

Soul Winning

By

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Introduction

This book contains six chapters that deal with the experience of Naaman the leper and his encounter with the prophet of God, Elisha. He was not a Jew, but a Syrian, and a warrior at that. Even worse, he had come into the land of Israel and carried off some of the people captive. Included in the captivity was a little Jewish maid. One would think that this little maid would have a bitter hatred for her captor. She spent her days waiting on the wife of this great captain of the Syrian host, Naaman. She was the catalyst that brought Naaman to Israel and there he received his healing.

Chapter One deals with Naaman, the Syrian captain of the host. He was a leper. He is typed in this writing as a Gentile, and as such, a picture of the nations that would receive the gospel through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not pictured as a lost sinner, for the language that describes him is that of a saved person that does not know anything about the Lord. His virtues are listed and they are many. In the end, it is merely said *“but he was a leper.”* He is but a type of many saved men today that are great men with many fleshly attributes, but, alas, they are sinners, for they have never met the Prophet, Jesus to be cleansed of their daily sins. He is a type of the saved person without baptism and access to the promises of God through his covenants. This promise is extended to him as it was to Cornelius.

Chapter two is the story of the little Israelite maid who mentioned to her mistress that if Naaman was in Israel he would have access to a prophet that would heal him of his disease of leprosy. She was compassionate even though she was a captive. It is a lesson for all to learn that one does not have to be a great theologian to be able to point one to the Saviour that can take away daily sins through obedience to his word. One only needs to love the Lord and want to have his name glorified.

Chapter three tells of the king of Syria that gets involved in the act. He decides to send Naaman with gold, silver and changes of garments to the king of Israel. Kings are not notorious for having spiritual minds and these two were no exception. The king of Israel thought the king of Syria was picking a fight and tore his shirt and asked if he was God to heal this man of leprosy. The Lord’s people should quit looking to politicians to set the standard for righteousness for their lives.

Chapter four tells of the prophet, Elisha, who heard that the king had rent his clothes and sent word for him to send this man to him and he would know that there is a prophet in Israel. How sad that with all the preachers in the world and particularly in the United States, the morals of this country has gone downhill like a runaway freight train. Most of the so-called prophets or preachers do not make one whit of difference in the lives of people with whom they are in contact. They are like those to whom the woman with the issue of blood went. She went to doctors until she spent all she had and was not better, but was rather worse. God’s true prophets (preachers) help people by giving the directions that will save their lives. Elisha merely told Naaman to go and dip in the Jordan river seven times and he would be healed. True prophets today tell folks to repent of false religion and be baptized and they will receive remission of sins. This helps those who will obey. False prophets ignore baptism and will leave one worse off than at first.

Chapter five reveals the response of Naaman. He became angry and began to reason in the flesh. He asked if the rivers of Damascus were not better than the muddy Jordan river. None are able to understand the instructions for following Jesus until they are believed and experienced, then the mystery is revealed. He dipped in the river seven times and his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child. Many do not understand baptism today but this event is a type of it. It places a person in the New Testament church where he has access to the Spirit of God and a proper understanding of God’s word. Once it is obeyed, then the blessing comes and happiness follows.

Chapter six records the actions of greedy Gehazi, the servant of Elisha. He is a type of the church member that is consumed by lust for money. He did great harm to the experience of Naaman and was a disappointment to Elisha. The Lord's people today do great harm to the cause of Christ by lusting for money as is recorded in the word and pointed out in this chapter This servant came to the same end that Naaman began with. Saved church folks can have much misery in their lives by refusing to keep under their body and bringing it into subjection to Jesus Christ. Sow to the flesh and reap corruption is the principle.

May the Lord bless the reader of this book as it is studied. It is my hope that it will be a blessing and help to make the lives richer and fuller to the glory of God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Soul Winning

Chapter One - The Sinner

A. Naaman the Leper

2 Kings 5:1 Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was a leper.*

He was a Syrian, a captain of the host of the king of Syria. He was a great man with his master. According to HARRIS, ARCHER & WALTKE in their *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, (hereafter referred to as TWOT) the word great is used to indicate a man of importance and was also used to mean "to set a high value on one's life." His master must have had a great amount of respect for Naaman. He evidently placed a high value on the person and accomplishments of his successful captain. His master also considered him an honorable man, due to the fact that the Lord had given him deliverance to Syria. The idea of being honorable that involved the Lord was that the Lord's face shined upon him and permitted him to be successful in his venture.

Num. 6:25 The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

An example of the face denoting an attitude or particular feelings is seen in the hard face which is indicative of defiance.

Jer. 5:3 they have made their faces harder than a rock. The face can show impudence. Prov. 7:13 with an impudent face said unto him. One's face can show ruthlessness. Dent. 28:50 A

nation of fierce countenance. A shining face is evident of joy. Job 29:24 ff1 laughed on them, they believed inot and the light of my countenance they cast not down. A shamed face points to defeat, frustration and humiliation. 2 Sam. 19:5 And

Joab came into the house to the king, and said. Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants.

“A flaming face is one convulsed by terror. Isa. 13.8 And they

shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them;

they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. An evil

face is one marked by distresses and anxiety. Gen. 40:7 And he

asked Pharaoh’s officers that were with him in the ward of his lord’s house, saying. Wherefore look ye so sadly to

day? A fallen face stems from very strong anger or displeasure. Gen. 4:5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had

not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. TWOT This man was honorable because the face of the Lord shined upon him. This is the principle in this word in Num. 6:25-26.

Naaman was a mighty man in valor. “The word ‘mighty’ has to do with strength and vitality of the successful warrior.” TWOT. It is used of Gideon. **Judges 6:12 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him. The LORD /swith thee, thou mighty man of valour.** It is used to describe Jephthah. **Judges 11:1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour.** It is also used of Jeroboam. **I Kgs. 11:28 And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour.** It also described Eliada. **2 Chron. 17:17 And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour.** A man of valour seems to be the elite warrior such as the men mentioned above. If only the narrative of this great man of Syria could have stopped there. However, when God’s word gives account of a person, it will include his successes due to his good attributes, and also will tell of the things that will detract from him and show him as he really is.

The last phrase in verse I states the solemn words “a leper” with the words “but he was” implied. One may note that these words are *in italics*, noting that they are not in the original language, but are implied and added for a fuller meaning. The last thing said about Naaman was more powerful than all the good things that went before. He was a great man with his master “but he was a Leper.” He was an honorable man “but he was a leper.” He was a mighty man in valour “but he was a leper.” Could all of this have a bearing on the men of the world in our time? To answer this it is necessary to know how the leper was treated and how he was shunned by the general population of Israel. A person with leprosy, apart from the raw flesh and white hair, was to be otherwise identified by torn clothes and the announcement of “unclean, unclean” when in the streets. **Lev. 13:45 And the leper in whom the plague /s his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry. Unclean, unclean.** He was to be isolated from the community. **lev. 13:46. Alt the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shaft be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.** These were certainly serious steps to be taken toward a leper, who was to be ultimately linked with sin. He was to bring an offering to the Lord as an atonement for his leprosy. See Lev. 14:10-20.

In addition to Naaman, not counting Moses in Exo. 4:6 and the four leprous men in 2 Kings 7:3, God inflicted this disease upon some others. He caused Miriam to become leprous because of her jealousy. **Num. 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses**

9 and the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold. Miriam becameleprous. w/ifteas snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam. and, behold, she was leprous.

He also caused leprosy to come upon Uzziah because of his anger and lack of full compliance with God’s commands. **2 Kings 15:5. And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king’s son ~sover the house, judging the people of the land.** He also smote Gehazi with leprosy because of his covetousness. **2 Kings 5:27. The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.** TWOT

If the priest determined that one was a leper, he was to be separated from the community and also declared unfit to enter into

the temple. **2 Chron. 26:21** And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. A very close analogy can be made leprosy and sin. See I Cor. 5:1-13. The fornicator in the church at Corinth was to be put away from the congregation according to v. 13, knowing that sin, as leprosy, was contagious and will leaven the whole lump (the church) if left there.

The word teaches that all are born with this sin nature. **Rom.**

5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: He may be a great one with his master, but he is a sinner and has the pronouncement of death upon himself He may be honorable in that he is immensely successful in all of his life's ventures, but the stench of death is with him always. The wrath of God abides upon him because he is a sinner and will not believe on the son of God. **John 3:36** He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

He may be a mighty man in valour but he is a sinner and is

described in the word. **Rom. 3:10** As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no tear of God before their eyes.**19** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

He is pronounced a sinner. **Rom. 3:23**. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. He is warned about the wages of sin. **Rom. 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Naaman could not have joy and satisfaction in his standing and accomplishments because he was a leper. He is an example of what Paul wrote by inspiration in **2 Cor. 1:10** Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. This scriptures teaches an important lesson that many have not learned. God's salvation is three fold. One's spirit is saved when he repents of Adamic sin and trusts in Jesus. The life is saved as one renews his mind and lives for him from day to day. The body will be saved in the resurrection when the saints receive a glorified body like his when he was raised.

The man Naaman is a type of the person that has had his Adamic sin forgiven but has not come into the position where he can have his daily sins remitted through the blood of Jesus Christ. This was the condition of all of mankind in the Old Testament. When Jesus came, he made this provision, of which Elisha is a type.

Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is not a one-time thing if one is to remain free from sin that will dominate his life. It will also contaminate those with whom he comes into contact. The word "believeth" in **John 3:16** and all other places in the New Testament carries with it the conditional promise if the believing is continued. Any scholar of the Greek language can tell one that the "believeth" carries the weight of "the one believing." It is a participial verb that requires one to "keep on believing" in order to receive the promise. The promise in **John 3:16** that says "should not perish, but have everlasting life" is contingent upon one's continual believing throughout the lifetime, else the promises cannot be claimed. One will continue to be saved for God has promised that though we believe not, ye he remains faithful.

2 Tim. 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

13 If we believe not yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

One can and will lose his inheritance which is the privilege of reigning with Christ in the kingdom, but will not lose his salvation, though one should not glory in this sad condition. It is also necessary to continue to believe God in order to have our daily sins forgiven.

I John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have

fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins. and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

If sins are not forgiven, then one will find himself in the same position as did Naaman. A person can be a great man, and a mighty man in valour and still be a sinner before God even though he is saved, if he does not confess his daily sins. God then excludes him from the camp of the saints and he is also excluded from worship with the saints. It should be easy to see from this that the daily salvation of the mind is necessary for one to become fit to reign with Jesus for the one thousand years of the kingdom age. Salvation of the spirit of man will enable a person to meet with God on a common ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The resurrected Christ is available for the on-going fellowship with God. Note that it is stated so in **Rom. 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.**

In order to continue in that fellowship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, it is necessary to continue to believe in him to the saving of the life. We are told in the word that we “**should live unto righteousness**” since Jesus “**his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.**” The fact that Jesus lives, guarantees that we shall live in that quality life relationship that is taught so frequently in the word of God. **Rom, 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.**

Having one’s sins forgiven is a benefit of that quality life that is available to all who will continue to believe in Christ who died that this privilege might be enjoyed by all the saints. According to Gal. 2:16, the saints are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ. The problem that many saved people face is that the spirit is saved, yet the life is not justified by his continued faith in Jesus Christ. Justification does not relate to the spirit of man, but to his life that he lives after he is saved, which is the term used in **Rom. 5:18 “justification of life.”** This is what was lacking in the life of Naaman. He could not glory in what he was as a successful soldier because of the leprosy that he knew he had. A sinner that is saved and yet is out of fellowship with Jesus, does not have the joy that one could have if his sins were removed from him. **Psa. 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**

When David had committed that terrible sin with Bathsheba in lusting after her and having her husband killed so he could have her, he lost the joy of his salvation and was not good at all to the Lord. **Psa. 51** tells of his terrible plight in that he asked the Lord not to cast him away from his presence and also not to take his Holy Spirit from him. He promised that he would then teach transgressors of the way of the Lord and sinners would be converted unto God. This confession says that he had not been doing these things while sin remained in his life. Naaman was not being his best while he was a leper.

It should be noted here that the scriptures do not call Naaman a lost person. The world has been swayed by too many electronic evangelists in their religious thinking. If one is called a name for a number of years, then the Webster’s dictionary will begin to carry that name along with the new definition. A case in point is the word “baptism.” Every Greek lexicon that has been referenced, translates “baptizo” as “dip.” Then the folks who practiced sprinkling came along and decided they would rather go against God than the king. They transliterated the word as “baptism” and thereby escaped the wrath of the king. One should care more about the wrath of God than any king for the word of God warns men about this compromise. **Prov. 29:25 The fear of man bringeth a snare.**

The translators of the King James Version of the Bible made this mistake and admitted it to be so in their Dedication of it. "To the Most High and Mighty Prince James King of Great Britain and France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith" is the heading of the Dedication page. Some today take this translation as being God-inspired just as we have it today. This has led to positions of error as has been mentioned above concerning "dipping" the convert after a profession of faith. One can be sprinkled and have a clear conscience by allowing the application the is made by the translation of the word "baptism." The question that begs to be answered is "Why did they not translate the word 'baptizo' as 'dip' instead of 'Baptism' which is not a translation at all?" The answer lies in the body of the dedication to King James.

These translators were members of the Church of England who had become a church by declaration of the King of England. They seceded from the Catholic church at Rome in order to stop the paying of tax or tribute money to the Roman church. The translators acknowledged that the king was the principal mover and author of this word (the translation). It is then stated that they (the translators) "may receive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious Prince as your highness is; whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us, than all the calumniations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that if on one side, we shall be traduced by popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy truth be yet more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in darkness; or if on the other side we shall be maligned by self-conceited brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking to nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their own anvil, we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience..."

It is evident that this is written because of the Roman church on one side and the "self-conceited brethren" on the other side. This latter reference is made of the Ana-baptists who did not accept the authority of the Roman church and also did not accept the authority of the Church of England because they were the children of Rome. It seems from this apology that these translators were more concerned with the good will of the king than the King of kings, Jesus Christ. As a result, the religious world believes that sprinkling is baptism, and much of the time of the Lord's preachers must be used to explain why it is not, based upon the correct translation of "baptizo" from the Greek language. These men who call themselves preachers of the gospel, including some who fly under the banner of Baptist, do not make any distinction between the salvation of the spirit and the salvation of the life, thus becoming a part of the confusion rather than part of the solution.

Most preachers that speak of spirit salvation call it being "saved from hell." This is not Bible language, nor is it what God intended for saved man to teach. It IS taught in God's word that God created man for the glory of God. **Isa. 43:7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.** This is a most interesting scripture. It tells us that God did "create" man. The idea here is the same as found in Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his *own* image. in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. God's word uses "create" three times in this verse, all meaning that God originated something that did not exist.

Creation is explained as to origin in **Heb. 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.** This gives rise to the expression that some make "the world was made out of nothing." It was actually made out of things that do not appear to man. The scripture in **Isa 43:7** then says "**I have formed him.**" Scripture explains this when God spoke of how man should appear and what he would be like in his make-up. The potter takes a piece of clay and gives it the shape that the potter desires. **Jer. 18:6 O house of Israel. cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so a,eye in mine hand. O house of Israel.** This is the "forming" of **Isa 43:7** as God described in **Gen. 1:26 And God said. Let us make man in our image. after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea. and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.** In this passage it is said "**And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.**"

He further stated in **Isa. 43:7** **“I have made him.”** This is the part of man’s creation that gives him characteristics and abilities to perform the will of God in concert with others in the body of Christ It is stated so in the scripture below.

Rom. 12:4 **For as we have many members in one body. and all members have not the same office:**

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ. and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy. let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

These gifts differ and make us to be different from all others in the body, yet fit together perfectly in the work of the Lord when the body is functioning according to Holy Spirit leadership.

Naaman was a Syrian, and not an Israelite. As such, the promises that God made to Abraham did not apply to any other nation. See **Rom. 9:4**; 3:1. The oracles of God were given exclusively to Israel with the promise that God would make of them a “peculiar treasure” “a kingdom of priests, **and an holy nation.**” Exo. 19:5-6. The one condition found in verse 5 was **“if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant.”** Under the reign of king Solomon when Israel was at her highest glory, the Queen of Sheba came to see the king because of the great things that she had heard about Israel. I Kgs. 10 tells of the visit of the queen and after she had come she stated that the half had not been told her. This is what God intended for Israel.

Rahab entertained the spies from Israel as they came to spy out the land where Jerico was located. She told them that the Lord had given them the land, that their terror had fallen upon them and all the inhabitants faint because of them. They heard of the military victories of Israel and the hearts of the people melted and no courage remained in them because of Israel for the God of heaven was their God. See Josh. 2 for the record of these events.

When Jesus had come and established his church in Jerusalem, it caused a great stir in all of the region. Shortly after the crucifixion of Jesus, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, came to Jerusalem to worship. He had returned from Jerusalem, where he no doubt, heard of the great tumult that was there regarding Jesus and the crucifixion and the deeds of the early church. He was sitting in his chariot reading from the book of Isaiah when the Spirit directed him to go near and join himself to the chariot. He initiated a conversation with the eunuch and then preached to him about Jesus.

An illustration of how God deals with mankind other than Israel and the New Testament church today is found in the record of God’s word concerning one called Cornelius. Acts **10 and 11**. As Naaman was a good man, so was Cornelius. He was a devout man, feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the people and prayed **to God alway**. God sent a vision to him by an angel and told him that his prayers and alms were come up as a memorial before God. God did not answer his prayers but instructed him to send men to Joppa to Peter the Apostle, a man of God, and he would tell him what to do. As can be seen, God did not talk to Cornelius directly, and he does not do so today. In the days of Cornelius, this task was assigned to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Matt 28:18-20. This is the work of the special people of God, Israel in the Old Testament until they were cut **off as a nation**, and then the task was assigned to the church that Jesus built. When God’s people are doing the calling of God, they will be a blessing to those who have an honest heart and are seeking the truth.

Let it be understood that God has never denied salvation and **complete blessings** to any person on earth. He has always spoken to his creation in some way. He spoke through the patriarchs, making his will known to the heads of families.

He spoke to judges, to prophets, to kings, to the nation **of Israel**, and **now speaks to the world** through the church that Jesus organized during his personal ministry. To that person with an honest heart, and willing **to** know the purpose of God in his life, God will see that he has an opportunity to hear the word of God. This is illustrated in the life of Naaman and the other people mentioned above. He stated this plan in the scriptures.

Acts 15:14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.

God knew the heart of Naaman and arranged to have a person to tell of the prophet in Israel that could cure him of his leprosy. This is the kind of folks that God wants for his kingdom work, that is, those with an honest heart. There will be no rebels nor lone rangers in the kingdom rule of Christ on the earth.

