

Gehazi's Hidden Sin

2 Kings 5

If only this story in 2 Kings 5 were finished with the cleansing of Naaman, then we could glory in God's simple cleansing. But the Holy Spirit's message is not finished.

Recall Naaman after being cleansed of his deadly disease of leprosy returned to the house of the Elisha, the prophet of God, to offer his an enormous amount of wealth, but the prophet refused. We see here a gallant military man that had humbled himself in obedience to God. *"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted"* is the golden rule for the soul.

V5 tells us that Naaman leaving Syria in search of the prophet *departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.* It seems reasonable that these were the "blessings" offered to the prophet by Naaman. *2 Kings 5:15-16 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.*

As Naaman left with his new clean skin and his new-found God, Satan was working in the heart of one of Elisha's servants, Gehazi. Gehazi could not believe that Elisha had just allowed this oppressive Syrian to walk in a leper and leave a clean man with his mule loads of gold and silver. Gehazi thought, *"As the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him."* *2 Kings 5:21 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?* Gehazi replied, *(2 Kings 5:22) All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.*

Gehazi made up the lie that Elisha sent him to request a talent of silver and two garments for two young prophets who had just arrived from Ephraim. In Naaman's zeal, he did what he thought was the Lord's work by offering two talents of silver with the two changes of clothing and then Naaman had two servants carry them for Gehazi. But he could not let Elisha see Naaman's servants carrying the gifts, so Gehazi stopped them when they got to Elisha's hill and carried the riches to the house himself. He set them out of Elisha's presence and returned to serve Elisha. Piece of cake, right? Nobody will know.

Then in v25 we find the chilling words that came from Elisha's mouth, *"Where have you been, Gehazi?"* Now we find Gehazi having to tell another lie to cover the first lie. *"Your servant went nowhere"* he said. But Elisha knew what had happened. Notice the next verse.

2 Kings 5:26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? In essence Naaman said, *"Did not my heart go with you when Naaman stopped his chariot and met you? Was this really the time to accept money and garments?"* A prophet is the last person you want to lie to. I can just see the blood draining from Gehazi's face as he trembled. Elisha continued, *"Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever."* In an instant Gehazi's flesh was as white as snow. Gehazi hid his sin and now he was the leper. What a sad finish to such a positive story!

Gehazi's sin is such a contrast to Naaman's healing. Naaman's healing caused him to serve the Lord alone. He even admitted that he has to bow with his master before the god Rimmon. Naaman hides nothing! He

bears his heart and soul before Elisha and God. But Gehazi hid his actions before Elisha and the Lord. This is not too surprising when you consider Gehazi's attitude.

Back in chapter 4, we are introduced to a woman from Shumen. She was old and had no children. Gehazi introduced her to Elisha who promised her a child. Years later the child died. When the Shunammite woman came to tell Elisha what had happened, Gehazi came near and pushed her away (4:27). Gehazi showed himself to be a man without compassion and without understanding. Tears did not melt him. His attitude was "*I am servant to Elisha, and no one touches him unless I say so.*" That brought a rebuke from Elisha, who then sent Gehazi to minister to the young man. Even with all of Elisha's authority behind him, Gehazi was unable to minister life! So when we see Gehazi trying to hide his sin we are not too surprised.

APPLICATION

Hiding Is Pointless; as Christians, trying to hide your sins before God is a losing proposition. Numbers 32:23 says, "*Be sure your sin will find you out.*" One day your sin will be completely uncovered and our secrets and the content of our character will be exposed. We think that admitting our sin will cause us pain now, but Naaman only found God's grace when he humbled himself. Gehazi was clever enough to use a very spiritual reason to cover his lie. He said it was to provide benevolence to the needed. But Gehazi's prideful lies and secrets only resulted in God's wrath and unthinkable consequences.

Consequences of Sin Are Terrible. You can receive forgiveness but that doesn't remove the consequences. How valuable were Gehazi's treasures once Naaman's leprosy covered his body? How enjoyable and valuable are our sins in the place of eternal punishment? Sin only has a spark of fleeting pleasure. Recall what the Hebrew writer said of Moses. *Hebrews 11:24-25 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; (25) Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

We think we can hold onto pleasure, but the only thing we hold on to are sin's condemning consequences. *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.* Leprosy was pronounced not only on Gehazi, but his descendants as well. Imagine what Gehazi's reaction would be if we asked him if the treasures were worth it. Was the silver worth the leprosy?

Today we occasionally see the consequences of sinful behavior being suffered by descendants. A mother uses drugs during her pregnancy and her baby is retarded because of her drugs. Here Gehazi's sin is passed down to his seed. Your sin could lead to you and your children spending eternity in eternal torment if you neglect to teach them about God and godly principles. Are your sins worth eternal shame and torment in Hell?

Gehazi's sins were a result of greed and selfishness. He wanted the riches that Naaman had and was willing to lie and deceive to get them. His attitude supports what Paul wrote to young preacher Timothy. *1 Timothy 6:9-10 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. (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.* V10 describes for us the story of Gehazi to the tee.

Gehazi, being a servant to Elisha, was with the prophet much of the time. You would think that Gehazi had much knowledge of God. Elisha was called "the man of God" some 27 times 2 Kings. It's in the realm of possibility that it was he who was the "messenger" that instructed Naaman to go and dip seven times in the

Jordan River. He was sent by Naaman back in 2 Kings 4:29 to the Shunammite woman. Then when he saw the child of the Shunammite woman being brought back to life by his master Elisha, surely he had a great faith and an appreciation of God. But vanity and the love of money lead him to falsify the grace of the God and commit sin. Just being near godly people does not immune a person from doing evil. You can be a member of the godly family and still have an evil heart. ***1 Corinthians 10:11-12 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (12) Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.***

Perhaps you are here this evening and you need to respond to the public invitation of the Lord.

Invitation.