

GOD'S WAY WORKS;
Man's Does Not

Naaman was a captain in the Syrian army, “a great man with his master, and honourable...he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was a leper*” (2 Kin. 5:1, emphasis B.G.). Leprosy is a slowly progressing, incurable, and highly infectious skin disease. It would begin as a rash or other topical skin disorder, but would continue to destroy the skin and also result in loss of bone mass and deformities. Israelites who contracted the disease were cast out of the camp, quarantined, and considered unclean (Lev. 13:44-46). For a mighty man of valor, such as Naaman, leprosy was indeed a devastating and life-changing development.

The only way to depose the leprosy was by means of a miracle. After hearing of Naaman's plight, Elisha calls for Naaman to come to him that Naaman “shall know that there is a prophet in Israel” (2 Kin. 5:8). Naaman was commanded to “go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean” (2 Kin. 5:10). God's way was simple and complete. Naaman's leprosy would be totally healed and his skin returned to health by simply obeying the word of God. Instead, Naaman “turned and went away in a rage” (2 Kin. 5:12). Naaman was expecting something more from the prophet of God – some grandiose show or performance, or at the least, the option to wash in a much cleaner or nicer body of water than the Jordan River. Naaman's way was to reject the word of God and walk away. Naaman's way led him to remain a leper, unclean and sure to be overtaken and killed by his disease. Fortunately for Naaman, one of his servants talked some sense into him and convinced Naaman to dip “himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean” (2 Kin. 5:14).

Many today are waiting for some grand sign or vision to come to them to prove they are saved. They are spiritual lepers, plagued by sin, who have rejected the word of God to follow the ways of some denomination. Sadly, many sincere individuals still wait, remaining in sin and doomed to spiritual death (Rom. 6:23), instead of obeying the simple plan provided by God in His Word – Hear (Rom. 10:17), Believe (Heb. 11:6), Repent (Acts 2:38), Confess (Rom. 10:9-10), and be baptized in order to have past sins washed away (Acts 22:16). Be cleansed of your spiritual leprosy today. Just as Naaman was cleansed from his leprosy by obeying God's Word and dipping beneath the waters of the Jordan River, you too can be cleansed from sin by obeying God's Word and being dipped into the watery grave of baptism. As Naaman arose from that water pure and clean, you too can arise from baptism “a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). God's way works.

- *Brad Green*