

08

2 KINGS 5:1-14

AN ENEMY HEALED



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Even on easy days, we all struggle with pride. On challenging days, the struggle only gets more intense. When we are hurting, it's hard to see past the pain and believe that anyone could possibly understand our pain or know what we need—but God does. He wants to heal us for our good and His glory—but we have to let Him. We have to surrender and do things His way. That can be hard to accept, but the payoff is worth anything that surrender may cost us. As Naaman learned when he finally let go of his pride, when we follow God's commands, He shows great compassion.



CENTRAL **truth**

When we follow God's commands, He shows us compassion.



EXPLORE scripture

2 KINGS 5:1-14

2 KINGS 5:1-6

1 Naaman, commander of the army for the king of Aram, was a man important to his master and highly regarded because through him, the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man was a valiant warrior, but he had a skin disease. **2** Aram had gone on raids and brought back from the land of Israel a young girl who served Naaman's wife. **3** She said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his skin

disease." **4** So Naaman went and told his master what the girl from the land of Israel had said. **5** Therefore, the king of Aram said, "Go, and I will send a letter with you to the king of Israel." So he went and took with him 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing. **6** He brought the letter to the king of Israel, and it read: When this letter comes to you, note that I have sent you my servant Naaman for you to cure him of his skin disease.

2 KINGS 5:7-10

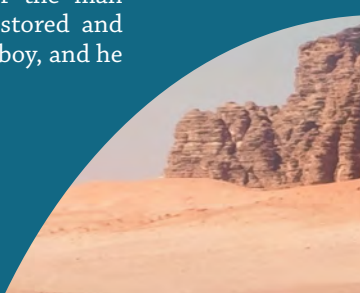
7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and asked, "Am I God, killing and giving life, that this man expects me to cure a man of his skin disease? Recognize that he is only picking a fight with me." **8** When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king:

"Why have you torn your clothes? Have him come to me, and he will know there is a prophet in Israel." **9** So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house. **10** Then Elisha sent him a messenger, who said, "Go wash seven times in the Jordan and your skin will be restored and you will be clean."

2 KINGS 5:11-14

11 But Naaman got angry and left, saying, "I was telling myself: He will surely come out, stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the skin disease. **12** Aren't Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and left in a rage. **13** But his servants approached and said

to him, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more should you do it when he only tells you, 'Wash and be clean?'" **14** So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, according to the command of the man of God. Then his skin was restored and became like the skin of a small boy, and he was clean.



DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE 2 KINGS 5:13

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

2 KINGS 5:1-6

DWELL

Naaman was a powerful man—the commander over all of Aram’s army. Yet he had a weakness: a skin disease, probably one that was contagious and not easily cured such as leprosy. The condition was serious enough that he was willing to take the advice of a young slave girl from Israel, who told his wife that there was a prophet there who could heal him. It’s likely that he would have seen this girl as completely insignificant—young, female, and a prisoner of war. But God was going to use her advice in a mighty way to show His power to this foreign commander.



Can you think of other times in Scripture that God used seemingly insignificant people to accomplish his purposes? What does this teach us about Him?



When you think you are too insignificant for God to use you, how might this story change your mind?

MEMORIZE

Print out 2 Kings 5:13 and read it slowly, highlighting key words and phrases that stand out to you. Review this printout throughout the week

PRAY

Ask God how to show you how you can serve Him this week, even in seemingly small ways.

day 2

2 KINGS

5:7-12

DWELL

According to Elisha, the solution was simple: all Naaman needed to do was wash himself in the Jordan River seven times, and his disease would be healed. But Naaman was angry. “Doesn’t this guy know who I am? I was expecting something a little more impressive than ‘Go take a bath!’” If we’re honest, we act this way sometimes, too. We want God to take care of things on our terms, and often in impressive ways. But we forget that He is God, and we are not. He has a greater perspective than we could ever have, and His way of doing things is always better.



Why did the king of Israel and Elisha respond differently to the letter from the king of Aram?



When do you tend to resist doing things God’s way? How can you change your perspective?

MEMORIZE

Split 2 Kings 5:13 into 4–5 sections, and write each section on a different note card. Try to memorize a different note card each day.

PRAY

Open a Bible to Proverbs 3:5-6 and pray these verses aloud to God. Thank Him that His understanding is always greater than ours

day 3

2 KINGS

5:13-18

DWELL

Fortunately, Naaman’s servants were more level-headed than he was, and they convinced him to give the prophet’s suggestion a try, basically saying, “What’s the harm in trying since you came all this way? The only thing you have to lose is your pride.” So Naaman did what Elisha had said and sure enough, he was cleaned of his disease. Instead of just going straight home to Aram, he returned to Elisha and declared what he now knew to be true: the God of Israel was the one true God.



What did Naaman learn about God? Where did he still need to grow his understanding?



How could you encourage people around you to try doing things God’s way like Naaman’s servants did?

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read 2 Kings 5:13 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Ask God to show you if there is something He is asking you to do that you have missed because it seemed too simple or unimportant.

day 4

LUKE

4:23-28

DWELL

The people in Nazareth were curious about the miracles they had heard Jesus performing, and they were hoping He would do some of the same for them. But Jesus reminded them of the story we just read about Naamah. The people had forgotten: God never healed people as a party trick or just to make them happy. He did it to show an unbelieving world that He was Lord over all. The people of Nazareth wanted God's blessings for themselves and were furious when they realized what Jesus was implying: just being an Israelite wasn't enough. God was looking for people who truly wanted to follow Him and His ways.

← Why didn't Jesus perform any miracles for the people in Nazareth like they wanted Him to? What was His point?

→ Do you sometimes ask God to act just to prove Himself to you? Why is this the wrong attitude to have?

MEMORIZE

Write 2 Kings 5:13 on a sticky note and post it somewhere you will see it often, like a bathroom mirror or notebook. Read it to yourself each time you see it.

PRAY

Ask God to help change your heart when you are frustrated that He doesn't always act in the way you'd like.

day 5

MARK

2:1-12

DWELL

Jesus knew that the paralytic man had a more important need than his need to walk: he needed the forgiveness of sin that only God could provide. When Jesus proclaimed that He had forgiven the man's sins, some people in the crowd were offended. Who was this man to claim to have a power only God had? Of course, Jesus has all the authority of His father to heal sins. But it was easier for them to see a man healed of paralysis than a man healed of sin. So Jesus healed his body as well to prove that He did, in fact, have the authority of God—authority to forgive sin.

↑ Why didn't Jesus just heal the man's paralysis first? Why was his sin a higher priority?

→ When do you most tend to doubt Jesus's authority and power? How can you grow your faith and trust in this area?

MEMORIZE

Write 2 Kings 5:13 on the center of a piece of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the Scripture

PRAY

Thank God that when we pray to Him, He not only hears our prayers, but knows what we actually need that we don't even realize we should ask for.