

Resonate

BIBLE STUDY

**DO YOU WANT MORE OUT OF LIFE:
MORE POWER**

Is there something holding you back from experiencing all that you were created to be? God has the power to break through the obstacles in your life. However, you must be willing to submit to His plan instead of yours. This will lead to more power for living.

DAY 1

Today's Scripture:
2 Kings 5:1-3

The Word

Mirrors do not lie. I wish they did. Crashing a mirror with a brick seems like it would be fun. I have a magnified mirror on my vanity. The regular mirror is bad enough but this one shows every flaw enlarged. I do not notice anything good, just the flaws.

Naaman was a man in the Bible who had many good things in his life. However, he had one glaring flaw. It did not need to be magnified for those around him to see it. Unfortunately, it was apparent to everyone.

2 Kings 5:1

¹ Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

Verse 1: Look at all those compliments: commander of army for the king of the nation of Aram, great man, highly regarded, the Lord had given him victories, and a valiant soldier. These compliments end suddenly with the word “but”. The words that follow are frightening. He had the dreaded disease of leprosy.

The small little word “but” has dramatic impacts in life: “He could have been successful but...” or “Their marriage would have worked but...” or “The baby seemed normal at first but...” or even “Most people survived the accident but...” The conversation takes a different tone with that one word.

Success becomes invalid when there is one glaring defeat or pain in life. What would Naaman have willingly given up to be whole again? Would he have traded all his military success for skin that was healthy? What would you give up? I have some things in my life that I would willingly trade away. There are some aspects of my character, my health, my past, my personality that I would willingly trade in even if it cost me some of the “success” in my life. Have you ever felt that way? Now you understand the desperation of Naaman. He wanted the “but...” of life to be removed. And he had no way out.

At his lowest point, a glimmer of hope emerges from an unlikely source.

2 Kings 5:2-3

² Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

Verse 2-3: I am so humbled by this nameless slave girl. If I had been taken captive from my homeland, the last thing I would be doing would be trying to cure my master from leprosy. But this girl looked past her suffering and saw another person's hurts and pains. She did what she could to help him.

I receive a monthly magazine called *The Voice of the Martyrs*. It documents the persecution of the church around the world. More Christians are tortured and murdered for their faith today than at any time in history! The founders of this magazine Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand were both imprisoned and tortured for their faith when Romania was under communist control. The brutal and gruesome stories pale in comparison to this one truth: these persecuted believers love their enemies. I have read of countless families grieving over their murdered loved ones choosing to love the very people who killed them! Despite their suffering, they are empowered to reflect the heart of God to all people, no matter what they have done. I am amazed and humbled by this love.

I believe this slave girl speaking to Naaman's wife had this kind of heart. She chose to help the very ones who enslaved her. May we learn from her example. We are not facing imprisonment or death for our beliefs. So surely we can love the disagreeable, help the irritable, and spend time with the argumentative. I do not believe that the "burdens" we carry can compare to what the believers around the world are dealing with today.

Naaman had one glaring problem. This slave girl used his problem as a springboard to teach him about true faith. Christians around the world are imprisoned for their faith. They use their prison cells as a springboard for sharing the gospel with the guards. I do not know what you may be going through right now or what others around you are suffering. Power is found by looking past your circumstances and looking toward the needs of others. Even in your times of hardship, could this difficulty be a springboard for someone coming to salvation?

Up Close and Personal

Ask the Lord to help you to see beyond yourself to the needs of others.

Explain a time when you felt desperate about a situation in your life.

How can difficulties in life lead someone to believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior?

Why is it important for believers to recognize that suffering may be appointed for the divine reason of leading someone else to Christ?

How does this bring godly power into your times of hardship?



Today's Scripture:
2 Kings 5:2-8

The Word

A turning point in my life came when I read a book by Becky Tirabassi. The book *Let Prayer Change Your Life* catapulted my spiritual journey into one of extended periods of Bible study and prayer on a daily basis. It challenged me to give God at least one hour of my day. I learned how to plan my times with Him and to keep appointments with the Creator of the universe. My life was radically changed.

In her book, Tirabassi shares that she had reached a desperate point in her life and walked into a church building for answers. No one was there but the janitor. This man led Becky to the knowledge of salvation through Christ. She accepted his words and began a new life. This janitor was just being faithful in doing his job when a random lady entered his workplace needing hope. He had the opportunity to lead a woman to Christ who would become a powerful author and speaker on behalf of the church.

