

The Little Girl's Choice

Based on 2 Kings 5:1-17



Long ago God chose a group of people to be His special people and He called them Israel. He taught them how to live well and how to treat others kindly and many such things. But most importantly, God taught them how to have a good relationship with Himself. That was the most important thing.

But there was another nation nearby called Aram. They did not know God and they did not like Israel. In fact, their army would often fight against God's people. The commander of Aram's army was named Naaman. He was a brave and skilled soldier who won many battles. The king of Aram liked that. But unfortunately for Naaman, he had a disease called leprosy and there was no cure.

Naaman's wife had a little servant girl. But the girl was not someone Naaman hired to work for him. No. A band of raiders from Aram had gone to Israel and kidnaped her! That was why she was working for Naaman's wife.



When the girl heard about Naaman's disease, she realized she had a really big, really hard choice to make. You see, the girl knew there was a prophet in Israel called Elisha and that God had given Elisha power to do miracles many times. If Naaman went to see Elisha, he could be healed!

But why should Naaman be healed? After all, Naaman's people were always fighting with her people. They even kidnapped her and forced her to work for Naaman's wife. She was far from home. She could no longer be with her family. And Naaman didn't follow God. He followed false gods. If he were an Israelite who loved God—well, sure, in that case he should be healed. But he wasn't. No, Naaman deserved to have leprosy. He did not deserve to be healed. Why shouldn't she just let him suffer and die?

But wait. Naaman didn't know God. And wasn't having a good relationship with God the most important thing? If Naaman went to see Elisha, would he learn to know God? And wouldn't it be better for Naaman to know God than to let him suffer and die without knowing God?

The girl made her choice.

She scampered through the house until she found Naaman's wife and said, "There is a prophet of God in Israel. If Mr. Naaman goes to see him, the prophet can cure his leprosy!"

There. She'd done it. She'd told them how Naaman could be healed. And she prayed that Naaman would learn to know the true God. Now she would wait to see what happened because of her choice.



Naaman's wife was very excited to hear this news. She rushed to tell Naaman and Naaman was even more excited. Naaman asked the king of Aram for permission to go to Israel and be cured of his disease.

The king of Aram could hardly believe something so incredible was possible, but he did not want to lose one of his best soldiers to sickness so he said, **"Yes, of course you must go. I will write a letter for you to take to the king of Israel so you can be healed."**

So Naaman traveled to Israel. Because he was an important man, he traveled with many horses and chariots and servants. He also brought lots of money and clothes to give as payment after he was healed. When he arrived in Israel, he went straight to Israel's king and delivered the letter from the king of Aram. It said: **"I have sent Naaman to you with this letter so you can heal him of his leprosy."**

What!? The king of Israel was shocked and distressed. He didn't know how to cure leprosy! And he did not think of Elisha, the prophet of God.

He was so upset he tore his clothes and said, **"Is this a trap!? I'm not God. I can't perform miracles! Why does the king of Aram send this man to me to be healed? I know what he's trying to do. He's trying to start a fight with me!"**

The whole matter might have ended right there, but Elisha heard about what happened.

He sent a message to the king, saying, **"Why are you so upset? Send Naaman to me and he will learn there is a prophet of the true God in Israel."**



Things were not going the way Naaman thought they would, but he was glad Elisha could heal him, so he took all the money and clothes he'd brought as payment and went to see Elisha. His big moment of healing would happen soon.

He imagined Elisha and all Elisha's servants would come out to greet him and bow down to show respect. Maybe Elisha would comment on how impressive all Naaman's chariots and horses were. And then the prophet would say some fancy words to heal the leprosy and Naaman would feel better immediately. Elisha would be awestruck by the rich payment Naaman would give him and bow down to show respect again. Then Naaman would return to Aram and everything would be as it was before.

That's what Naaman imagined...but that's not what happened.

When Naaman reached Elisha's house with his chariots and servants, there was no flurry of activity. No one came running out to greet him or bow down.

Just one man came out of the house, walked up to Naaman, and said, "Elisha sent me as his messenger to say, 'Go wash yourself in the Jordan river seven times and your disease will be cured.'"

Well, that made Naaman mad. He said, "I thought Elisha would come out to me himself and stand there calling on the Lord his God and waving his hand over me to cure the leprosy. But he doesn't even show his face! I would never wash in the Jordan river. Aren't the rivers in my own land much better than anything in Israel? Why can't I wash in one of them and be healed?"

After that, Naaman left in a rage. The prophet had insulted him and he would not put up with it.



But Naaman's servants thought differently. After a while, they found the courage to speak.

"Mr. Naaman, sir," they said, "If Elisha had told you to accomplish some great task to be healed, wouldn't you have done it? We know how badly you want to be cured! All he said was for you to wash and be healed. Isn't it worth it to try washing in the Jordan, even though it is not as nice as the rivers in Aram?"

Naaman realized his servants were right, so they changed direction and traveled to the Jordan river. Naaman walked into the water and dipped himself in the river seven times, just as Elisha told him to do. And the leprosy went away! He was completely healed!

Naaman wasn't angry anymore. He was amazed! And he no longer cared that Elisha had not come out to speak with him. All he cared about now was that he had been healed and that it was the power of Israel's God that had done it.

So Naaman and his horses and chariots and servants hurried back to Elisha's house. This time, Elisha did come out to greet him, but Naaman did not expect him to bow down or be impressed. This time, Naaman was the one who was impressed.



"Now I know the only God in the whole world is the God of Israel," Naaman said. "He is the true God. Please accept a gift from me as a token of my gratitude and respect."

But Elisha replied, **"No, I serve the Lord, and as surely as He is the true God, I won't take anything from you."**

No matter how much Naaman urged him to accept the money and clothes, Elisha would not take them.

"Well," Naaman said at last, "if you will not accept my gifts, will you allow me to take some dirt from Israel back to Aram with me as a reminder of the incredible thing God has done for me? From now on, I will not serve the false gods of Aram. I will serve the Lord."

Elisha agreed and Naaman returned to Aram.

The king of Aram was pleased that his soldier would still be strong and able to serve him. Naaman's wife rejoiced that her husband was no longer suffering and would not die. But the little servant girl may have been the happiest of all because she knew that Naaman now had a good relationship with God. And that was the most important thing.