Naaman is Healed



Scripture Reference: 2 Kings 5

Suggested Theme: God can work through children to help others. Obey and follow God, even when no one is looking.

Memory Verse: “The Lord’s eyes see everything that happens. He watches both evil and good people.” Proverbs 15:3, ICB

Story Overview:

Naaman, a wealthy military man from Aram (Syria), had leprosy. The servant of Naaman’s wife was a young girl who had been captured from Israel and taken away from her parents. The girl suggested that Naaman go to the prophet Elisha in Israel to be healed. When Naaman followed Elisha’s instructions and dipped in the Jordan River seven times, he was then healed of his leprosy.

Background Study:

Aram (modern Syria) was the country northeast of Israel. Naaman was the commander of the king’s army in Aram. The king of the Arameans (air-uh-ME-uhnz) was pleased with Naaman’s military victories and referred to him as his servant, a term used for high officers in the army. He was a valiant soldier, having often led his army to victory many times. Naaman was probably a wealthy man. He owned servants, including a young girl from Israel who was his wife’s servant. This little girl had been taken away from her parents in a raid and brought to the foreign country of Aram.

Naaman was ill with leprosy, which made him physically unable to perform his duties. He could not lead the army to further victories for Syria without stopping the disease. Leprosy was a highly contagious disease, so people would shun anyone with it. Because of Naaman’s position, he was permitted to stay in his own home, possibly living in separate rooms from the rest of the family.

It is interesting that this young servant girl from Israel wanted to help her master. She could have just taken the attitude that he deserved what he got. After all, these were the people that took her away from her family. Instead, she told Naaman’s wife that a prophet in Samaria (the capital of Israel) named Elisha could heal her husband (verses 2-3). The fact that this young girl did this also makes it plain that she had been taught about God from a very young age. She still loved God and believed in His power even though she was far away from her parents and religious teachers. She believed in God’s power enough to take a big chance and tell her mistress about the prophet, Elisha. The fact that Naaman acted on this little girl’s suggestion shows a combination of his desperation to be healed and the respect he must have had for this little girl.

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With a letter from his king, Ben-Hadad (vs. 5), and gifts of gold, silver, and embroidered garments – Naaman went to Israel's king to ask for Elisha's help. But the letter frightened Joram. He thought Ben-Hadad was trying to provoke a fight with him. He had no powers to heal this man. Yet if he refused to heal Naaman, the king of Aram would become angry and attack Israel.

God used Elisha to intervene. Elisha heard about the letter and told King Joram not to be angry or afraid. God would heal Naaman.

Naaman went to wait outside of Elisha's humble house. In his pride, Naaman must have had some preconceptions of how he would be cured. He must have been shocked that Elisha did not even come outside to greet him personally. Instead, the prophet sent a servant to Naaman to say he should wash seven times in the Jordan River (20 miles away) to be cured. Elisha did not stay in his house because he was afraid of leprosy but rather realized that Naaman had overestimated his own importance. Elisha gave Naaman a command that would test his faith because he had to do something toward his own cure.

In a temper, Naaman stalked off. He pointed out that the rivers of Damascus in Aram were better than the dirty Jordan, anyway.

You have to give this man credit for listening to his servants! They pointed out how easy it would be for Naaman to do what Elisha said. He changed his mind, humbly obeyed God's prophet, and was cured of the leprosy. Many years later, at the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus referred to the healing of Naaman (Luke 4:27). Jesus also healed a Gentile from that same region (Matthew 15:21-28).

Elisha's servant, unlike the servants of Naaman, was not a faithful servant. Gehazi decided to make some money out of this whole event. After Elisha rejected payment and gifts from Naaman, Gehazi chased him down and asked for payment. Naaman was happy to give the gifts and money. Gehazi hid the money, but Elisha immediately knew what he had done. Gehazi was struck with leprosy. The money would have been little comfort, then.
Background Information on the Divided Kingdom.

Way to Introduce the Story:

Bring a box of tissues and a glass of water to today's gathering. Act like you are very ill with a cold. Have a drink of the water and then play like you sneeze into a tissue. Talk about how sick you have been feeling lately. Ask the children if they want to use your tissue or drink from your glass. "Of course you wouldn't want to use my tissue! You would catch my germs. You might catch my cold. There are some kinds of diseases that you can catch by touching people who have the disease. In the time of Elisha, there was a terrible disease that you could catch that way. It was called leprosy. You could die if you had leprosy. There was no medicine you could take for it. In today's story, we are going to find out about a man who had leprosy."

The Story:

Naaman was the commander of the whole army of the country of Aram. He was very rich. He had many servants. Even his wife had a servant girl. She was a little girl from the country of Israel. She had been captured from her home and brought to the country of Aram to be a slave in Naaman's house. Naaman and his family did not believe in God, but the little girl did. Even though she was far away from her parents and Israel, she remembered what her parents had taught her when she was very little. She remembered Elisha, the prophet, and all the good things he did for God.

Even though Naaman was a commander of the army and very rich, he had a very big problem. He had a terrible disease called leprosy. Leprosy starts out as white spots on the skin. Then, the white spots start becoming sorer. If the leprosy spots were on a person's hands, then their hands could become so sore with

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leprosy that they could fall off. The spots would spread all over your body, and finally, you would die. It was a horrible thing to have leprosy because no medicine could make it better.

No one wanted to be around someone with leprosy because they might get leprosy, too. Naaman had to stay away from everyone. He could not be a soldier anymore, and he could not be with his family. Everyone was sad about Naaman.

No one in the whole country of Aram knew how to help Naaman except the servant girl from Israel. She told her mistress, Naaman's wife, about her God and Elisha the prophet. Elisha could do miracles because Elisha was a prophet of God. Maybe Naaman could go to Israel and see Elisha.