Chapter Two - The Messenger

2 Kings 5:2 And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

The messenger was a little maid that had been captured in the land of Israel as they fought against the people of God. There does not seem to be anything in the word of God about her before this incident. The word of God does not even mention her name. You may be sure that God has a record of her and what she did as a witness for the Lord. The purpose of God's people in the world is to make known the will of God to the world. This has always been the purpose. It can be done by many different ways. One does not need to be a great theologian nor have in their memory a great portion of the word of God. It is only necessary to know the prophet of God and be willing to direct people to him.

A great disservice has been done to the cause of Christ by the men who are pseudo-evangelists claiming to be true ministers of the gospel. Their great cathedrals are built from offerings that are received from gullible listeners to their electronic pleas for more and more. They do not minister to the people, but claim to be their television pastors. They do not visit the sick, sit with them in hospitals, pray for them when in need, nor provide any other useful service. The greatest disservice is that they preach only a small portion of the word of God, leaving out the words of the Lord and the Apostles about saving the lives of their converts to live with Jesus and reign in the kingdom age of one thousand years. They claim to be followers of Christ, but ignore the plain teaching of the word of God.

Mark 10:21 Then Jesus beholding him toyed him, and said unto him. One thing thou lackest go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast. and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me

These so-called evangelists would cry to the heavens if it was pressed upon them to take the vow of poverty as Jesus asked this one to do. The real test of giving up his riches in order to follow Jesus was just too much, and he became sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possessions. Love of money keeps many from being what they could be in the service of the Lord. It causes these electronic evangelists to alter the truth of God's word if it is even known to them, in order not to offend the hearers and thereby cut off some of their money. Others ignore the teachings of the kingdom, knowing that this will separate the most of the people that listen to them. Their preaching crosses all denominational lines, and makes the church of God a mixture of the true and false, condemning no false doctrine.

This attitude prevails among God's people today in the true churches of the Lord, as it always has. To give up all one has in order to tell the good news of the word of God is really quite too much to most. This little maid will put many to shame when their life is examined in the light of her's. She had nothing. She was a captive of the enemy of Israel. She was a slave and worked in the house of one of the great men, a captain in the army of the enemy.

Naaman was her captor and she was forced to live in his house as a servant to his wife. She could have been bitter about the circumstances of her life. She probably had nothing to do with the war between her nation and Syria. Yet, here she is, about as low as a person can be in the eyes of the world.

The early church was faced with this same problem. Jesus had given the commission to go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them and teach them to observe all things that Jesus had commanded them to teach.

Matt. 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you aiway. ev~iiunto the end of the world. Amen.

Immediately before Jesus was taken up in the air to return to the Father after his crucifixion, he repeated the command that he had previously given to the disciples to go into the world and enumerated the places where they were to go. The last words of any person are considered to be very important and are normally remembered above all things that had gone on before.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Did they obey this command with joyful and happy hearts and leave Jerusalem immediately to go to make disciples of all the world? They did not. Many of them never did get over their superior feeling of being a Jew and, as a result, superior to the rest of the world. They were called dogs and were considered unfit to be in the company of a Jew. To even speak to a Gentile was unspeakable. So what did the Lord do to prod and urge them to go into the world?

Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Jesus had commanded them to be witnesses unto him in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. So what did the church folk do? They did nothing until this persecution came upon them under the leadership of Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul. Then they went into Judaea and Samaria. Is this carrying out the commission of going into all the world? It is not and God had to go to another extreme in order to get the church to go into the rest of the world. He did this by calling the Apostle Paul as an Apostle to the Gentiles. His ministry extended into Asia Minor and from there the Lord's people have gone into every continent on the earth.

God knew that there was a man in Syria that had a need. He allowed this little maid to become captive in order for the word to get to him. God never excludes human instrumentality in the spreading of the word. He could preach it through angels but he does not. He could preach it from heaven with the booming voice of God but he does not. He has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty and the base things to bring to nought the things that are.

1 Cor. 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised. hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

The position that the little maid had would not be one that many would desire in life today. Probably many would complain about the plight of being a captive in a strange land, and cry out to God for deliverance. Deliverance to some of the Lord's people means freedom to walk in the lusts of the flesh with no thought of bearing witness of the Lord Jesus

Christ. This seems to have been a problem to Israel when Jesus came on the scene. They wanted to be delivered from Roman bondage to walk in the desires of their own heart.

Gal. 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Luke 24:21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.

While she was a captive, she did her duty that was assigned to her by her captors. “**she** waited **on** Naaman’s wife.” She was faithful to her duty and later she was trusted in her message concerning the plight of her master Naaman.

I Cor. 7:20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 Art thou called *being a servant*? care not for it but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, *being a servant*, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called, *being free* is Christ’s servant.

23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

One must remember that the latter years of the life of Paul were spent in a Roman prison. He did not complain about his plight, but used the time to be a witness for the Lord and an encouragement to others who observed his bonds and his continuance in the work in spite of them. He was able to witness to people in Rome that he would have not had the privilege of meeting except he was a prisoner.

Because of her faithfulness in her work as a captive maid, she had the opportunity to be a witness for the Lord. This is the ultimate goal for the saints of God. If one was free and never was a witness for the Lord, that one would surely be a disappointment to the Lord. The work of the Lord’s people is to make disciples, baptize them, and then teach them to observe the things that Jesus taught while he was here on the earth.

This little maid was effective in her witness. It is not known whether she was a great orator. She perhaps was not. How great an orator must one be to speak one line of witness for the Lord? Here is her testimony: Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. It is not necessary to know all things in God’s word, only that we know that the great prophet, our Lord Jesus Christ is able to help sinners. She had confidence in the prophet that he would be able to heal Naaman of his leprosy. How much more should we have confidence in our prophet? We should believe that he is able to save and to protect. He will enable us to be faithful to him and finally to take us with him into the kingdom age there to rule with him for one thousand years. Scriptures below will impress upon us that the great prophet is Jesus.

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and. lo. I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Deut. 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Luke 24:19 And he said unto them. What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

John 7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

John 9:17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 7:37 This is that Moses. Which said unto the children of Israel. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

Saints of all ages have recognized that salvation is of the Lord. Jonah recognized this when he was in the belly of the great fish. How sad it is that he did not know this before some tragic event happened to him. How equally sad it is that many of us do not know it today.

Jonah 2:9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.

Psa 3:8 Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

Psa.37:39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: *he* is their strength in the time of trouble.

Psa. 62:6 He only is my rock and my salvation: *he is my* defence; I shall not be moved.

She knew that Naaman's leprosy was something that must have been a great problem to this great man. It was pointed out so vividly after all the good things that were said of him, the scripture immediately declares "he was a leper." It evidently was a signal to the maid of Israel that Naaman was shamed by his condition. It should be noted here that Naaman was about as great a person in the eyes of the king of Syria as one could be. The king was ready to respond immediately to the needs of his great captain. The little maid was probably impressed with the qualities of this great captain also. This is the thing that made the leprosy stand out so vividly. One might not be impressed if leprosy was found in a hobo or street person. But to find it in a man of such success in his field and fine physical qualities in life, will impress upon the maid how sad this case was.

The maid was not concerned with Naaman's food, shelter, home, insurance, etc. This is the fatal mistake that so many make today in dealing with those in the world that need help that is beyond their ability to acquire. So much money and effort are put into mission projects today that deal with the physical needs of people. Hospitals, the Heifer project, dealing with the population explosion in many countries, aid in farming techniques, construction projects, etc., are all dealing with the problems of the flesh. The great need that will never be realized in the religion offered by false prophets is that man is a leper, and by type as has been pointed out in the previous chapter, a sinner in the eyes of God. Nothing can or will be done for a sinner until he meets this proposition head-on and deals with it on God's terms.

It is beneficial at this time to remind the reader that man is a triune being just as God is a triune God. He is Mind, Spirit and Body and man was created in this image as has already been mentioned. When one repents of his Adamic sin and trust in Jesus Christ as the Saviour, his spirit is saved. The distinction is made between the spirit and soul in several places in the word of God, two of which will be mentioned here.

1 Thess. 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, end of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

These scriptures plainly teach that there is a spirit of man; there is a body that man lives in; and there is the life or soul which is the conscious life that that all living creatures have. The folks who claim to be soul winners are really “spirit” winners, if even that All that is accomplished when one repents of Adamic sin is that his spirit is saved, and he is reconciled to God by the death of Jesus Christ so that we may be able to legitimately approach God for further instructions concerning the saving of the life. There must be some common ground upon which a sinner can speak to God and the blood of Jesus is that ground.

Rom. 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

The saving of the spirit permits one to begin to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the process by which the life is saved as we bring our lives into conformity to the teachings of the word of God with Jesus Christ as the role model. This process is not completed at the point of salvation of the spirit for the life is saved as we live it day by day. The time that we live in harmony with God’s word and will is saved, and the time that we live walking in the flesh and without faith in God’s word is lost. This process is that which is shunned by most electronic evangelists, because of the time that would be involved in teaching saved people how to live and save the life by so doing. Some scripture is in order to point out the importance of the life salvation taught in the word.

Luke 9:56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

Matt. 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples. If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

The presentation regarding the King James version of the Bible comes into play in the study of the salvation of the life. The big preachers call themselves soul-winners when in fact they are only spirit winners. To save the soul is to stay with the saved all of their life and teach them the all things that Jesus commanded the church to teach in the great commission in Matt. 28:18-20. The word “soul” is used in error by many well-meaning religious people when they are actually speaking of the “spirit.” The word “soul” and “life” come from the same text in the Greek language, but is quite different from the word from which “spirit” is translated. Some editions of the King James version of the Bible tend to cloud this issue in their editorials.

