add more to the story from our Scripture text: v. 4-12 (Discuss the story and some application as read)
 - ⁴ So Naaman went and told his master what the girl from the land of Israel had said. ⁵ Therefore, the king of Aram said, "Go, and I will send a letter with you to the king of Israel." So he went and took with him 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ He brought the letter to the king of Israel, and it read:
 - When this letter comes to you, note that I have sent you my servant Naaman for you to cure him of his skin disease.
 - ⁷ When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and asked, "Am I God, killing and giving life that this man expects me to cure a man of his skin disease? Recognize that he is only picking a fight with me."
 - ⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, "Why have you torn your clothes? Have him come to me, and he will know there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.
 - ¹⁰ Then Elisha sent him a messenger, who said, "Go wash seven times in the Jordan and your skin will be restored and you will be clean."
 - ¹¹ But Naaman got angry and left, saying, "I was telling myself: He will surely come out, stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the skin disease. ¹² Aren't Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and left in a rage.

¹³ But his servants approached and said to him, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more should you do it when he only tells you, 'Wash and be clean'?" ¹⁴ So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, according to the command of the man of God. Then his skin was restored and became like the skin of a small boy, and he was clean.

- So what do we do? Where do we find help? Where do we go for healing?
 - o We learn from Naaman that we go to a place of humility.
 - o Notice Naaman's journey to the place of help:
 - Naaman, the commander-in-chief, finds direction through a captive servant - his wife's slave.
 - Naaman, the conqueror, finds help in a conquered nation - Israel.
 - Naaman, the highly regarded man, learns of his treatment from a servant boy of a lowly prophet - Elisha
 - Naaman, the wealthy and valiant soldier, is cured in a dirty river - the Jordan.
- Naaman almost rejected his opportunity for healing by getting angry that Elisha did not show up to greet him at the door.
 - o Elisha didn't meet the expectations of Naaman.
 - o Naaman was a dignitary and he wanted a display that would be worthy of himself.

"I was telling myself: He will surely come out, stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the skin disease.
 - o God chose a very humble solution.
 - Somewhat bizarre.
 - ★ Wash 7 times in the "less than pristine" waters of the Jordan
 - ★ "That's crazy," thought Naaman, "7 ducks in a dirty creek.
 - ★ There are much better water holes for this!
 - Obvious to us now we know that the power was not in the water but was demonstrated in the water by doing what God says!
 - ★ Healing always comes from doing what God says.
 - ★ Humility leads to obedience
 - ★ We will not always understand His way of working, but by humbly obeying, we will receive his blessing.

PROJECT:

- Why must Naaman, and you and I for that matter, descend downward in order to receive healing?
- ...have a compliant attitude toward God's instructions?

All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷ casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.

1 Peter 5:5-7

- We must humble ourselves before we can feel the hand of God lifting us up.
- Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan 7 times, obedient to the command of the man of God.
 - If his leprosy defined his story before; it was God's healing touch that redefined his later story.
 - o He experienced the grace of God and was changed, not only physically, but spiritually.

¹⁵ Then Naaman and his whole company went back to the man of God, stood before him, and declared, "I know there's no God in the whole world except in Israel..."

ACTION:

- We know nothing else of Naaman's story once he leaves the presence of Elisha.
 - Whatever that story it will include a time when he encountered the Lord Jehovah who showed him mercy and healed him!
 - He can talk of the young girl that had been taken from the Israelites by force and was made his wife's servant who became his connection to the prophet of God who gave him instructions through a servant boy.
 - I almost didn't do what the prophet told me to do but another servant convinced me that I was being foolish.
 - I am now free of leprosy because the God of Israel was faithful to His promise that I would be healed if I obeyed.
- Your story, will it include a story of becoming humble and simply doing what God has said to do and being the person God has called you to be?