

TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Daniel Balch /Opening Prayer by: Walden David

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Kelly McCain

#100 Holy Ground

#47 Holy, Holy, Holy

Scripture Reading by: Jackson Burgess

#332 Lead Me to Calvary

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#189 Master, the Tempest is Raging

Sermon: "Out of the Depths"

Psalm 130

#908 There's a Stranger at the Door

#859 When All of God's Singers Get Home

Closing Prayer by: Shannon Smith

Welcome by: Daniel Balch

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Kelly McCain

#399 Jesus Calls Us

#406 Just a Closer Walk with Thee

Scripture Reading: Tristan Strickhausen

Prayer by: Bobby Rader

#416 Footsteps of Jesus

#431 Break Thou the Bread of Life

Sermon: "Elisha's Last Sermon"

2 Kings 13:18-19

#454 Rock of Ages

#429 Oh, to Be Like Thee

Closing Prayer by: David Warren

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

March 11, 2018

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

Where Have You Been, Gehazi?

We have been looking at episodes from the books of Samuel and Kings on Sunday evenings since my arrival here. These are stories many of us heard as children that we have perhaps not thought of in a long time. But we can still learn a great deal from them, in terms of who God is and what he expects from his people.

One of those stories we examined recently was that of the Syrian general, Naaman, recorded in **2 Kings 5**. You might remember this one. Naaman was a great man with a problem: *he was a leper*. So he goes to see the prophet Elisha, who gives him a simple instruction: go and wash in the Jordan River 7 times and be cleansed. Naaman is outraged! The Jordan was filthy, far inferior to the waters of Syria; why didn't he do something stupendous, come and wave his hands and say some magic words? But one of his men prevails on him to do this small thing, *and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child*.

But there is a sad epilogue to this narrative that we did not cover. Naaman returns to Elisha, praising the Lord as the only true God, and offering gifts of silver and gold and fine clothing. Elisha refuses all of those, telling him to return home in peace. But Elisha's servant, Gehazi, has other ideas. He catches up to Naaman and says, *My master has sent me to say, "There have just now come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothing" (2 Kings 5:22)*. Naaman actually gives him 2 talents instead. That's about 150 lbs of silver – worth about \$40,000 in today's market. You can see why Gehazi would be so eager.

But Elisha was aware of all of this. When Gehazi returned, he confronted him: *Where have you been, Gehazi?* Gehazi tried to lie his way out of it. But Elisha was a prophet – he knew all that transpired. And he pronounced sentence: *"The leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever." So he went out from his presence a leper, like snow (v. 25, 27)*.

Gehazi's actions make a sorry conclusion to a great story. He made several mistakes:

For one, he thought Elisha had let Naaman off too easily. *See, my master has spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not accepting from his hand what he brought (v. 20)*. In other words, he resented that God's mercy had flowed so freely to Naaman – he knew better than God!

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Privilege to Serve
Sunday, Mar. 11th

Our Sick

Dana Wiggins is taking chemo treatments.
Doris Trahan is taking radiation treatments.
Patsy Corcoran is in San Jacinto Methodist Hospital room 283A.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, March 12th at 7:00 pm.
 Singing at Magnolia Place Health Care at 4:00 pm today.

Communion Preparation: Nancy Hempel
 Nursery Attendants: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton
 Children's Bible Hour: Tania Balch
 Teen Helpers: Brandon Smith, Tristan Strickhausen

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Mar. 18th: Pat Hobbs
 Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Mar. 18th: Marsha Rader
 Children's Bible Hour for Sunday, Mar. 18th: Emily Nance

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, James Scott, Gary Nielsen, Harold Cryer, Gerald Lucy, Steve Ward, Teresa McKewen, Jackie David, Patricia Padon, Frank & Tina Garcia, Ronnie Davis, Bill Lunceford, Phillip Cottle, Eric Davis, J. P. Williams, Stacie Copeland, Wayne Howser, Jo Ella McKewen, Frances Petree

Primetimers are going to Big Frank's BBQ on Tuesday, March 13th at 5:30 pm. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the foyer.

Men's Prayer Breakfast is Saturday, March 17th at 8:00 am in the family life center.

We are having a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, March 22nd at 9:00 am.

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Secondly, Gehazi dared to take God's name in vain. By that, I don't mean that he cursed. *As the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him (v. 20)*. Gehazi is ostensibly a servant of God, and yet he is going to use that as a cover to lie and cheat and steal.

Finally, the root issue is that Gehazi found security in possessions rather than in God. He hid the money and clothes he got from Naaman and lied to Elisha about it. Perhaps he resented being a prophet's servant for so many years with nothing to show for it. He decided it was time to look out for number one.

In this light, Gehazi's sin sounds remarkably contemporary. He was led off track because of his desire for the good life and his trust in himself rather than trusting in God. And for that, he is one of only 3 people in Scripture said to be struck with leprosy.

I think that many in our culture would say that Gehazi was merely being a shrewd businessman – he saw an opportunity and seized it. That sort of self-reliance and ingenuity is viewed in some quarters as the American way. Yet God is very clear: it is not his way.

And we are confronted with the question we face, again and again, when we hold our lives up to Scripture: will we allow ourselves to be shaped by God's story, or by the world around us?

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Pauline Taylor, Winona Angelle, Pat Henley, Myrtle Sheffield, Ronnie Rubit, Ouida Cauthorn, Joe Leonard

Blood Drive

We are having a **Blood Drive**, Monday, March 19th from 4-8 pm. Let your friends and neighbors know so they can be here to give blood.

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Bob Parker	Danny Balch	
Bobby Rader	Shannon Smith	
Don Taylor	Phillip Strickhausen	
Robert Ward		

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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