It is not necessary to be a Greek scholar to understand this and it is explained simply by the following short Greek lesson. “Spirit” comes from the Greek word “pneuma” and is the root word for spirit, wind, etc. The English words “pneumatic, pneumonia, etc. come from this word and refer to some usage of air. It is that part of man that cannot be seen and resides in the body. The word “soul” come from the Greek word “psuche” and we get our words “psyche”

“psychiatrist” and “psychology” which, according to Webster’s dictionary is the science that deals with the mind. The mind is that which is being saved day by day.

2 Cor. 4:16 For which cause we faint not but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Rom. 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

So it is easy to see that it is the mind that controls the actions of a person, and it needs to be renewed day by day and brought into conformity with the will of God in order that we may do those things that are pleasing to him. This is the life that is being saved that Jesus refers to in the quotation above from **Matt. 16**. The words soul and life are translated from the same word and is that part of man that Jesus said that he was not come to destroy but to save. If one stops at the point of spirit salvation, his life is not saved and he will not stand in the best position before the Lord at the judgment. Consider the conversation with the one talent man in **Matt. 25:14-30**.

The problem that Naaman was having was not with the inner man but with his life. It is symbolic of mankind that is upright, honest, successful in life, but is not content with his day to day relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else matters when this situation exists. Note the prayers of Cornelius that went unanswered until the Apostle came and told him what to do in order to have his prayers answered. It is one thing to pray to God and ask for things, but another one entirely to have those prayers answered and receive the thing that we ask of him. There are certainly conditions that one must meet before the Lord will answer our prayers.

Note in the model prayer in **Matt. 6:8-15** that Jesus requires that we acknowledge the Father in heaven, and that his name is hallowed. We then are to pray that his kingdom come. It is strange that one hears next to nothing being preached on the airwaves and in the pulpits around the world about men praying for the kingdom to come. One can only suspect that this will require some dedication to the will of God in order that we be raised and judged worthy to reign for these one thousand years on this earth with Jesus Christ sitting upon David’s throne in Jerusalem.

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith. and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Matt. 20:21 And he said unto her. What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two Sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

Malt 20:23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup. and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.*

After one prays that the kingdom of the Lord will come and brings his life into conformity with the teachings of the word of God, then he must pray that his will be done. This will eliminate the frivolous praying person and one who comes to God in a lighthearted manner, regardless of the ungodly lives that many saved people live. It is supposed incorrectly that God will answer one's prayer on the basis of his spirit salvation, but this model prayer will eliminate that thinking from the mind of a serious child of God. One who has a good and honest heart will respond to the message of God as Naaman did. Once the dire need was recognized by the maid, God set the wheels in motion that would enable Naaman to be healed.

One might say that **God** could have healed him then and there. The question must be asked, "Why did God choose not to heal him at that time?" God has a plan and he will not deviate from it, regardless of how great a person is in the eyes of the world. All are sinners as has been proven previously, and death is pronounced upon all for that all have sinned. **Rom. 5:12: 1 Cor. 15:21-22.** A person does not have to do anything in order to be condemned. His very Adamic nature (the one received from our father) decrees that he is condemned already.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter.

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

One of the Devil's tactics is **to** convince a person that he is not in need of God's prophet One could have argued that in the case of Naaman, but in the end he was still a leper. It must have been the source of much embarrassment and also much discomfort to this great man. The scripture does not say that he denied being a leper. Much of the religious world deals with sinners by denying the sin. If the sinner insists, the false prophet will daub a little balm on it and declare him fit for the kingdom. God raises a relevant question about this type of activity in his word.

Jer. 8:22 Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

There was balm in Gilead, but the daughters of Israel were still sick and not healed. There was a physician there but the scripture speaks of them as he did of those in the days of Job. His so-called friends came to him to offer advice and consolation in his time of trouble.

Job 13:4 But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.

Jer. 12:10 Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

Matt. 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you In sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Church attendance is at an all-time high in our country. Pastors are better educated than at any other time in modern history. Many churches call a pastor only after studying a resume' to see how many D.D.'s, PHD's, etc. are there. Yet sin is rampant in the land. Pre-teen aged children are killing each other at school. Drive-by shootings have become commonplace. Homosexuality is pressed upon the populace and laws are being passed to force their acceptance in every phase of life. This is in spite of God's explanation of the reason that people are in this condition. One cannot read Rom. 1:18-32 and come to a different conclusion if he has an honest heart.

Instead of going to the prophet of God, any old preacher will do. Spiritual quacks abound that dispense the wrong balm for the leprosy and it is not cured. Preachers preach but sinners are **not** saved and come to the knowledge of the truth which is God's will for all men. Many learn continually but never come to the knowledge of the truth. Some come to the knowledge of the truth but turn from it to their own destruction.

I Tim. 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

2 Tim. 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Pet. 2:21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

Others try to become involved in religious works, thinking that they are doing good, but are rejected when they lay claim to the covenant promises. See **Matt. 7:15-29**. How sad for men to spend their lives in man-made religions only to find out that their lives have gone for nought because they did what they did without God's approval or authority. The house built upon the sand will not stand in the time of testing, and great will be the fall of it. Dashed hopes and unrealized expectations will abound in the time of judgment for those who worked in this situation.

Peter's preaching did not save Cornelius, for he was already a saved man. Peter did direct him to baptism into the New Testament church where his sins could be washed away and God would be able to grant the desires of his heart to him.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost felt on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter.

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

John 20:23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Matt. 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matt. 18:18 Verily I say unto you. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shalt be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Let it be understood that these sins (plural) have to do with daily sins committed after one has been saved from his Adamic sin by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heb. 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and

every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Heb. 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them

after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now where remission of these *is, there is no more offering for sin.*

Psa. 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

The Adamic sin which all receive from Adam through their father must be dealt with by the Prophet of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. See Acts 20:20-21. The daily sins that one commits after he has been saved must also be forgiven by the Prophet of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the great tragedies of the religions of the world is that they offer no plan to have these daily sins forgiven. They are dealt with and forgiven or retained by the actions of the agent of the Prophet of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the New Testament church as his agent, as seen in the scriptures mentioned above.

Some teach that when one is saved, all the past, present and future sins are forgiven. On this premise, the Bible is silent and no one is bold enough to assert that this promise is made based upon the Holy Word of God. One must only read the scriptures to see the folly of this approach and the sorrow in lives of saved people who need forgiveness of sins and do not receive it. Some teach that if a person is really saved that he will not commit sins. The experiences of the great man of God~ David, whom God testified that he was a man after his own heart, will once and for all explode that myth. One has only to look into his own heart to see that he sins and that these sins need to be forgiven.

Psa. 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

Whether the sin of unbelief or the daily sins that one commits is the problem, the Prophet of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, can deal with it and bring it to a desired conclusion. The message of the maid was relayed to one who could do something about it. We are introduced to the king of Syria and his actions in the next section.

Soul Winning

Chapter Three - The Kings

A. Governmental Help

The King of Syria was the ultimate authority over Syria and could command and get things done. The king told Naaman to go and he would send a letter to the King of Israel regarding the matter. We now see the action of a person who is a sinner and reasoning about what he should do to bring about the desired result. Naaman took

with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment. It is the common thought of many sinners that one must bring something to God or his Prophet to recompense for salvation of life in the forgiveness of sins. It is easy to come to this conclusion by listening to the electronic evangelists who spend much of their program time asking for money.

Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto him. Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

**Isa. 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat yea, come,
buy wine and milk without money and without price.**

The attitude of many about money, especially those who solicit funds on their TV programs, is that it is necessary. This is true, and it will be seen later that God has a plan for financing the Lord's work. It is not necessary for these electronic evangelists to have three or four grand homes, several very expensive automobiles, and clothes that the average person could not afford. The church where I pastor underwrites the ministry of mailing these books to all who request them, free of charge. Many have responded to our web page where the offer of free books is made, by questioning very closely the promise of free books. Are these books REALLY FREE? Send them only if they are free with no strings attached.

One respondent stated that books were ordered from one who offered free books. After they were received, they were bombarded with requests that bordered on demands for financial support. This has caused many to be wary of promises of free things. The gospel is free and there should not be any catches in the offer of free things from preachers and churches. This has caused many to have a lesser opinion of God and his workers. A well known TV preacher was exposed by one of the national news services for false promises. He promised that the money that was sent to him was prayed over by him personally and that personal attention was given to the needs of the donor. It was later proven that their letters went directly to a bank. They took the checks and deposited them to his account. They then threw the letters in the dumpster to be hauled away to the dump with the trash. This expose' caused him to shut down his ministry. Thank the Lord, but there are always several more to spring up in his place.

Other nationally prominent preachers who speak on TV and peddle their wares, have been exposed as living immoral lives. The privilege that these men have is that they answer to no one for what they do. Until someone exposes their ungodly behaviour, they are free to do as they please and spend their millions on themselves as they see fit. The tragedy that comes from this type of behaviour is that people believe that all preachers are cut from the same cloth and act the same way. There are thousands of pastors out there across the world that are laboring honestly as they preach the truth in sincerity and raise money through Biblical means.

