

Naaman Healed of Leprosy

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[0:00] Well, open your Bibles with me to Luke's Gospel, Luke chapter 4, if you would please. Luke 4. It is a wonderful hymn, and it is a wonderful prayer for us.

Shine thou upon us, O Lord. Breathe thou upon us, O Lord. Speak thou for us, O Lord. According to your word, let all our teaching be.

That's awesome and a wonderful prayer. Luke chapter 4. Well, here in Luke 4, beginning with verse 16, we have an account of the Lord Jesus Christ returning to his hometown of Nazareth.

After having spent 40 days in the wilderness where he was tempted by the devil in verses 1 through 13 of Luke 4, Jesus returned to Galilee and he began to preach in the synagogues where he was praised.

He was praised by all who heard him. Verses 14 and 15. Jesus continues this practice in Nazareth on the Sabbath day. He stood up in the synagogue and he read from the scriptures, verses 16 through 19.

[1:18] Then he sat down and he said, Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. Verse 21. In verse 22, we see a similar response as that which Jesus had been receiving throughout Galilee.

They all spoke well of him and were amazed at his gracious words. But as Samuel has written, the Lord sees not as man sees.

Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. The Lord sees not as man sees. We men are often taken in by flattering lips, but not so the Lord Jesus.

Knowing the true state of their hearts, he says to them, beginning with verse 23, Surely you will quote this proverb to me. Physician, heal yourself.

Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum. I tell you the truth, he continued, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elisha's time when the sky was shut up for three and a half years.

[2:34] And there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet. But yet not one of them was cleansed, only Naaman the Syrian. All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of a hill on which the town was built in order to throw him down the cliff.

But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. All who spoke well of him and were amazed at his gracious words, verse 22, now were furious with him, verse 28, and wanted to kill him by throwing him down a cliff.

Verse 29. What was it? What was it that so infuriated these people? One minute they're praising Jesus for his gracious words, the next minute they want to kill him.

[3:46] And literally, we're speaking of minutes. Why were they so quickly filled with rage? Well, look again at verse 27 with me. And there was many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed.

Only one. Naaman the Syrian. Not Naaman the Israelite, but Naaman the Gentile, as mentioned by Jesus, who had received the Lord's favor.

The Lord had commanded the Jews, these Nazarenes, to act justly in love mercy, Micah 6.8. But for most of them, their mercy, what little there was of it, extended only to Jews and not Gentile dogs. Nevertheless, our merciful God will have mercy on whom he wants to have mercy. And in this case, it's a dreaded Syrian.

And not just any Syrian, but the commander of the armies of the king of Syria, no less. So now let's turn to our text for this evening, and that's 2 Kings, 2 Kings, chapter 5.

[5:04] 2 Kings, chapter 5. And look into this amazing story of amazing grace.

The story of Naaman, the Syrian general. Most of you are aware of my military background, having spent about a half of my adult life in the military.

So most of you are also probably aware that I'm somewhat biased toward the military and those who serve in the military. Well, bias may not be the proper word to use when considering the Lord God's relationship to military men.

But no one can deny that he very often favorably singles out military men. Men like Joshua and Caleb and Gideon and David and Cornelius, the Roman centurion, who is spoken of in Acts, chapter 10, as devout and God-fearing, giving generously to those in need and praying to God regularly.

Another godly centurion, you may remember, was the one in Luke, chapter 7 and Matthew, chapter 8, where he said to the Lord, Lord, I don't deserve to have you come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed.

[6:30] I don't deserve you to come under my roof. Jesus' reply, as you remember, was, I have not seen such faith in all of Israel.

There have been many, many godly military men throughout the ages. Most of them, indeed the vast majority of them, we know little or nothing about. However, there have been a very few, a very small number of Christian soldiers who have left their mark in history, in his story.

I want to tell you just a bit about two of these soldiers who have blessed my soul immeasurably over the years. I'll give you a brief example of the type of man each one of these dear brothers in Christ was.

It's only going to take a couple of minutes. General Robert Edward Lee. He was visited by two of his chaplains one evening. They told the general that all the chaplains were praying for him.

All the other chaplains were praying for General Robert Edward Lee. He said, well, first, he said, tears came to his eyes, to the great general's eyes, as he said, please, thank them for that, sir.