I do not know the name of the janitor, just as I do not know the name of the slave girl who shared with Naaman the power of God. The Lord knows their names and he has allowed their faithfulness in their jobs to bear much fruit in the lives of others.

2 Kings 5:2-4

² Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴ Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said.

Verse 2-4: Naaman was desperate. He took a slave girl's suggestion to the king. He grasped at the only hope he had ever heard. Even the king was responsive. This is impressive considering this was an enemy nation to Israel. They knew there was no hope in their land, so they were willing to go to another for help.

Sometimes desperation brings people to considering Jesus. They realize that nothing in their life has worked in helping them. Their situation is only getting worse. Becky Tirabassi had tried to fill her life with drugs, alcohol, relationships, moving to California: nothing worked. She still felt desperate inside. It was at her lowest point that she considered that maybe someone in the church could give her answers. Naaman is experiencing the same thing. No doctor or religious leader in his nation could cure him. Maybe, just maybe, someone who calls on the name of the Lord could transform his life. He was willing to go to find out if this slave girl's claim was true.

2 Kings 5:5-6

⁵ *"By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing.* ⁶ *The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."*

Verse 5-6: Naaman walked into enemy territory to help. The king of Aram humbled himself in writing that letter. He was admitting his nation's helpless state in making a difference for this diseased man. While the king wrote the letter, Naaman had to act on it. He had to go and find out the truth.

A former youth minister was reminded of how people must feel coming to church. He had hosted many events where unchurched youth rode on the church's bus to camp. They would have to hear church lingo, watch church-approved movies, experience church events. He never thought about how awkward it must feel for them until he got a job working as a chaplain for a football team at a secular school. He now knows how it feels to ride "their bus" as they use worldly lingo, watch worldly movies, and hear about their exploits in worldly events.

We get so involved in our "church group" that we forget that there is a world out there needing to hear about Jesus. When they do come, we want them to act like us instead of being sensitive to the fact they may be feeling awkward on the "church bus". We need to be sensitive to their needs. This is not about lowering the standard of biblical truth but instead meeting people where they are to lead them to Christ. Our focus needs to be on them not ourselves.

2 Kings 5:7

⁷ *As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"*

Verse 7: This king of Israel lived in the nation that knew the true God yet he did not act like it. He was concerned more about politics than the Lord. His first thought was that this could lead to war between the nations. His response was self-centered and not sensitive to Naaman who was truly seeking help.

Often we are too busy looking at ourselves that we miss out on what God wants to do. We need to have eyes on God who will show us how to respond to the needs of others.

2 Kings 5:8

⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."

Verse 8: While the king is pouting in his self-centered state, Elisha is acting on behalf of God. He rebukes the king for not sending Naaman to him in the first place. The king seemed to forget that there was a prophet in the land. A little slave girl living far away did not forget about the prophet. The king living nearby had put Elisha out of his mind. The slave girl was faithful in enemy territory. The king himself was unfaithful in his own land.

We must be faithful to God. We are the light to the world. People are living in darkness and need to know the way to salvation. We can only show them if we are living for the Lord. If not, we will miss opportunities to share. If Elisha had not intervened, Naaman would have remained a broken and diseased man. People all around us are broken and diseased by sin. We must help them.

Up Close and Personal

Confess missed opportunities of sharing about the Lord. Ask Jesus to help you to never miss one again.

What is your attitude toward people in the world? (e.g. judgment, pity, apathy, love)

In what ways can you begin to stop focusing on yourself and begin to focus on those around you who need Christ?

How will you meet people where they are?

DAY 3

The Word

Today's Scripture:

2 Kings 5:9-14; Romans 1:16-17, 10:17

Naaman has been summoned by the prophet. After a disappointing encounter with the king who tore his robes and claimed that the king of Aram was trying to pick on him, Naaman's hope is restored as he is called by Elisha for healing. I wonder if Naaman was both excited and nervous, hopeful and doubtful, curious and cautious. His ride to Elisha's was emotionally filled but it would all quickly turn to anger.