When Naaman's wife told him about Elisha, he became very excited. He decided to go to Israel and find out if the girl's words were true. Naaman and his servants had to ride very far to get to Israel. They went to King Joram's house and then to Elisha's house.

When he got to Elisha's house, Naaman sat outside and waited. Naaman was very important, so he expected Elisha to come outside and give him a special greeting. Naaman waited, but Elisha did not come outside. Instead, a servant came outside and told Naaman that Elisha had a message for him, "Elisha said that you should go and dip in the Jordan River seven times. If you do this, then the Lord will take away your leprosy, and you will be well."

Naaman was very angry. Didn't Elisha know that he was an important army commander? How dare Elisha tell him to go and wash in the dirty Jordan River! If he wanted to wash in a river, then he could have done that back in the country of Aram. Naaman was so angry that he started to head for home.

"Please, sir," said Naaman's servants, "we really want you to be well again. You will die if the leprosy does not go away. It would be an easy thing to wash in the Jordan River seven times. We have come such a long way. Why don't you try it?"

Naaman also wanted his leprosy to disappear, so he washed at the Jordan River. Then he washed again. He did this seven times, just as Elisha had said. Naaman came up out of the water and looked at his skin. The leprosy spots were gone! His skin looked perfect! It was as soft and smooth as a little child's skin.

Naaman went straight back to Elisha's house. Naaman wanted to give Elisha all the money, gold and silver and beautiful fabrics he had brought from Aram. But Elisha would not accept the gifts. He had not done this for money. He told Naaman how to be healed because he wanted Naaman to know that God was real.

"Elisha, since I have been healed of my leprosy, I know that the God of Israel is real. My wife's servant girl was right. From now on, I will worship the Lord," Naaman promised. Naaman left and began his journey back to Aram.

Elisha's servant, Gehazi, was not happy. He thought Elisha should have accepted all of the gifts. Gehazi did not tell Elisha, but he followed Naaman and told him a lie. Gehazi told Naaman that Elisha had changed his mind, and now Elisha wanted the gifts. Naaman was happy to give Gehazi the gifts, and then he continued on his journey.

Elisha was very angry with Gehazi for the way he had tricked Naaman. He told Gehazi that now he would have the leprosy that Naaman had had. Gehazi looked down at his skin and saw that he did have leprosy. Gehazi knew that he had made a big mistake.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

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Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

View this slideshow and download it from the original source: http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/elisha-naaman/

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

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Review:

- What disease did Naaman have? (Leprosy)
- Who told Naaman how to make his leprosy go away? (His wife's servant girl)
- Who was the servant girl? Who did she worship? (The girl had been captured from Israel and served the Lord God)
- What message did Elisha's servant give Naaman? (Dip in the Jordan River seven times to be healed)
- What happened when Naaman dipped in the Jordan River seven times? (He was healed of leprosy, and his skin became clean and smooth)
- Elisha did not accept Naaman's gift. What did his servant, Gehazi, do? (Lied to Naaman and took the gift himself)
- What did Naaman say he would do now that he was healed of leprosy? (He would only worship the Lord God)
- Why did Naaman not like Elisha's directions for him to dip in the Jordan River seven times to be made clean? (The Jordan River was a dirty river, and Naaman's pride made him think Elisha should treat him better and give him a better way to be healed)
- Why did this story teach you about God?

Reflection:

- What is something you wonder about in this story?
- What do you think the Jordan River looked, smelled or felt like?
- How do you think Naaman felt when he went home and showed everyone he was healed?
- How do you think Naaman's life changed after he was healed and started worshipping the Lord God?
- How do you think the servant girl from Israel felt when she saw her master, Naaman, return healed and promising only to worship the Lord God?
- Why do you think the servant girl wanted her master to be healed, even though she had been captured from her home in Israel to be their slave?

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- If you were the servant girl, would you have loved God even after being captured and made a servant? Would you have told your master that Elisha could heal Naaman?
- The servant girl obeyed and believed in God even though she was without her family or religious teachers. Is it difficult for you to obey God when you are alone?
- Because of the servant girl, Naaman started worshipping and believing in God. Who can you talk to about God? Who do you know that might want to hear the good news about Jesus's love and sacrifice for us?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a lifelong friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- My God is So Big Song
- Goodbye World Song
- Rejoice in the Lord Always Song
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Discuss what might have happened if the little girl had not been in the story.
- Look up "leprosy" in a bible encyclopaedia and discuss the results.
- Trace Naaman's travels on a bible time's map. Compare this with a modern-day map.
- Have the children draw a face on the pad of their index finger to make a Naaman puppet. Then, bring a pan of water and let the children dip "Naaman" seven times.
- Let the children each list good things that their parents have taught them (or that they have learned in bible studies or from someone good in their life). Ask them if they would remember these things if they were taken to a foreign country where no one else believed in God. Have children write notes. Begin the letter: "Thank you for helping me. I will always remember these good things that you have taught me…"

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

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Crafts:



‘Dipping Naaman’ Craft: Have children draw a picture of Naaman on a thick piece of paper. Glue or tape a craft stick to the back, with only a small portion remaining behind the picture and most protruding from the bottom.

Poke a hole in the bottom of a plastic or paper cup. Stick the craft stick through the hole so that the picture of Naaman can slide in and out of the cup. The children can push the stick in and out of the hole to “dip Naaman in the water” seven times. Decorate the cup if you wish.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

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Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page and puzzle worksheets (Calvary Curriculum)
- Craft: Naaman in a cup craft and also a song (Kids and the Bible)

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