

Naaman

2 Kings 5:1-14

by Don Falkos

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Naaman was the commander of the Aramean army. He was highly respected. He was well liked. He was married. He was wealthy. But he had a problem. Naaman was a leper.

There was a young Israelite girl who had been captured and given as a servant to Naaman's wife. The girl said, "There is a prophet in Samaria who could heal my master of his leprosy."

Aram and Israel were often at war. But Naaman didn't care. He took some of his men and set off for Israel. He went to the home of the prophet Elisha. Elisha sent a servant out to say "Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. You will be healed."

Naaman was incensed. "I expected this man to wave his hands over me and loudly pray to his god that I might be miraculously healed. Yet he won't even come out of his house to greet me. And he wants me to wash in the Jordan River? The rivers of Aram flow with pure, clear water. If all I needed to do was wash, I could just as well have done it there. I'm certainly not going to wash in the muddy waters of the Jordan." And he stalked off.

Some of Naaman's men said, "Sir, if this 'prophet' had given you a really difficult task to perform, you would have done it. We've traveled all the way here from Aram. It would be a shame to travel all the way back without even attempting this very simple thing you've been instructed to do."

Naaman recognized the logic of what his men were telling him. He went and dipped himself in the Jordan River seven times. Despite his lack of faith in what he was doing, he was healed. His skin became as soft and as smooth as that of a child.