

Lessons from 2 Kings 5

2 Kings 5 contains the story of Naaman, a Syrian army commander who was healed of leprosy by the prophet Elisha. It is rich with spiritual and practical lessons.

Read Scripture with your imagination turned on. Try to picture this story playing out as you read it.

Lesson #1 Help can come from unlikely sources

Vs 3 The slave girl from Israel, likely taken from her family to serve her captors, told Naaman's wife there was healing available. Was she bitter? Was she resentful? No, she wanted to help her master be free from leprosy. Remember 1 Sam 16:7. Don't judge by appearances. Naaman took the girl's word and went to the King to get permission to go to Samaria. 1 Cor 1:27 God uses what man thinks is foolish to confound the wise. How should we treat our enemies? Matt 5:44, Rom 12:19-20

Lesson #2 Submit to those in authority over you

Vs 4 Notice Naaman did not just take it upon himself to go to Samaria. He submitted to the King and asked him for permission to seek help. Do you submit to those in authority over you? How about God? Do you seek first His thoughts or do you go off and do what you want to do, then ask for His blessing? Matt 6:33. What happened to King Asa when he sought help from Syria in a war against Israel and needed a healing and did not seek God. What did God have to say about that? 2 Chron 16:7,12

Lesson #3 Trust God and don't get into fear

Vs 7 When the King of Israel received the letter from the King of Syria he did not trust the letter was genuine and got into fear. What happens when you get a bad report? Do you seek God or do you get into fear, expecting the worst? Ps 23:4, 46:1-3, 56:3-4, 118:5-6, Deu 31:6, Isa 41:13

Lesson #4 Don't put God in a box

Vs 11 Naaman was a man greatly respected. He expected Elisha to meet him personally and do some great act to bring about his healing. When a messenger came, instead of the Prophet, and told him to wash in a muddy river, he was disappointed and offended. God's ways are not our ways. Isa 55:8-9.

Lesson #5 Be brave and speak up

Vs 13 Here we see yet another unexpected source giving Naaman input. It must have been a bold move for him to approach this great man and tell him he was wrong. I think this says a lot about Naaman that his servants could approach him. Sometimes in life we have to be bold enough to speak up to help someone to see what they should be doing or how they should be acting.

Lesson #6 Humble yourself to receive

Vs 14 It was a humble Naaman who finally took the advice of Elisha, spoken of by his messenger, and his servant. He followed this instructions, dipped 7 times in the muddy Jordon, and received his healing. God exalts the humble Matt 23:12 Do you need help from God? Have you received advice your pride keeps you from taking?

Lesson #7 React in gratitude

Vs 15 Naaman was so grateful he immediately went back to Elisha to offer him a gift. We, of all people, should be most grateful. We should not take things for granted. A heart-felt thank you goes a long way. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Lesson #8 Gifts from God can not be bought

Vs 16 Even though it was right for Naaman to express his gratitude for his healing, it would have been wrong for Elisha to have accepted it. Why? Because a gift cannot be purchased. It is wrong to take money for that which God gives. Peter and Simon the Sorcerer Acts 8:18-20

Lesson #9 You can't hide from God

Vs 20 – 26 Elisha's servant Gehazi saw all the rewards Naaman was willing to pay Elisha. He got greedy. Proverbs 1:17–19 After he returned with his ill-gotten gain Elisha confronted him. Gehazi could not hide. Numbers 32:23

Lesson #10 Actions have consequences

Vs 27 The judgment of Gehazi's greed came upon him as leprosy. Galatians 6:7-8, Job 4:8 Praise God for His mercy, under the covenant in Jesus blood, the debt we owed for our sin has been paid for.

The next time you are wading through the Old Testament, or anywhere in the Scriptures, don't just read the words. Try to picture what is going on and ask the Lord to show you what He wants you to see. There are so many lessons we can learn and share.