

## ***“Behold, I thought...”***

The army captain had leprosy. There was no cure and no hope – only a future of cankerous corruption of his body and a sorrowful, sickly death.

But Naaman’s servant told him of a possible cure, a prophet who healed by the power of God. With nothing to lose, Naaman sought out the prophet, but wanted things to happen on his own terms. When Elisha the prophet told Naaman to dip himself seven times in the Jordan River to be healed, Naaman was incredulous. His own idea was something more dramatic, something more in line with his own thinking and his own national origin.

Etched in scripture forever are his words from II Kings 5:11, 12...

Behold, I thought, ‘He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.’<sup>12</sup> Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.

Did you catch it? Naaman wanted to be cleansed of leprosy on his own terms in his own place. Thankfully, after listening to reason from his own servants, he complied with the directions of God’s prophet and was cleansed.

If we are not very careful, we can fall into the Naaman syndrome. God’s word gives us clear instructions concerning baptism for the forgiveness of sins. In fact, every time God’s word says, “into Christ” the verb preceding is “baptized” (go ahead, look it up). Clearly there is *one way into Christ*, where salvation is, (II Timothy 2:10), and that is baptism for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

We can go away angry, frustrated and try to create our own man-made plan for healing from sin, but God’s word is still as sure as it was to Naaman. Let us never appear at the judgment bar of God (2 Cor. 5:10) saying, “Behold I thought....” May we all follow God’s truths, understand His word (Eph. 3:4) and say “Yes” to His plan for washing away our sins (Acts 22:16). Behold, we know!

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