

LESSON 66

Naaman Is Cured

2 KINGS 5



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD WELCOMES REPENTANT SINNERS BUT CASTS OUT THE HYPOCRITES

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read 2 Kings 5 from the Scriptures or read story 66, “Naaman Is Cured,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN**
Leprosy Is a Picture of Sin
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ photos of leprosy sufferers (Choose modest pictures that show the condition but are not so serious as to traumatize the children.)
 - ✓ red washable marker
 - ✓ heavy-duty paper towels (one per child plus one extra)
 - ✓ basin of warm soapy water
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
God Works All Things for Good
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ paper and pencils
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Gehazi’s Sin
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
From Naaman’s Point of View
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ a few costumes and props to act out the story of Naaman, such as a cloak, bandanna, staff, and a plastic sword

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The prophets of God are forgotten—It seems that a little Israelite girl knows more about God and demonstrates greater faith than the king of Israel himself. The girl, captured in a raid, speaks with great faith about Elisha and his gift of healing. But when the king of Israel receives a letter from the king of Syria requesting that his commander Naaman be healed, he reacts out of fear not faith. This is a period in Israel's history when the kings did not follow God. But Elisha, hearing of the request to heal the Syrian commander, invites Naaman to visit him.

God heals Naaman's leprosy—When Naaman arrives, Elisha does not even come out of his house. Elisha's message to Naaman is that it is the God of Israel who heals not Elisha. Elisha sends word telling Naaman to wash in the Jordan River, a river within the boundaries of Israel. When Naaman is finally convinced and obeys he is cleansed and returns to offer gifts to Elisha. By rejecting the gifts Elisha underscores God and his role in the healing and takes the focus off himself.

Naaman asks permission to take soil from Israel. This shows that he understands that it is the God of all Israel who has healed him. God's care for Naaman, an enemy of Israel, demonstrates God's compassion for people outside the borders of Israel.

Gehazi falls away—Notice how much deception Gehazi, Elisha's servant, has to practice in trying to get away with his sin. He lies to Naaman in claiming that Elisha has sent him. He sends Naaman's servants back before they reach Elisha's home to keep them from exposing his scheme. When he returns, he lies to Elisha. He should have known he could not hide his sin from God.

The account of Gehazi's sins concludes the story of Elisha and Naaman. God will always welcome repentant sinners as he welcomed Naaman. But liars and hypocrites like Gehazi will suffer for their sin.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Leprosy

This is a disease caused by bacteria that affects both the skin and internal organs. Leprosy often starts as a white patch on the face and can spread quickly, leading to boil-like sores. Eventually deformity can result from loss of tissue surrounding the bones on the hands and feet. In Bible

times there was no known cure for leprosy and there were stringent quarantines imposed as a part of the Mosaic law (see Leviticus 13). A judgment of leprosy as happened to Gehazi meant being cast out of the community. Healing from leprosy meant a welcome back to the community.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read 1 Peter 2:24.

Just as God healed Naaman, so we look to God for our healing. Peter tells us that we can be healed because of the finished work of Christ. Healing is possible for us because of what Jesus did on the cross. We look to God for our healing from the spiritual sickness of sin as well as physical sickness.

Elisha's cleansing of Naaman's leprosy points forward to Jesus and the healing of the lepers in his ministry. In Luke 4:27 Jesus says: "There were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

Naaman foreshadowed the plan of God to reach the Gentiles with the grace of the gospel.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Kings 5 from the Scriptures or read story 66, "Naaman Is Cured," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

Leprosy Is a Picture of Sin

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ photos of leprosy sufferers (Choose modest pictures that show the condition but are not so serious as to traumatize the children.)
- ✓ red washable marker
- ✓ heavy-duty paper towels (one per child plus one extra)
- ✓ basin of warm soapy water

Before class, cut crosses out of the paper towels (one for each student plus one extra).

Just before the kids enter, place all but one paper towel cross into the basin to soak.

After you share the story, tell the children that Naaman’s leprosy represents sin. Naaman comes to Israel with sin because he does not trust in God. But he leaves Israel as a man of faith cleansed of his leprosy (sin). Gehazi, who should have trusted God, was dishonest and in the end was struck with leprosy.

Read John 9:1–7. Ask the children how this story is similar to the story of Naaman. (Jesus healed a man by having him wash.)

Have the children form a line. Draw a red *S* on the back of each child’s left hand. Tell them just as leprosy and blindness represent sin, so the letter *S* represents sin. Each of us is sinful and deserves God’s judgment. Hold up the dry paper towel cross and tell the class that each one will receive a wet paper towel cross with which to wash off the red *S*.

Use this as an opportunity to share the gospel and let them know that we can be cleansed of our sin only because of what Jesus did on the cross.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

God Works All Things for Good

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper and pencils

God works all things together for his good purpose. Have the children each read through 2 Kings 5 and make a list of all the details God worked together to fulfill his plan.

1. God allowed Naaman to get leprosy so that he would need to be healed. It was through his desire to be healed that Naaman was introduced to the true God. Although the leprosy was a curse, God used it for good.
2. God gave Naaman success on the battlefield. It was through his success that Naaman had access to the king of Syria who wrote a letter and provided for Naaman's trip to Israel.
3. God allowed a little girl to be captured so that Naaman could find out about the prophet Elisha.
4. God had the king of Syria leave out Elisha's name from the letter so that the king of Israel would think that the foreign king expected him to be the healer. Distressed, the king of Israel tore his clothes. News of the king's distress found its way to Elisha.
5. God gave to Naaman servants with the wisdom to encourage Naaman to obey the word of the Lord through Elisha. Had Naaman gone away angry, he would not have been healed.
6. God used the riches offered to Elisha to make the point that God is gracious and generous and cannot be bought.
7. God brought judgment upon Gehazi's sinful heart by inflicting leprosy on him for his lies and greed.

One could say that God gave Naaman leprosy so that he could judge the evil in Gehazi's heart. Or that God allowed a little girl to be captured to bring healing to Naaman. The point is that all things are directed by God for his purposes.

Have the children share as many of the interconnecting parts of the story as they can come up with. One change and the whole story would have been different. Talk with them about how God uses the smallest details in our lives to accomplish his plan.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Gehazi's Sin

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of Gehazi sneaking around with two talents of silver and two robes.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

From Naaman's Point of View

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a few costumes and props to act out the story of Naaman, such as a cloak, bandanna, staff, and a plastic sword

Tell the story from Naaman's perspective. This will allow you to add details the children may not know such as what leprosy is (open sores) or what the journey from Syria to Israel would have been like (going over mountains). This should pique the children's interest in the story.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- **What did you learn about God from this story?**
(God is all-powerful and can heal. God works through people as a means of grace to others. God judges sin and can see everything we do, etc.)
- **What is amazing about God reaching out to Naaman?**
(Naaman was not an Israelite. This is a foretaste of God's plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. In fact, in the end, the Israelite Gehazi is judged and the Gentile Naaman is set free.)