

MISTAKES OF NAAMAN

By Keith Greer

“Then she said to her mistress, If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy.” {2 Kings 5:3} Yes, the cleansing of Naaman’s leprosy is a powerful story of God’s power and His mercy. Still, Naaman made some mistakes. Let us examine these mistakes to learn some lessons so we don’t repeat them in our own lives. Naaman made the mistakes of:

Going to the wrong authority. *“Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.” {2 Kings 5:6}* Why would Nathan go to the king instead of the prophet? The prophet of God was the one who could cure him – not the king! People are always going to people who truly cannot help them with their problem. *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” {Isaiah 8:20}* According to the Scriptures we have been given *“all things that pertain to life and godliness,” 2 Peter 1:3.* God’s word equips one *“for every good work, 2 Timothy 3:17.* So in matters of religion, for authority and guidance – where else should one turn to? Sadly, they are still going to the wrong authority!

Becoming angry. *“And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean. But Naaman became furious...” {2 Kings 5:10,11}* Yes, Nathan left in his anger but he still left with his leprosy! Why did he come to the prophet? Did he not desire a healing for the dreaded disease of leprosy that was afflicting him? Why get angry when you receive the answer for what you desired? Sadly, this is also being played out in our own time. On more than one occasion a person will come to me and say, “I want the truth, just tell me what God expects of me.” Yet, when I take the Scriptures and show them the conditions required by God – they get angry and go off in a huff! In one case a person said, “baptism, I do not need baptism, all I need is God’s grace.” When I try to show them what God’s grace *“teaches them,” (Titus 2:11)* they get angry – but they remain in their sins! Anger will not change one word of the truth!

Being presumptuous. *“...and went away and said, Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’” {2 Kings 11}* Naaman had already assumed how the prophet would heal him. Prejudice had closed Naaman’s mind. Such thinking is still very much alive today! Yes, men want to be saved from the condemnation of their sin but have already predetermined how God should accomplish it in their lives. Most want little duty, little commitment and something that doesn’t demand too much of them. Naaman was wrong in his assumptions and so are men!

Wanting a substitute. *“Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.” {2 Kings 5:12}* Yes, Naaman wanted to be rid of his leprosy but he wanted it on his terms and not the prophets. Why? His plan was better! Oh yes, man wants salvation today but by his own terms in his own way and his ways are better than God’s. Sadly, the prophet Isaiah long ago spoke the truth concerning such foolishness, *Isaiah 55:8-11.*

The good news of this story is Naaman corrected his mistakes and was healed. Will you?