God has a plan for financing his work. This is done by tithes and offerings made by the membership. This principle is set forth in the word. **Mal. 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.** It is carried over into the New Testament church plan in Jesus' sermon on the mount. Every teaching that Jesus gave the church regarding the teachings of Israel in the Old Testament, he made more binding and required that the church people go beyond what was required of Israel. One has only to read this address in **Matt. chapters 5-6-7** to see the truth in this claim. He does not address the amount that the church folk should give, yet it would be difficult to take the position that one could give less under grace than Israel was required to give under the law.

It is very important that the Lord's church folks be very careful regarding the handling of money. Much is said in the Bible about money and the love of and the effect that it will have on church folks. **1 Tim. 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil:**

which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sonows. It is easy to see how churches can be criticized for placing too much emphasis on raising money for the church. Selling trinkets, candy, etc. should be avoided as fund raisers for the church. Many old time churches had cake walks and pie suppers.

The folly of this is that the woman buys the ingredients for the cake or pie. They go to the church and the husband bids on the pie or cake. The church gets the money, but the man gets the pie, for which the family has paid twice. She paid when she bought the ingredients and he when he bought the pie. Neither will get any credit for money given to the church for they received a pie or cake for it. My, how we beat the Devil around the bush, as the old saying goes.

The scriptural way to raise money for the church is for the members of the church to give it as the church meets in regular services on the first day of the week. The principle is stated in the scriptures, though this one concerns the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem, but the principle is the same. **I Cor. 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.** The idea is to go to church on the first day of the week and take your offering with you. It then is placed in the church fund to be used for the purpose that the church decides under Holy Spirit direction. God's word has some harsh words for the rich. He also has a warning to those who want to be rich. It will be seen a little later how this became a problem to Gehazi, the servant of Elisha. The money that Naaman took with him became more of a hindrance than a help.

James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, Which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

25 But Abraham said. Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things. and likewise Lazarus evil things:

but now **he is comforted, and thou art tormented.**

1 Tim. 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Naaman went to see the king of Israel. He was not the proper person to heal him of his leprosy. The reaction of the king was such that he was in no spiritual condition to help Naaman. He rent his clothes. This is something that people did in Biblical times when they were confronted with situations with which they were unable to cope. In our language today, one would say "he tore his shirt," meaning that one is excited, unable to do what is needed and even not understanding the problem. The king of Israel was thinking like the kings of other nations. God did not want Israel to have a king when they chose Saul. They wanted to have a king to judge them like all the nations. In so doing, they rejected God as their king.

I Sam. 8:5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy

Sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

B But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to Judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign ever them.

God is never pleased when men turn from him to be ruled over by a man. Too many times when this situation exists, God's people will obey the laws of the king or ruler and take them to be the will of God. For example, the government of our country permits unmarried men and women to live together as though they were married, without the requirement of a marriage license. This is strongly condemned in the word of God.

Heb. 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Rev. 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Our law makers are now debating the issue of homosexuals and lesbians living together with all the privileges of insurance coverage, housing rights and are even permitting them to adopt children. The word of God sounds loud and clear about the judgment that God will bring upon those who will not live as they know they should before him. **Rom. 1:21-32** sounds the message very firmly regarding this sin of the flesh. Our present laws forbid having public prayer in our public schools. It has been ruled that the ten commandments cannot be displayed in a courthouse. Reading the scriptures is banned in most public places. Living by these laws will cause one to meet God unprepared when all stand before God to give account of how one lived before him.

Men can be governed by these rules and be deemed to be a good citizen and protected by the government. In doing so, he is in violation of the word of God in almost every case and good common sense in the remainder. God's people need to learn that being a good citizen does not necessarily mean that his life is pleasing to the Lord. The men and women who are recognized in the word as being among the faithful, had absolutely nothing to do with the government under which they lived. This is true of the Apostle Paul and the other disciples mentioned in the New Testament. Paul knew the laws of the Roman government, being a citizen of Rome, and used it to his advantage to preach the gospel without interference though he had to do much of it from jail.

Jesus did not associate with the governing body of his day. In fact, they were the people that opposed him and tried to put him to death. One may rightly ask "What possible glory could Jesus get from our association with the politicians of our nation." Most are just as fleshly minded and ignorant of the will of God for mankind as was the king of Israel when dealing with Naaman. The only command in the word of God that requires that we submit to the powers that be is found in Rom 13:1-7 in order to stay in the good graces of the rulers, to have a good conscience and to help pay tribute to those who rule over us in civil matters. This is right and good according to the scriptures. The reason is not that we should get on the soap box and extol the virtues of our leaders, but it is stated very plainly in the word that we should pray for the leaders, how we should pray, and for what purpose. We have a commission to carry out and we cannot do this unless the rulers leave the churches alone to do it. The core of the matter is that we should pray for our rulers that we may be able to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

1 Tim. 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all. supplications.

prayers. intercessions. And giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

The Adamic nature of man requires that he have some authority over him. God intended that man be in subjection to him when he created mankind in Adam. It became evident right soon that man made the wrong choice when he listened to the voice of Satan in the serpent. Mankind has been making wrong choices ever since that day. God ruled mankind by speaking to the patriarchs of each family in the early part of man's existence. This system broke down soon enough when there arose the line of people from Cain who disobeyed God and was banished from his presence.

When it became obvious that this system was a failure, the scriptures tell us in Gen. 6 that it repented God that he had ever made man. This was evident when he destroyed all the population of the earth in the flood except Noah and his family. They were spared so that the earth could be repopulated with mankind as well as the animals that Noah had on the ark. God later chose a nation to be his people to represent him and to tell the word of God to the world. They were a

failure almost from the beginning, and moreso when they demanded a king to rule over them, thus renouncing the theocracy of God.

Their idea was to have a king like the rest of the world so that they could be told what to do. This is much easier than living by faith and doing what God says. This system failed because they relied on the king to tell them what to do. The problem here was that Saul was not a godly person. This will happen almost without fail when absolute power is placed in the hands of one person. He can decide what to do independent from the people and, ultimately from God also. The ruin of Israel under Saul has already been documented. God anointed David as the successor to Saul after his reign of forty years. David was a godly man but he still had absolute power over his subjects, like the other kings of the world. This permitted him to have Uriah killed and for David to have his wife, with whom he had already committed adultery. He had the authority to do this, for he was the authority, but it was wrong before God and he was reminded of it right quickly. He paid for it the rest of his life in the trouble that he had in his family life in his children, etc.

David's son, Solomon, succeeded him as king of Israel after David had reigned forty years. Solomon's reign was also one of absolute authority and was evidenced by his having three hundred wives and six hundred concubines. It was legal because he said it was, and he was the absolute authority. Yet, it was not right before God and it is expressed so in the word. The teachings of Jesus on the subject of marriage in the New Testament are very clear. The Pharisees came to him, tempting him, asking if it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause. Jesus answered them in no uncertain terms in the following scriptures.

Matt. 19:4 And he answered and said unto them. Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

Mark 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

The meaning in both of these scriptures based upon the account of the creation of mankind in Genesis is that he made a male and a

female. This means that he created one man and one woman. One can plainly see that the meaning here is that one is to have a mate, and that for life. It is difficult to understand how some religions will practice a marriage between a man and multiple wives, and some of them claim to be Christian. The practice of multiple wives was officially stopped in this country when laws were passed making it a crime to practice this ungodly system. It is reported that this practice still continues in some areas of the country.

Most absolute powers in the world are corrupt, simply because the Adamic nature of man will not permit otherwise. When given the power, men will tread down the common man, tax him to death, and give him little or no consideration for the things that he does to support his ruler. This is the reason that the government of America has been as successful as it has been. God has seen that it is impossible for one person to have authority over the Legislative, Judicial and Executive branches of our government. Corruption still abounds and will wherever men rule. Yet, God promised that he would bless this nation so that his people would have a place where they could freely worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. It is so stated in the word.

Rev. 3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth: and shutteth. and no man openeth

8 I know thy works: behold. I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Many Bible teachers believe that this scripture was written to and about the Lord's churches during the time of the discovery and settling of the United States of America. Christian men saw to it during the formation of our government that no one person nor religion would have the freedom to lord it over the remainder of the people of our nation. As a result of this freedom, the gospel of

our Lord Jesus Christ has gone out to all the world from America for many years, and probably will until Jesus comes back. Many will find it unusual that the gospel is being preached from this nation to people who had the gospel hundreds of years before it came to America. They let it be driven from their shores by ungodly rulers who had absolute power over their country.

Corruption abounds in the government of America, and this is the reason that God's people should shy away from it and go about their business of preaching the gospel to the world. Some have left the preaching of the gospel to enter into politics, only to become much like the very ones that they had vowed to purge from their positions of power. To become involved in politics is to become tainted with the corruption that permeates the entire system. It will kill the influence of a godly person and ruin his opportunity to be a proper witness for the Lord. Follow the lead of Paul and our Lord and remain aloof from this system that is ruled over by Satan and become involved in preaching the gospel to all the world. Let us rejoice in the liberty that exists for the Lord's churches today. Let us take advantage of this opportunity while the door is open. It is believed that the door will remain open until Jesus comes back to receive his saints to himself

The fact that Jesus says that he has the key of David is telling us that he will be successor to the throne of David, and that he will be absolute ruler over the earth for the one thousand years of the kingdom age. He has the authority now to open the door of service to God and to keep it open so that no man can shut it Man's desire and God's authority to preach the word in this age of religious freedom in this country is a combination that has no equal in the history of mankind. What a joy to live in this land and under our great God and his King Jesus Christ.