[7:49] I warmly appreciate it, and I can only say that I am nothing but a poor sinner, trusting in Christ alone for salvation, and I need all the prayers they can offer me.

General Thomas Jonathan Jackson, nicknamed Stonewall, by his men, wrote to his wife Mary Ann from Manassas, yesterday we fought a great battle and gained a great victory for which all the glory is due to God alone.

My preservation was entirely due, as was the glorious victory to our God, to whom be all the honor, grace, and glory.

And in another letter, he said to his wife, oh God, let this horrible war quickly come to an end, that we may all return home and engage in the only work that is worthwhile, and that is the salvation of men.

I must add that before the war took him away from his home in Lexington, Virginia, General Jackson taught a Sunday school class for colored slaves every Sabbath.

[8:58] He was a wonderful man of God. Truly, the Lord God has shown abundant grace to many military men. Here in our text, 2 Kings 5 is another example.

Before we begin, let me tell you that Aram or Syria are one and the same. One and the same. A country located just to the northeast of present-day Israel.

The Syrians were often used by our sovereign God as the rod of his anger against the faithless in Israel. All the more reason for the anger of the Nazarenes.

Follow along now as I read verse 1 of 2 Kings 5. Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram, or the king of Syria.

He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

[10:01] Naaman was one of the highest officials in his country. He was commander of all the forces of Aram or Syria.

Did you notice the adjectives that the Holy Spirit uses to describe Naaman? Great, highly regarded, valiant, or courageous.

Not only was he a highly esteemed leader, but he was also a valiant soldier himself, leading by example. You would probably think that such a man would be the envy of every man in Syria.

Yet the lowliest private under his command, the lowliest slave in the kingdom, would have never traded places with Naaman. You see, for all of his greatness and honor, though the king thought so highly of him that he made him the commander over all of his army, though he was exceedingly brave, though he possessed all these enviable qualities, there was one drawback.

But he was a leper. He had leprosy. Now, to fully understand the significance of this but, I need to tell you a little bit about what a horrible disease the leprosy of those days was.

[11:27] Leprosy in its later stages was a highly infectious disease, attacking the skin, the nerves, and the organs. It is characterized by lumps, open sores, white scaly scabs, deformities, and the wasting away of body parts.

It begins as just a white spot on the skin, but it goes on to attack the whole body. A leper in Israel was generally cut off from the rest of the people.

He was required to warn others of his presence by crying out, unclean, unclean. He was considered polluted, cut off from society, under the curse of God.

Perhaps you can now a little better understand the force of that one little word, but. Naaman was a great and honorable man, highly regarded, a man of valor, the commander of the armies of Syria, but he was a leper.

Naaman's leprosy was obviously in its early stages, but slowly, relentlessly, the leprosy, which may have been only a spot, would spread.

[12:47] There was no cure. Brethren, leprosy is a type. It is a symbol of sin. Leprosy represents sin.

And Naaman the leper is a representative man. That is, he symbolizes or represents all natural men. Men, women, children in their natural state.

Our world is full of such men and women. They're all around us. There are some here in our midst this evening. Men and women, boys and girls, infected with the moral leprosy of sin.

Under the curse of God, objects of his wrath excluded from citizenship in the Israel of God and excluded from fellowship with God.

Cut off from God and his people because of this soul-destroying disease. Men and women, boys and girls, in different stages of moral leprosy. It's very visible in some, not so visible in others.

[13:51] But all are infected with the same hopelessly incurable disease. Incurable by human means. Of which leprosy symbolizes.

The deadly disease of sin. It's interesting to compare the leprosy of the body with the leprosy of the soul. A lot of parallels.

Both are progressive and incurable by human means. Both are fatal in every case unless the Lord God, the great physician, intervenes.

They both, in fact, young as well as old, rich as well as poor, the self-righteous churchgoer as well as the heathen, the king as well as the commoner, the general as well as the private.

It's questionable whether or not leprosy is hereditary. It certainly was hereditary in the case of Gehazi in 2 Kings 5, verse 27.

[14:53] But again, this is debatable. But there's no question about, there is no debate. Sin is hereditary. Like begets like.

Sinful parents produce sinful offspring. Who can bring what is clean from the unclean? Unclean. Flesh gives birth to flesh.

The moral nature of man is diseased, which shows itself to varying degrees in every child of Adam. Every child. Many complimentary things may be said about unregenerate or the natural man.

