



**Sermon Series: Elisha: Seeing the Hand of God at Work**

**To be used with Session 4: God's Hand in Restoring Lives**

**Sermon Title Possibilities: When God Intervenes**

**Scripture: 2 Kings 5:1-3, 10-19**

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the Bible study "Elisha: Seeing the Hand of God at Work," this sermon highlights the challenges that many of us face and the changes that should be evident when God restores our lives.

**Introduction:** In the book of Mark chapter five, Jesus entered the region of the Gerasenes by boat. He was confronted with a demon possessed man who lived among the tombs. He could not be restrained. He suffered in this state for a long time. Seeing Jesus, the man ran to Him and fell at His feet. The demons within him cried out "Son of the Most High God" and begged Him not to torment them. Jesus restored the man by commanding the unclean spirits to come out of him. You can imagine the townspeople had given up on his deliverance, but God.

### **1. Exposed His Ignorance (2 Kings 5:1-3).**

The Syrians went out on raids and brought back a captive, a young Jewish girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife (v.2). After assessing the situation, this girl made an accurate statement about her master. She surmised that she knew something that Naaman did not know (v. 3). He was clueless to the truth that his very existence was because of the LORD God Almighty (Acts 17:28). As a captain in the Syrian army, the king admired and honored Naaman because of success on the battlefield. Yet, Naaman was ignorant that every battle he won was because God (2 Kings 5:1; 1 Chron. 29:12). The LORD provided him with the military wisdom to outmaneuver and overwhelm his enemies on the field of battle. He was ignorant that God works in mysterious ways. He could not fathom that his cleansing would come from the advice a captive.

We too in the past and some even right now are ignorant of God's hand on our lives. He guides us through dangers seen and unseen. He places the right people in our lives at the right time to carry out His purposes. Potiphar, the pharaoh's butler, and the king of Egypt's were unaware that their prosperity would come from a slave named Joseph. Likewise, the

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Lord continues to send pastors, missionaries, saints, and others to show us what we are unaware of.

## **2. Uncovered His Arrogance (2 Kings 5:10-15).**

Naaman came to the door of Elisha's house and stood expecting the prophet to greet him. The prophet did meet him but sent his servant. The messenger told him to go and wash in the Jordan seven times to be clean. Instead of following the instructions, he became upset because Elisha did not come before him and call on the name of the LORD. He also questioned the instructions. He tried to modify the instructions. Naaman's response exposed the pride inside him. Giving the orders was Naaman's normal mode of operation; others looked to and treated him with respect. Even the king of Syria valued his skill set and now he could not add nor subtract to the instructions. Yet, Naaman found out that his attitude was getting in the way of his healing.

After following the instructions of the prophet without alterations, Naaman's skin was restored. He testified, "I know there's no God in the whole world except in Israel" (v. 15). A man who worshiped idols realized there was no one else like the LORD (Ex 9:14). Why? Because the God of Israel used ordinary elements to produce extraordinary results. He used the muddy Jordan river to cleanse the leprous skin of Naaman.

We need to be careful not to change God's Word. "Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). Husband and wives try to change God's commands for marriage. Children try to find loopholes in the Word so they can disregard honoring their parents. Believers trying to adjust the Word so that sin is not a sin. The foundation of all of these is that we know better than God. Remember "...God resist the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5:5).

## **3. Activated His Allegiance (2 Kings 5:16-19).**

After Naaman swallowed his pride, his attitude and actions changed. First, he became a giver. He wanted to be a blessing to others (v.16). Second, the captain became a worshipper. In verse 17, he recognized the holiness of the ground and asked could he take some back with him. This was not to worship the ground but to worship God on this ground. Third, his actions changed. He said that he would never again offer burnt offerings or sacrifice to idol gods again. His allegiance was now to the LORD God of Israel.

While giving his intent, Naaman did not want his actions to be misinterpreted. He knew his responsibility to the king when they went into the temple of Rimmon. He made it clear to the prophet that he would not operate like he did in the past. He would not go in out of devotion to an idol but out of duty to his king (v.18).

Where is the change? I was doing door to door witnessing and came across a young man living with his girlfriend. I went through the gospel with him, and he replied that he was saved. I asked him how his life has changed since he gave his life to the Lord Jesus. After

contemplation, he said that his life had not changed. I then asked him would he like to make Jesus the Lord and Savior of his life? Like Naaman, our allegiance to God should not just be verbal but also visual.

**Conclusion:** In 2024, a show started airing on Netflix called Resurrected Rides. The show uses a team of mechanics to restore beaten and broken-down cars of deserving owners. The workers do more than bring the car to its original glory, they customize vehicles into roadworthy masterpieces based on the needs and the wants of the owner.

God restores our lives into worthy masterpieces. We may have thought it could not be done but when the Lord intervenes, He is able to restore what the locusts have eaten (Joel 2:25).

### **Author Bio**

Dr. Brian M. Carmichael Sr. is married to Stacey of twenty-seven years. They have four grown children (three boys and one girl) and two grandchildren. He is the pastor of Holy Temple Baptist in Memphis, TN. He is also on faculty with MCUTS of Union University. He received his BSCL from Union University (Jackson, TN) and his MDIV and Ph.D. from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. As a Christian leader, he has a passion for preaching, teaching, disciple-making, and all things church related.

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