Soul Winning

Chapter Four - The Prophet

2 Kings 5:3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

James H Thayer in his GREEK ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT defines an Old Testament prophet as "one who speaks forth, one through whom God speaks." In the New Testament language, he describes a prophet as "one who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially future events, and in particular, such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and human salvation."

Aaron was the first prophet mention in the Bible. He was given to Moses to speak to the people when Moses claimed that he was not eloquent and was slow of speech and of a slow tongue.

Exo. 4:10 And Moses said unto the LORD. O my Lord, I amnot eloquent neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

Exo. 7:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Many of the kings of Israel used the prophets in order to know the wilt of God. An example is that of Jehoshaphat.

2 Kings 3:11 But Jehoshaphat said. Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said. Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.

12 And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him

13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.

2 Chr 18:6 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat. There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me. but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said. Let not the king say so.

The Old Testament prophet was the successor to a seer.

1 Sam. 9:9 (Beforetime in israel. when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake. Come, and let us go to the seer: for *be that is now called a Prophet* was beforetime called a Seer.)

The will of God was sometimes revealed by God with Urim and Thummim. This was a method used in the years beginning with the office of the High Priest and later. This consisted of twelve stones set in the breastplate of the garment of the high priest God would sometimes make his will known by some method of the lights of the precious stones as they reacted to the questioning by the high priest. As far as is known, it has never been revealed to those outside the Jewish faith just how this worked. It is sometimes called by those who studied the scriptures, "lights and perfections."

Exo. 28:30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Exo. 28:17 And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row.*

18 And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

19 And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.

20 And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings.

21 And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel. twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

When God took his Spirit away from Saul and anointed David to be king in his place, he quit revealing his will by the Urim and the prophets. **1 Sam. 28:6** And when Saul enquired of the LORD. the LORD answered him not neither by dreams, nor by Urim.

nor by prophets. The scripture says that a true prophet speaks the truth. **Jer. 28:9** The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass. *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

In Old Testament times, the priests and prophets were not always true to the calling of God. **Jer 23:11** For both prophet and priest are profane; yea. in my house have I found their wickedness.

saith the LORD. There is no doubt the the same thing exists in our land today. There are multitudes who claim to be called of God and put into the ministry just as the Apostle Paul spoke of his own experience. **1 Tim. 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. who hath enabled me. for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry:**

Only a few profess to be called of God into the work of the Lord to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. To many it is just another profession, as banking, engineering, teaching, etc. It is an honorable profession, but it is not one that a person can choose for himself. The choosing is of the Lord, as Paul testified of his experience on the Damascus road. Many debate the experience of Paul at this time, saying that this is the time that Paul was saved. A problem exists in that the testimony of Paul himself is contrary to this opinion. Will we take the inspired word of God, and that by one whom God had called into his ministry, over that of the opinions of those who see nothing but spirit salvation in the word?

Acts 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose. to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

Old Testament prophets experienced the same calling when God wanted them to prophesy for him.

Amos 7:14 Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an

Herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:

15 And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people israel.

Gideon had a similar experience in his call to the work of the

Lord. **Judges. 6:14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?**

15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

16 And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

True prophets today will have the same experiences. Paul was not popular with the world. He did not win any "man of the year" awards that comes from the Chamber of Commerce. It is not the practice of the world to recognize men who are in jail, and that for the preaching of the word of God. Paul did not have to worry about his reputation in the eyes of the leaders of society. He said that he counted as dung those things that the world valued. The treasures that mattered to Paul were laid up in heaven for him to await the resurrection and judgment seat of Christ. Just as the Phanses hated Paul and his preaching, the Old Testament prophets also were sometimes disliked by those to whom they brought the word of God. Some were asked outright not to preach the truth to them; they wanted to hear smooth things.

Isa. 30:10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things. prophesy deceits:

The reward of the Lord will be based upon the proper response to the teachings of the word of God. If smooth things are preached, and one does not hear the truth, how will he prepare to meet the Lord as Amos told Israel to do. They were the chosen people of God but they were not prepared to meet God. The Lord's churches today are the people of God today, but many of the members ask the pastors who prophesy to them today to speak to them smooth things. This will hardly prepare one to stand in the presence of the Lord and receive a reward for his work.

Because of the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, God sent a prophet to them to lie to them in order to get them to go into battle where they would be killed. Lest someone objects to a lying prophet, let it be known that this is what these two desired and God let them have their heart's desire. They acted upon a lie and they were removed from the leadership of God's people where they would do them no more harm. One in the place of leadership should learn a lesson from this sordid affair. God's word says that the wages of sin is death in **Rom. 6:23**. God's word also says that if we sow to the flesh, we will of the flesh reap corruption in **Gal. 6:8**, The admonition is that we are not to be deceived because whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap. **Gal. 6:7**.

I Kgs 22:20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

21 And there came forth a spirit and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade *him* and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets. and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

Israel did much evil to Jeremiah the prophet, for no other reason than he told them what God wanted them to hear. This is happening in the world among the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pastors and other leaders do not like to hear some things that are found in the word of God. A person really has only two options when he hears God's word preached. One option is that he can repent and get his life into harmony with the message of the Lord. The other option is that he can rebel against the word of God and persecute the messenger. This is the age old practice of killing the messenger when the message that is brought to the king is not what he wanted to hear. One listener told his pastor one day "Pastor, you are not telling me what I want to hear."

It is against the law in America to kill the messenger, but it is fair game to many to kill his influence with half-truths, innuendoes, insinuations, etc. This will accomplish the same thing. Once a person's influence is killed, very few people will listen to his message and he may as well have been killed physically. May God help us to examine the attitude that this spirit not exist among those who name the name of Christ

2 Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Many want to hear from the Lord. The question is asked by some who only want to hear good things. Such is the case with Zedekiah when he asked about the word of the Lord for him.

Jer. 37:17 Then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

It is said that Israel shall seek a vision from the Lord, but the Lord refused to hear their inquiry.

Ezek. 7:25 Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and *there shall be none.*

26 Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour: then shall they seek a vision of the prophet but the law shall perish from the priest and counsel from the ancients.

27 The king shalt mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezek. 20:1 And it came to pass in the seventh year. in the fifth *mourn* the tenth *day of* the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me.

2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying.

3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you.

After God called Ezekiel to go to Israel, he gave the reason.

Ezek. 2:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

4 For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them: and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

5 And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they *are a rebellious house,*) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

Ezek. 33:32 And. lo. thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

33 And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

The desire of every true man of God whom the Lord has put into the ministry, whether it be in the Old Testament time or in the church age, is that he will leave his mark on the people who heard his prophecy. When the word of God is preached, it will not return unto the lord without accomplishing that for which God sent it. It may not be such as thought in the minds of the one bearing the message, nor in the ears of the hearer. It will have an effect, and God will get glory out of it now or later.

Elisha said the same thing to the king of Israel about the coming of Naaman. The important thing was not that Naaman be healed of his leprosy, except in the mind of Naaman. The important thing is that the message of the Lord be preached. When it is believed, the results will come and God will receive glory. The message of Elisha to Naaman was a simple one.

2 Kings 5:8 And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

2 Kings 5:10 And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying. Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

Soul Winning

Chapter Five - Naaman's Response

2 Kings 5:11 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

The sinner who is standing in need of help from the man of God is rarely pleased with God's word from God's man. He may have become angry with Elisha because he did not come out and make a big to-do over this great man and his gold, silver and changes of garments. Mankind will not receive the word of God from God's man unless and until he humbles himself and becomes as a little child in the eyes of God. God is no respecter of persons in that he requires the same thing of every one who will come to him with a need. This great truth is so stated in the word of God so that no person can stand before the creator and accuse him of playing favorites with his creation. All will praise him from the least to the greatest. See. Acts 10:34. Sin makes all come to the same place for help.

Matt. 18:3 And said. Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Repentance is taught throughout the scriptures. Jesus taught the Pharisees that they should repent, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Jesus, the great prophet, had come on the scene and found a group of haughty religionists that were not in any condition to be a part of the kingdom reign of Christ on the earth. God had promised that Jesus would be rewarded for his faithfulness to the will of the Father by allowing him to rule over all the earth in righteousness. He also promised that those who suffered with him would be permitted to reign with him. God's word has promised that his followers would be like him. To be like him is to be humble as Jesus was.

I John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you. which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

It does not make any difference who it is that preaches the word of God. He may be well educated in the languages, or he may be unlearned but a scholar as he studies the word in the quietness of his corner as he prays for the Lord to help him to understand.. The word of a great and popular preacher is no more effective than the humble servant of little formal education. The power of the preached word comes when the Spirit of God takes the word, which is the sword of the Spirit, and divides asunder the soul and spirit, etc. One is made to wonder why it is so difficult for many to see that there is a difference in the soul and spirit, it is so plainly taught in the word. This will bring salvation and deliverance.

Eph. 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The response of Naaman when he went away wroth, indicates that he may have thought he commanded more respect and attention because of who he was. When one comes to God for a blessing, he is as all others who have come before him.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened *his mouth*. and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Gal. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye *be Christ's*, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Eph. 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and Foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*.