He may be called great, highly regarded, valiant. He may be kind. He may be gracious. He may be compassionate. Compassionate.

The natural man, the unregenerate man, may be many things. But he is a sinner. She is a sinner. God has bound all men over to sin.

[15:55] Romans 11. Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin. Galatians 3.22. The whole world. And to be a prisoner of sin is to be under the wrath of God and in danger of eternal punishment.

Naaman, in spite of the glory of his earthly position, is in a dreadful state. What shall he do? Well, let's read on in verses 2 and 3.

Now, bands from Aram or Syria had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel. And she served Naaman's wife.

She said to her mistress, If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy. We descend from a highly exalted man in verse 1 to a lowly captive slave girl. Verse 2. But as I thought on this, perhaps it should be the other way around. It would be more accurate to say that we ascend from a highly exalted man in verse 1 to a lowly captive slave girl in verse 2.

[17:17] Because though she is lowly in the world's eyes, I believe her to be exalted in the king of glory's eyes. As Job has said, the lowly he sets on high.

This young girl from Israel is an excellent example for you and I to remember as we mingle with the Syrians of our day. We, like her, should look for opportunities of doing good to all men.

Consider her circumstances for a moment. She was a captive slave in exile, living among the enemies of her God and her nation.

Forcefully stolen away from her country and home. Now serving the commander of the very army that had stolen her away. Stolen her away from parents, brothers and sisters, and friends and neighbors.

And as they did so, Naaman and his army brutally killed many Israelites and left behind much destruction. Yet for all of this, this little girl had compassion for her captor.

[18:28] And she goes to her mistress saying, If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy.

One of the primary lessons you and I learned from this young Jewish girl is that like her, we should seek out opportunities of doing good in the situation God has providentially placed us.

No matter how bad the situation, we must seek out opportunities of doing good. Oh, that you and I had the compassion and the concern for the lepers in our midst like this little girl did.

Unlike the Jews the Lord Jesus spoke with and tried to teach in Nazareth in Luke chapter 4, this little Jewish girl was full of compassion and mercy. And amazingly, the great general listens to the young servant girl.

Let's go on and read verses 4 and 6. Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. By all means, go, the king of Aram replied.

[19:41] I will send a letter to the king of Israel. So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of clothing. The letter that he took to the king of Israel read, With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy.

Here, folks, we see just how highly regarded Naaman was in the eyes of his king. He too listens to the advice of the young girl and without hesitation says, Go now!

Or by all means, go! And he sends a letter to the king of Israel even though he was told that it was a prophet in Samaria who could cure Naaman of his leprosy.

That's not all he sent. He also sent 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing.

Obviously, Naaman thought that the miraculous power that could cure a man of the deadly disease of leprosy could be bought. Just like, if you remember, Simon the sorcerer in Acts chapter 8 who thought he could buy the gift of God, the Holy Spirit, from Peter and John.

[21:01] It seems like Naaman has the same attitude. Ah, but the king of Israel knew the futility of all of this thinking. Verse 7, As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, Am I God?

Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he's trying to pick a quarrel with me? The words of the king of Israel confirm that what I said earlier is absolutely true.

Leprosy is indeed a deadly and curable disease. He clearly declares that nothing or no one but God himself can cure leprosy.

The king says, Am I God? Does the king of Syria expect me to do only what God can do? I can't do the impossible.

He thought it was as impossible to cure leprosy as it was to raise the dead. Now it seems very strange that King Joram, the king of Israel, appears unaware of the prophet Elisha who had performed many miracles in Israel through the power of God including that which the king himself thought to be impossible, Elisha did.

[22:24] He raised the son of the Shunammite woman from the dead. Maybe he was like King Ahab before him who said of the prophet Micaiah, I hate him because he never prophesied anything good about me.

Maybe the king of Israel hated Elisha so much that he just erased him from his memory, I don't know. Well, we don't know why the king ignored Elisha. Nevertheless, God has not ignored Naaman.

He providentially sees to it that Elisha is made aware of Naaman's plight. Verse 8, When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message, Why have you torn your robes?

Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel. Elisha also sends the king of Israel a message, Don't be so troubled, O king.

All things are possible with God. You seem to have forgotten that there is a prophet of God in Israel. Kings with all of their wealth and with all of their authority can do nothing.

