

The Unnamed Servant Girl and General

2 Kings 5:1-16

Being content and having inner peace is a great character trait. It is a discipline to experience God's presence in all circumstances. We have tendency to see the half empty cup and not the full part.

When I was a kid, my mom taught me start the day thanking God for the new day. She was right. Sometimes I am, but some other days I am grouchy, grumbling and eventually bitter.

Today I will present to you two names who are not too familiar to us. The first person is an **army general, Colonel Naaman, a Syrian general**. And the second one is an unnamed, servant-slave Jewish girl. Let us start.

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and in high favor, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. (2 Kings 5:1a ESV)

Naaman is a common name in Syria, it means gracious. He ranked highest in the Syrian army. Thousands of soldiers were under his command. The narrator adds saying that the Lord Yahweh was the reason Syria had victory.

He was a mighty man of valor,

Yet...

but he was a leper (2 Kings 5:1b ESV)

This man was ill; he had leprosy. In those days, lepers had to be quarantined. For public figures like him, that was equivalent to death. He might have preferred death to leprosy.

Suddenly an unnamed slave-servant Jewish girl comes into the picture.

Now the Syrians on one of their raids had carried off a little girl from the land of Israel, and she worked in the service of Naaman's wife. (2 Kings 5:2 ESV)

The narrator is very clear: she has been brought there against her own will. She is servant of the Mrs. Naaman. She is probably missing her family, her culture and her faith.

The narrator did not mention details about her life, only that she was an unknown slave-servant girl. **She was no one**, vs Naaman, the guy on the top. Do you see the contrast?

The interesting thing about her is that instead of being filled with bitterness and hatred, she is a merciful girl that knew her priorities. It seems she knew the Lord God.

She said to her mistress, “Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.” (2 King 5:3 ESV)

-Why in the world she would suggest any cure for the ones who were keeping her in captivity?

-An unnamed Jewish girl gives a solution to a general who usually goes to war and when he wins, he brings along captives. (Loving and caring for enemy?)

-How in the world you give your opinion? Who asked you to give your opinion? She had the courage to open her mouth in a situation like this.

It seems this unnamed girl had inner peace with God. It seems she knew who Yahweh was. It seems she knew her “Bible” verses quite well that, with God everything is possible. She saw her boss suffering and she would not stay silent. I see that in Paul. He was beaten, put in prison and while he was chained in prison, he wrote to the Philippians: **“I thank my God every time I remember you.”** (Phil 1:3) Only a person who has inner peace with God can have a thankful and content heart.

-Can you do the same thing today? **Can you help an “enemy”?**

Let us continue with **General Naaman**. He **did listen** to the advice of this **unimportant girl**, and took the message to **his big boss**, the **king of Aram**: King **Ben-Hadad**. The Arameans were in **Damascus**. The king thought the best thing was to write a recommendation letter and send gifts to the king of Israel. This could help his General Naaman. Naaman took a lot of silver and shekels along with him.

The king of Israel read the letter, **became angry and** tore his clothes. He was angry because he knew that he could not heal this man. Why had they come to him?

But **Elisha** (Yeghiseh), the prophet heard the event and sent his servant to tell the king not to worry, and send General Naaman to him.

Naaman still did not understand what was going on. He is man of the army. He believes in fights, victories, orders, servants and possessions. He is just doing whatever has been said to him.

Naaman went to Elisha in a caravan of horses and chariots. Elisha did not come to welcome the General. Instead he sent the instructions through his servant: ***“Just wash seven times in the Jordan River and you are cured.”***

Naaman was expecting respect. After all, he was the general. One can imagine the General’s face on his horse. **Jordan River?** In Damascus they had the Barada River, which is much better than Jordan. What is going on?

He was angry. He decided to not do anything. But his servants convinced him saying, **“Whatever is asked is not difficult. Do it.”**

What can we learn?

1. Naaman Obeyed the Word of the Man of God

So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. (2 King 5:14 ESV)

He learned to obey the man of God. God was teaching him to humbly accept His guidance. This is a problem for many of us. We tell God how to do things. The general thought he had a better chance in Damascus with a much better river. Simple obedience is extremely important in your walk with God.

2. Naaman came back to acknowledge who God was

then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him. And he said, “Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant.” (2 King 5:15 ESV)

Naaman acknowledges who Yahweh is:

“Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel”

There is **only one true God. I AM.**

Revelation 11:17 says: “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.”

3. The angry Naaman was changed

When he returned to the Man of God, the angry Naaman was changed. He came to say “thank you.” Naaman had experienced God’s grace.

Now he wanted to thank the man of God.

*This is very similar to the situation when Jesus healed the **10 lepers**. **Only one came back to thank him**. Only one was really healed inside and out. He was saved.*

We all need healing. We **need to come like Naaman: ready to be “washed.” We all need to acknowledge who God is.**

I heard once a pastor saying when we age, we either become better or bitter.

“Better” means acknowledging Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It means allowing Jesus to wash you. Because we are sinners, we need to be washed always by the blood of Jesus.

“Bitter” means losing your connection God, becoming negative criticizing everything. Dangerous condition...

Isn't it interesting the unnamed servant Jewish girl was better not bitter?

4. Naaman came back to the man of God with gifts...

“Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant.”(2 King 5:15 ESV)

Naaman wanted to give back to God. He wanted to give Him gifts. But the man of God refused his gifts. We can not repay GOD. We can only rejoice with HIM.
God does not need us. We need God.

You know what is first thing one should find in his/her life.

To love God, to serve God, to worship God, to do, do, do, do

Each can find God different ways. Each is facing different sinful life and conditions. We all need to repent.

Whatever situation you are:

first thing you need to experience that **God loves you** and **He wants you to be His child. To be with God...**(Allow God to Love you) (Receive His Love)

Then, love Him, worship Him, serve Him....

Naaman wanted to give. I do know what his motives of giving were, but does it matter to God why we give?

In **Acts** chapter 8 we read about a man called **Simon**. He saw that one could get the Holy Spirit by the laying of hands. He offered money to the apostles so he could have the same power. Peter said:

“May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money?” (vs20)

You can not do favors to God. God does not need you. **God’s grace is unconditional. God offers new life.** Our response is recognizing our sinful nature and asking God’s grace through His Son Jesus Christ.

Then you can give with the right motivation. God will accept your gift.

Sometimes we will ask for healing and we will not get healed as Naaman was healed. We need to learn to thank God also in difficult times. **You see, being thankful is not related to the circumstances. It is a state of being. It is from the inside. It is from the heart.**

Conclusion.

Unnamed servant girl made a difference in a proud General's life.
How knows, God will use you today to make difference in someone's life.
Maybe even no one will recognize what you did. God knows and that is the best,

Amen