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Naaman asked whether the rivers in Damascus were not better than the river Jordan. In response to this question, the answer is “no.” God’s way is the only way. It is right because this is what the Prophet said for Naaman to do. His servants reasoned with him that if Elisha had asked him to do something great, he would have done it. He then went and dipped seven times in the river Jordan according to the saying of the man of God and he was cleansed of his leprosy. He praised God and wanted to give something of a blessing to Elisha but the man of God refused. It is the usual thing for one to love the person who brings blessings in his life, but the blessings and praise really belong to God.

The message of Elisha to Naaman should be noted at this time. At first glance, one will make the application that many have made down through the years. It is thought by many that this is a type of the lost sinner coming to the Lord for salvation of the spirit. It is a beautiful picture to think of one who is such a great man with his master having such a great and bothersome problem. To be sure, he must have been quite a curiosity to all who saw him. To get this problem solved would certainly be grand. There are, however, some thoughts that one must consider other than spirit salvation. The Lord’s people have been fed this doctrine so much and so often that it is likely that very little else is thought about in the word of God my many.

It is a wonderful thing for a husband and wife to be blessed with a child in the family. All who have had this experience ~vill surely remember the many good and wonderful things that come with the bringing of a child into the world. This is all this couple wants to think about - for how long? Until the baby says its first word “goo” or “gmp” or “sip” or any other word that is unintelligible to all others but them. Then this is all they want to think about - for how long? Until the baby takes its first step - then this is all they want to talk about - until the child starts to school and puts all those other bright children to shame with its progress in learning.

Is this not the picture of proud parents today? There is nothing wrong with this, unless it is taken to extreme and one makes all others look like dummies compared to “my child.” The truth is that all expect this child to grow and make progress. If that child reached the age of six and had not uttered a word, the parents would be beside themselves wondering what was wrong. There would be definitely something wrong here. Is experiencing the new birth all that we want to talk about in our spiritual lives? Is living all there is to it? Is there not the command to grow after one has been saved? Is there not the admonition to add to our faith after one has had the salvation experience?

2 Pet. 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Pet. 1: 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

How can one be content to see a spiritual birth that never matures into a full grown Christian? To be barren, ignorant of God’s word and bearing no fruit is unacceptable in life, and should also be in the spiritual life. To have a blind child would bring a great burden upon the entire family. Yet, there are those who are described in this passage as being blind

and having forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. How can the Lord be proud of such a child of his? Honesty would require that we admit that this would be a great problem to all of us.

Yet, there are many of the members of the Lord's churches that are in this same condition spiritually and the pastor and churches do not seem to be upset nor excited about it. When God does not get glory from a life, how can the Lord's churches be content with the spiritual lepers that have sin in their lives that Jesus could remove if only their faith were in him? This leprosy could be cured if the word was preached in simplicity and power of Holy Spirit. Saved people can grow up from being babies into adulthood and bring forth fruit to a hundred fold if only their faith were in the word and promises of God. This is the condition that existed when Jesus came on the scene and presented himself to Israel about two thousand years ago. They were sick as Isaiah told them in the word.

**Isa. 1:5 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt
more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole
heart faint**

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is no soundness in it but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*

The forerunner of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, came and told them to dip in the Jordan river and they would be made fit to enter into the kingdom if they would only bring forth fruits meet for repentance. They were a sick people in Isaiah's day and nothing had happened to help their condition. Now they are commanded to repent, to change their mind about Jesus and the promises of God, and they would be received into the kingdom.

**Matt 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the
wilderness of Judaea.**

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying. The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**

**Malt. 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance:
but he that cometh after me is mightier than I whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the
Holy Ghost, and with fire:**

The Apostle Peter and the other Apostles made the same promise to those gathered in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven. It involved dipping in the same Jordan river that Naaman had dipped in nine hundred years before. Two thousand years later the promise is still the same to their seed and to all who would believe the message of John and Jesus and the Apostles. The promise is that these would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost if they would repent and be baptized. This would bring them into the New Testament church that Jesus organized and gave the promises when he cut off Israel as the chosen of God. There is no other way to have daily sins forgiven except by becoming a part of the covenant people of God where one can confess his daily sins and have them removed as far as the east is from the west.

**Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them. Repent and he baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the
remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

**I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light we
have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**

**8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth
is not in us.**

**9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our sins*. and to cleanse us from all
unrighteousness.**

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

The great question that plagues many saved people today is, “What happens to me when I sin after I have been saved?” Generally, there are one of three answers given. Two of the answers are wrong. One of them is that if a person is saved, he does not sin. Another answer is that when a person is saved his past, present and future sins are all forgiven at that point. The correct answer is that if I say that I have not sinned we make God a liar and his word is not in us. The problem that we must face is “How do I get rid of sins that I commit each day?” Naaman got rid of his leprosy which has been shown to be sin in a type, by dipping in the Jordan river. Today the Lord’s people get rid of sins by washing them away in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in the body of Christ which is the New Testament church, the covenant people of God today.

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized. and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

This is Paul’s testimony of how he got rid of his sins. He was already saved, but a disobedient child of God. He was baptized into the church at Damascus by Ananias and his sins were taken care of by the blood of Jesus Christ. This is not teaching baptismal salvation, but the washing away of daily sins after the Adamic sin has been forgiven in the act of repentance and faith unto salvation of the spirit. Naaman’s life was saved, enriched and made much more enjoyable, by his dipping in the river Jordan. The lives of the Lord’s people can be made more enjoyable, enriched, by the work of Christ in the church through the forgiveness of sins.

Acts 13:38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

Eph. 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

When “sins” plural, are mentioned in the New Testament, it is speaking of these daily sins. When the ‘sin of the world’ is mentioned by John as being taken away by Jesus, it has to do with the Adamic sin that we received from our father in birth. ‘Sin’ is forgiven at salvation and “sins” are forgiven when we confess and ask the Lord to forgive us for them.

Soul Winning

Chapter Six - The Greedy Servant

2 Kings 5:20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

One would think that there would be rejoicing all over the territory because Naaman had been healed of his leprosy. To the Prophet, Elisha, it was an opportunity to do something that would bring glory to God and it did do so. Naaman pressed upon him to take something from him that would be a blessing. There is no question that Naaman was happy about being rid of the leprosy. There is no question that Elisha was happy at the testimony of Naaman after the leprosy was gone. Elisha would do nothing that would take away from that blessed and happy moment.

2 Kings 5:15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said. Behold, now I know that *there* is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none, And he urged him to take *it* but he refused.

These events are as they should be in the work of the Lord. God provided for the Prophet, Jesus Christ, for his work of bringing forgiveness of sins to the world. Jesus provided a method by which man could come into fellowship with God, the Father, by salvation of the spirit of man. He then provided a method by which man could have his daily sins forgiven

in the body of Christ, the New Testament church. He gave her the command to make disciples, baptize the hearers, and then to teach them the things that he had commanded while here in the world. It has already been pointed out that this is where these promises lie. Jesus will be rewarded by the Father by giving him a place at his right hand now and in the future, the promise of ruling the world in righteousness by God's permission. There is no way that a person who is recipient of these blessings of having his daily sins forgiven, can reward our Lord for what he has done, except to do what Naaman did. He praised God. To praise God is to begin to live for him according to his will that is recorded in his word.

One would think that this would end this happy affair, The prophet did his job, Naaman obeyed the words of the prophet, was healed and is on his way back to Damascus. The great tragedy in the work of the Lord is that some people walk in the flesh and are not able to resist fleshly temptations. One of the great ones is the love of money, which has been discussed at length previously. Money is one of the things that will ruin the testimony of a child of God. It will probably come in second place right behind adultery and fornication. A dire warning in the word should be heard by all who name the name of Christ.

I Tim. 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

This narrative will return to the "many sorrows" that is found in the above scripture. Elisha's servant, Gehazi must have begun to think of all that money and changes of garments that Naaman was taking back to Damascus after offering them to Elisha. He must have thought that it was not the right thing to do to let all that wealth go back with Naaman when he had offered it to Elisha and, if he had taken it, he would not have it any way. Isn't it amazing what the love of money will do. We recall the experience of Ananias and Sapphira in the new Testament. It will be worth while to print the story from the scriptures.

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part of* the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up. and carried *him* out and buried *him*.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost and the young men came in and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

The "many sorrows" of this couple were death and the judgment hereafter. How many church folks have lost their influence in the world by having this love of money as did Ananias and Sapphira? The Bible speaks of being dead in trespasses and sins. This is a condition that is brought about by living in the flesh and being controlled by the lust of the

flesh Folks become dead to God as far as their fellowship with him is concerned The ability to be a witness for him is dead also and they may as well be physically dead than to continue to live and bring shame and reproach on the name of Christ. The truth of this story is that it would have been better to have less of this world's goods and be happy in the Lord, than to have more and be dead. It seems than anybody would take the first. But Gehazi fell into the snare of the devil and would not resist it.

2 Kings 5:20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said. Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman, And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, is all well?

The great tragedy here is that this decision affected the thinking of Naaman. He had been healed of leprosy, gave glory to God, and was on his way back home. He was happy in this experience and had offered Elisha money and clothing but the prophet refused. Now the servant of the prophet comes running after him as though the transaction is not complete as he had understood it to be. The work of our Prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, is clouded by the bad acts of some of the Lord's people who love money. They cannot get out of their head the "*deep pockets*" that some folks have and how it would be great to get into them. This brings reproach on the name of Christ and the church that he established to serve him.