[23:41] One sends Naaman to the other and the other tears his clothes in despair. But Elisha, the Lord prophet, says, Have the man come to me.

Verse 9, So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Now try to picture this.

Try to picture General Naaman coming to Elisha's house. Horses and chariots loaded down with gold and silver and fine clothes.

Nearly a half a ton, a half a ton of gold and silver. What a spectacle it must have been. Children, I think Naaman was showing off.

I think he was trying to impress the prophet of Israel. Don't you think so? But don't forget, for all of his pomp and circumstance, for all of his glory and his prestige and his wealth, he still had this terrible, deadly spot on him.

[24:56] He was a leper. Children, teenagers, young people, parents, grandparents, when you and I look around us and see men and women who seem to have everything, wealth and honor and prestige.

Maybe they're a big star in the entertainment world, or a big sports hero, or a big shot executive making millions of dollars a year. You may be tempted to envy them, to want to be like them, but if they are merely storing up for themselves treasures on earth, without laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, they aren't to be envied, but pitied, because they too are lepers, moral lepers. Consider Naaman sitting in his chariot surrounded by his servants at the door of Elisha. He's a great and mighty man, honored by his king, commander-in-chief of all the forces of Aram, a war hero.

He has great wealth and influence as far as the world goes, everything to make a man happy. The world has been very, very good to Naaman.

But why is he here? Why is he waiting outside the door of a poor prophet's house? house? Because though he appears to have everything, he doesn't.

[26:37] He is diseased. He has an incurable disease. And unless the prophet of Israel is able to heal him, he is doomed.

All of the beautiful clothes and precious metals that he brought with him might hide, but they cannot take away his leprosy. If you're an unbeliever this evening, if you're unconverted this evening, see yourself in this picture.

You may have everything the world has to offer, wealth and prestige, you may have many, many things, but if you are not born again, reconciled to God, at peace with God, you, like the leper, are doomed.

Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, Proverbs says. Naaman probably expected to make a big impression on the prophet of Israel.

He expected that Elisha would come out of his house and greet him with the respect due his rank. He's a five-star general. You can imagine a general Naaman was accustomed to people licking his boots, bowing down before him.

[27:54] He was a proud man. He very probably had no idea, no understanding at all of what it was that prophets did. Remember, Naaman was a Syrian.

There weren't any prophets in Syria. He didn't have any idea of the way that he was to be cured, except some of them he made up in his own mind.

We see this as we go on in our text, verses 10 and 11. Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed. But Naaman went away angry and said, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord as God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Naaman obviously thought that his cure would be brought about with great outward ceremony. [28:58] You can imagine how all of this must have shocked him. Expecting to be honored by the prophet in Israel, he receives cool, very cool, and seemingly indifferent treatment.

The prophet wouldn't even come out and see him. The great general has to wait outside his door and receive a brief message from a messenger. Naaman didn't hide his feelings. He was very angry, he was very offended, his pride had been wounded. Why, he treats me like a nothing, like a nobody. He won't even come out and look at me, and then he says, go wash in the Jordan.

Does he think that all I need is a bath? If that were all I needed, I certainly wouldn't have come all this way. Verse 12, Are not Abana and Farpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel?

Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed? So he turned and went off in a rage. Naaman departs in a rage thinking that he would be cured by some outward means.

[30:09] But the cure for his terminal illness wasn't to be found in any outward means, but by the grace and the power of the Lord God who uses whatever heart changing means and methods he pleases.

Naaman had no idea of the simplicity of the cure for his leprosy, for his deadly disease. All he had to do was just believe.

Believe the words of the prophet. And here again we see him as a representative man, a type of men and women, boys and girls, who have some desire to be healed of the moral leprosy of sin. There are many such men and women, boys and girls in our day, laboring under very wrong, very erroneous views of how to be saved from sin.

Listen, listen as I read a segment from Morning and Evening, that very outstanding devotional book by Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

[31:18] Listen to this segment. Mr. McDonald asked the inhabitants of the island of St. Kilda how a man must be saved. An old man replied, we shall be saved if we repent and forsake our sins and turn to God.

Yes, said a little middle-aged female, and with a true heart too. I joined the third and with prayer and added a fourth. It must be the prayer of the heart and we must be diligent too, said a fifth, in keeping the commandments.