Very little is said in a positive way about money in the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles. The idea set forth in the scriptures is that the church is to teach its members. When people begin to know the Lord and to serve him in nearness to him, they will find that part of the service to him is to worship him with our money. This is just as important as our time and our talents. The person who loves money and is constantly thinking about how to get into those "*deep pockets*" is generally one that gives nothing to the Lord's work and is usually a taker instead. This was the problem with Gehazi and the likes of Ananias and Sapphira.

In answer to the question of Naaman, "is all well," Gehazi answered "all is well." Then he began to work on getting some of the wealth that Naaman had. He began by telling a lie. He said "my master hath sent me." The love for money was so strong in him that he did not mind telling a lie. Elisha DID NOT send him. How many people are there today that present themselves as on an errand for the Lord when they are telling a lie to get money from someone? No doubt, there are many. I suppose that Gehazi felt like Elisha would not find out that he had done this. One would have to suppose that these wild so-called televangelists do not think that the Lord knows what they are doing. The story is told of the drunk that stopped the preacher and asked him to pray for him. The preacher began by saying "Lord I come now to pray for this old drunk - the drunk spoke up and said 'Don't tell the Lord that I am a drunk.'"

1 Pet. 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears *are* open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Prov. 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Let us be reminded that the Lord is watching us as the song says "There Is an All Seeing Eye Watching You." The song may not be altogether glorifying to the Lord, but the thought is true. It is such an evil thing to see men and some women stand in pulpits and in front of the television cameras and lie to the people in order to get money from them. Some may do it in ignorance, but many do it purposely. If they are interested in the word of God they would know that God does not call women into the ministry. It is not possible that women can meet the qualification of becoming a bishop when it is required that they be the "husband of one wife." It is just as bad for a man to stand and compromise the word to please the fleshly minded church members who would probably have to reduce his salary if he spoke the truth of God's word. His congregation would most likely be much smaller. Most men's ego would not allow that.

Gehazi concocted a story to tell to Naaman so that he would be convinced to give him some money and garments. It is a shame that Naaman had to be treated in such a way just after he had gotten his life in order by being healed of his leprosy. I am sure that he may have been a little naive about the things of the Lord at this time. This makes the sin even worse. When people with a great many years experience in the Lord's work dupe a newly blessed and happy person, it is unforgiveable. According to the word of God, this sin has no forgiveness. This is why God dealt with it so harshly in the word in the Old Testament when God's people came to the point of rebellion in their lives.

Heb. 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Much misery exists in the world because of this principle of life. One cannot and should not ignore God's warnings. He stated

further in Heb. 10:30 For we know him that hath said. Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. God has given to mankind the ability to judge between two or more options and the right to make his own decisions regarding these options. He has also given us the intelligence and ability to understand his will for our lives. When this knowledge of his will is ignored the result is vengeance. When his knowledge is not known purposely then one can only act in willful ignorance and the result is the same. Some fall in the category of willful disobedience because of the lust for money as did Gehazi. The fairy tale that many preachers are telling their congregations that man's sins, past, present and future, are forgiven at salvation of the spirit, is not true. All sins must be forgiven, even those committed by the saints of God in a New Testament church.

Naaman gave him twice what Gehazi asked for and his servants bore the gift for him. When he came to a "tower" or "secret place" (TWOT) Gehazi took the loot and laid it up in his house and let the men go. Very good!! The trick worked and he got away with it. He almost got away with it. He went in and stood before the prophet, Elisha, who asked him "whence comest thou Gehazir Now he is confronted by his master. This is a principle in the word of God that must not be ignored. Because no one sees the bad things that God's people do, does not mean that he has gotten away with it. Some very plain scriptures give God's people fair warning about this type of activity.

2 Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether it *be* good or bad.

Rom. 11:11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

1 Cor. 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Gehazi told lie number two. "Thy servant went no whither." The bad thing about lying is that one has to continue to lie to support the first one. God classes liars in some very bad company. The judgment for lying is serious as we notice the people that are classed with them. This will eliminate the theory that God's people under grace today are not subject to the law of God.

I Tim. 1: 9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for

manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and it there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Rev. 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

One may try to take evasive action concerning these warnings about liars, but to no avail. One can only take the position of many who say that saved folks do not lie nor commit these other sins. This will only make the preacher look silly for all know this to be a futile proposition. Scriptures are abundant that say that all are sinners (**Rom. 6:23**) and they are defined in **Rom. 3:10-19**. It has been pointed out that all will give account of their lives before God. Then it has been proven by the word that willful sins will not be forgiven. The sin that Gehazi committed was willful, could not be forgiven, and would result in judgment coming upon him. One great sin that Gehazi committed that he apparently did not give any thought to, is the impression that he made on this one who had just gotten his life right and was happy about it. He may very well have asked, *“Is this what God’s plan is all about? This man is supposed to be a man of God, and is a liar.* Elisha’s response indicated that he was not at all pleased with his servant. The Lord has a very pointed way of convincing one of his servants that what he has done is not right according to the scriptures. He sent his Spirit unto the New Testament church in order that they might know when they had done something displeasing to him. The early Israelites had the Spirit to convict them of their sins, but they attributed his convicting power to Satan which brought swift rebuke from the Lord. It is very important to hear and yield to Holy Spirit when he comes to convict of sin and lead the saints into the way of righteousness. It has been pointed out earlier that the sword of the Spirit is the word of God and that the Spirit will divide asunder the soul and spirit and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. When one reads the word *“hear”* in the New Testament, it carries the weight of *“hearing to the point of understanding and obeying.”*

Elisha reprimanded Gehazi and reminded him that he knew what he had done. He asked the servant whether it was time to receive money, and garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards and sheep, and oxen, and menservants and maidservants. I can just imagine that Gehazi thought in his own heart that he did not do all of those things. Why was Elisha going beyond what he had done? He may have done it for emphasis, that he may as well have received all those things. It would not have been any worse. The next time an opportunity came along, he just might go for greater things. The Lord looks on the heart and not on the things that are seen.

To be a servant of a Prophet in the Old Testament carried a great responsibility with it. He had to reflect the will of the Prophet. He had to be obedient and not try to understand why a certain thing was being done. It seems that Gehazi reasoned in his heart that Naaman had offered these things to Elisha and it would not cause any problem if he gave them to someone else. Besides that, Naaman had those *“deep pockets”* and would not miss this small amount of his wealth if he gave it to him. The scripture still says For the love of money is the root of all evil. It was an evil thing to Gehazi and it is an evil thing today to allow this love of money to have any influence in Christian lives. This love cannot exist in the heart at the same time with the love of our Lord and Master

Jesus Christ. He will provide for his people and this must be believed if Jesus will be exalted in the lives of his people. It was the same in the Old Testament, and it is the same today.

The tragedy that Gehazi did not think about was the curse that came upon him for what he had done. The leprosy of Naaman came upon him. To be sure, he must have thought that he would like to go back and undo what he had done. The damage had been done and the punishment was sure and swift. Men should realize that they are the head of their house and what they do will affect the lives of their wives and children. The curse of leprosy came upon the seed of Gehazi forever. This may be harsh, but this was the teaching of the law and he should have lived by it.

Ex 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

**Num. 14:18 The LORD is Longsuffering, and of great mercy,
Forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means
clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation***

**Deut. 5:9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am a jealous God*,
visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me,**

These three scriptures are printed out for emphasis. God's word says in **Heb 10:28 He that despised Moses' law died without**

mercy under two or three witnesses: Three witnesses are given and Gehazi was guilty under the law and God is vindicated for giving him the leprosy of Naaman. The children of Israel refused to go into Caanan as they camped at Kadesh-Barnea because they said they feared the giants and they did not want to have their wives and children harmed. The Lord listened to them with some very sad results. Fathers must beware of the decisions made for their families out of lack of faith in God's word.

Num. 14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

Num. 14:30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land.

***Concerning which* I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.**

31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

32 But *as for you*, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.

33 And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years. and bear your whoredoms. until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.

One may think that this is the end of Gehazi, but it is not so. He is found in **2 Kings 8:4-5**, evidently still a servant of Elisha. It does not say so, but one can be sure that he is still a leper. One may also be sure that his children are lepers. One can continue to be a servant of the Prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, but it will never be the same as it could have been if the sin had not been committed. His credibility with the saints is diminished and he does not have the witness before the world that he could have had. He does not lose his salvation, but part of his life is lost and some of his inheritance will be taken away because of his unfaithfulness to the Prophet.

The tragedy of this account of Naaman is that he was healed of his leprosy and was made to glorify God in the process, but Gehazi was exposed as one who lusted for money. Satan is ever ready to do what he can to keep God from receiving glory from the lives of the saints. One can be worse off if he should decide to quit the work of the Lord because of his sin. Others have been guilty of failing the cause of the Lord and have been useful later in their lives. John Mark and Paul are one case in point. Let us become busy in the salvation of the lives of the people of God. It is a long and difficult task to raise an oak tree from the acorn, but when it is a giant tree, it is something of which one can be proud. There are some plants that grow up overnight, but have no strength nor substance to them. They can be destroyed with just one step of a man's foot.

Naaman went to great lengths to find the Prophet of God after the little Israelite maid told of his existence. She will be rewarded for her testimony. God went to much trouble to see that Naaman could hear about the Prophet and have his leprosy healed. Many have been faithful down through the years to preserve the truth of the gospel in order that the people of God could hear it today. It is an opportunity to all who read this book to respond and turn to Jesus Christ, the Prophet of God, the fullness of which Elisha was a type. He can help and he will help you to get you life in order that it will be saved and account for a blessing to you at the judgment seat of Christ.