Thus, each having contributed his might, we might say in our day his two cents worth, feeling that a very decent creed had been made up, they all looked and listened for the preacher's approval, but they had aroused his deepest pity.

The carnal mind always maps out for itself a way in which self can work and become great. We heard about that this morning. But the Lord's way is quite the reverse.

Now these folks Mr. Spurgeon speaks of, or Mr. Spurgeon writes of, like General Naaman, fail to see the very simple truth of the matter.

[32:28] Naaman wrongfully understands that the cure is to be found in the means rather than through the means. Similarly, these Mr. Spurgeon writes of, wrongfully mistake the fruits of salvation for the way to salvation.

It's obvious that this was Naaman's thinking. He was not only willing, but he seemingly preferred to pay a great price to be cured. He was a proud, highly exalted general.

Isn't this the thinking, though, of the vast majority of people? People who don't realize that in spiritual things they are bankrupt? There wasn't enough gold and silver in all of Syria to purchase the cure of a single leper.

Naaman was furious, enraged when the simple message, go wash into Jordan, was brought to him. It didn't seem possible that this could be all he needed to do.

He thought he was being made the fool. Even so, when men are told that to be cured of their moral leprosy does not require the work, the prayers, the sacrifices, the struggles of years, but that the precious gift of cleansing and salvation may be acquired immediately, now, without money and without price of any kind, the simplicity of that turns many away.

[34:00] It's so simple, they cannot accept it to be true, they stumble over it. Oh, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and you who have no money, come buy and eat.

Yes, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. So says God in his word. The fact is, people must simply take God at his word.

What about you? Have you simply taken God at his word? He says in his word, he who believes will be saved. Have you done that?

Have you believed putting your hope and trust in him? Have you come to him without money and without price?

Nahum and foolishly departed from Elisha's house and raged, but thankfully, thankfully, his servants had more wisdom than he did. Verse 13 and 14.

[35:07] Nahum and servants went to him and said, My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he tells you, wash and be cleansed?

So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

How good it is to have wise counselors. How important and how beneficial it is to heed their wise counsel.

in doing so, we ourselves become wise. He who walks with wise men will be wise. Amazingly, here again, we see the great General Naaman listening to the counsel of his servants.

He walked with the wise. He thereby follows the directions of Elisha, with a simple faith giving up all of his own ideas as to how his healing should come about.

[36:20] Naaman humbly submits to the words of the prophet. He went and washed in the Jordan, dipping himself seven times as the man of God told him.

And he came up out of the river, a cured man, his flesh restored, clean, like a little child. Ah, but that's not the half of it.

It appears that he may also be cured of his moral leprosy. It appears that not only his flesh that has become like a child, but his heart as well.

The Lord Jesus himself said, except you be converted and become like a little child, you shall never enter the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven. it appears that Naaman has indeed been converted and is now a believer in the God of Elisha.

Verse 15, Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel.

[37:33] Please accept now a gift from your servant. servant. The great, highly honored, valiant soldier, commander of the army of Syria now considers himself a servant.

Please accept now a gift from your servant. Indeed, the Lord saves the humble and brings low those whose eyes are haughty.

Psalms 18. Naaman is now a grateful, joyful, humble, childlike servant of the Most High God.

Ready to consecrate himself and all that he has for the service of the God who so miraculously delivered him from a living death.

Amazing grace. Amazing grace. Well, there are many lessons to be learned for each one of us from this story of Naaman. First, let us never, ever despair over the soul of anyone, irregardless of who they are or what they've done.

[38:55] We all have a tendency to feel, I chuckle because I am myself in the same way, we all have a tendency to feel that some moral lepers are just too diseased, too wicked, too vile to be healed.

Remember Naaman. Who would have ever imagined that such a man, a Syrian, an enemy of God's people, murdering thousands of them probably, would be numbered among God's elect from the foundation of the world?

Who would have ever thought it? Jesus said, it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

He also said, I've come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, the worst of sinners.

Secondly, we have seen indeed a picture of the natural condition of man. Man in his natural state is a sinner. without God and without hope, if he remains in this state.

It matters not how highly exalted he is in the world, it matters not how wealthy he is, how honored he is by others, how much favor he has gained in the world.

[40:15] He carries around a despicable, disgusting, deadly spot on him, he is a leper, and unless he is cured, he shall perish. Do you know yourself to be a despicable, disgusting, leper, a moral leper, a sinner?

Next, we have seen in the actions of the young Israelite servant girl an example for those of us who have already received the miraculous cure for our moral leprosy.

We, like her, have been left here in this sick and dying world to be messengers of healing and life and salvation. You and I, like her, are to be laboring on behalf of the Lord for the spiritual good of men.

The world is full of lepers. Marshall County is full of lepers. Bremen has its lepers. Worse lepers may be than Naaman himself. Are you and I doing anything to help them?

Remember this young girl. Do as she has done. You too know of a prophet, a savior, who is able to cure the disease of sin.

[41:27] You know him. Who among us can't point our sinful diseased soul to the, who cannot point one sinful diseased soul to the great prophet, the great physician?

May the Lord God be pleased to give each one of us the loving boldness of boldness not only of this little servant girl, but of the servants who advised Naaman to listen to Elisha's direction as well.

Fourthly, we are taught in this account of Naaman the duty of every sinner, every moral leper to seek the salvation of his soul, the cure for his leprosy.

And we see and are warned against all false theories of finding a cure. There is only one cure, only one way. Jesus said it, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No man comes to the Father except by me. the only way. All other ways lead to destruction. We must listen to and obey the words of the prophet.

[42:33] Then lastly, we have seen the simplicity of the gospel and the true spirit in which a sinner should come for salvation. Yeah, it's true.

You are a sinner, a great sinner. sinner. It is written, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is no one who does not sin, not one.

But it is also written, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. sinners. You too, like the proud Naaman, must humble yourself.

You must realize that you have no hope, no hope at all apart from the great prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, and cry out to him, Lord, have mercy beyond me, a sinner.

The prophet of Israel invites you to come. Come unto me, all you who are heavy laden, who labor and are heavy burdened. Come, wash in the blood of Jesus, and your leprosy is cured and cured forever.

[43:40] Simply believe and wash. Wash in the blood of Jesus, which was shed for many for the remission, the removal of sins. There's always only been one answer, always, to the question, what must I do to be saved?

Believe the prophet, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Do you remember the excerpt I read from Mr. Spurgeon's morning and evening?

All of those things the people mentioned as being necessary for salvation were good things, repentance, prayer, diligence in obeying the commandments, all very good things.

And it's very true that no man will be saved apart from doing those good things. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord. But except ye repent, you shall perish.

However, it is also true that no man will be saved because of doing those good things. not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Ghost.

[44:53] Titus 3.5. What those people of the island of St. Kilda failed to realize is all of those good things are a result of having been cured and not to cure itself, not the cause of it.

The cause is to be found in Jesus and in Jesus alone. Believe on him. To believe is simply to trust, to depend, to rely upon the Lord Jesus Christ and him alone.

After having done that, you like Naaman show, offer up all that you have to the one who has healed you, humbly serving him from that time on, doing many good things.

Well, I began this evening by reading from Luke 4, the Lord Jesus speaking to his former neighbors in Nazareth. Men and women, boys and girls, he lived among for nearly 30 years.

Israelites according to the flesh. They lived with him 30 years and never once ever seen him sin.

Because Jesus never did say sin, never sin.

[46 : 10] He never said no to his parents. Yet they would not listen to him. They angrily rejected his words.

Indeed, the way of a fool seems right to him. He will not listen to advice. Then we saw in our text an amazing contrast.

The great commander-in-chief of the Syrian army, a pagan Gentile, humbly listens to and heeds the advice of his servants.

Now, which will you be like this evening? We're just about finished. Which will you be like this evening? Will you, like the men and women of Nazareth, reject the words of the Lord Jesus? or will you humble yourself and listen to his servant and seek the cure for your deadly disease? Humbly seek him and you will find him.

[47 : 08] You shall find him. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Come to him and wash. Wash and be cleansed in the blood of Jesus. Come to him in and through his word and prayer.

Amen. Father, thank you. Thank you very much for reminding all of us again this evening of what we once were.

We praise and thank you and love you exceedingly for what you have done for many of us. You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power in our eternal love simply because of who you are.

Lord, if there be but one moral leper in our presence this evening, let him or her not rest until they, like Naaman, come to their senses and simply believe.

We ask it in Jesus' precious name and for his glory. Amen.