2 Kings 5:9-12

⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

Verse 9-12: Unmet expectations can cause the most heartache in our lives. We think about how we want life to work out and when it does not happen the way we planned, we are angry. We blame others or circumstances but ultimately our anger is toward God. "Why aren't you doing things my way?" Naaman was so angry that he turned from his hope and decided to go home. He had travel many miles but lost hope within a few feet of healing. What a tragedy. Thankfully, Naaman wasn't alone.

2 Kings 5:13

¹³ Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'"

Verse 13: Another nameless servant radically changes the course for Naaman. A slave girl led him to begin this journey; a servant encourages him to stay on it. We must make the effort to keep people on the path of spiritual discovery. I have heard that it takes an average of someone hearing the gospel seventeen times before they accept Christ as Lord. Seventeen times is just the average. We may not know if we are number one or number thirty four but we need to be faithful in our part. God will draw that person to Himself in His time but we must be willing to share about Him at all times.

2 Kings 5:14

¹⁴ So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

Verse 14: Encouraged by the servant, Naaman acts in faith by going into the river. Everyone experienced his joy as he was cleansed from the disease that had plagued him. Leprosy was incurable. Here he is standing in the river with skin like a baby's. The impossible became possible.

People around us have the incurable disease of sin. They have no way out. But they, too, can experience healing after being washed in the blood of the Lamb. Are you leading people to the river so that they may experience the power of God?

Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Verse 16-17: Naaman had been ashamed of the Jordan river compared to the rivers of Damascus. But he discovered that the waters of God could heal him. We are not to be ashamed of the gospel for it leads to salvation. The power of God is showcased through the healing waters of Jesus Christ. This power is accessed by faith.

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Verse 17: When we hear the Word and accept it by faith, we experience the power of God through salvation. When we tell others the Word, we are showing them the way to the "river". We are leading them toward experiencing the power of God for themselves. Thus, the Source of the power in our lives is to be shared with others.

Up Close and Personal

Ask the Lord to help you to share the power of salvation with others.

How are you encouraging others on their spiritual journey?

Who are you actively praying for and building a relationship with in order to share with them the power of salvation?

DAY
4

The Word

Today's Scripture:

2 Kings 5:15-19a; John 20:19-21; Philippians 4:6-7

This past summer I was able to visit my third grade Sunday School teacher. I had not seen her in over twenty years. She and I have written back and forth through the decades. I wanted the opportunity to thank her for all she meant to me as a child, encouraging my spiritual growth. Even though this was a beautiful experience, I wish it could have been more like Naaman's. He returned to Elisha with skin like a baby's. I returned having very much aged!

2 Kings 5:15-16

¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant."

¹⁶ The prophet answered, "As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing." And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

Verse 15-16: Naaman was so thrilled by what the Lord had done he wanted to give a gift to Elisha. His new found life wanted to abundantly flow to others. I love the generosity that poured out. Elisha, however, knew the danger of taking the gift. He knew that the acceptance could lead others to think they could pay for a miracle. His decline is to protect from future obstructions to the ways of God.

2 Kings 5:17

¹⁷ "If you will not," said Naaman, "please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD.

Verse 17: Naaman made a decision that day. He realized that the Lord was God and there was no other. He chose to serve the Lord and worship him alone. He went beyond the miracle to worship.

My grandparents are not believers. Yet, each time one becomes seriously ill, they pray and ask God to intervene. They promise to go to church if He helps them. God is gracious and has carried them through many difficult times. But once the miracle has happened they revert back to their old ways. God is ignored by them once again. They want help but they do not want the Helper.

Naaman wanted more. He knew that he did not just want power to work in his life but wanted a relationship with the All Powerful one. Electrical gadgets only have power if connected to an outlet. We only have a powerful life if we are connected to the Lord. Whatever obstructs this power must be removed.

2 Kings 5:18

18 But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this."

Verse 18: Naaman wanted to “come clean” before the Lord. He knew what he was returning to: a pagan country with heathen practices. He wanted to be able to know God was with him even in the corrupt environment. Even if his body had to bow because the king is leaning on him, his heart would not.

2 Kings 5:19a

19 "Go in peace," Elisha said.

Verse 19a: This is the most powerful statement in Scripture. You want power? It is summed up in one word: peace. In fact, this is the very word Christ used upon His resurrection.

John 20:19-21

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Verse 19-21: The disciples were afraid that they would be crucified as Jesus was. What did the Lord tell them: Peace be with you. Naaman was returning to a country that worshipped others gods and hated the nation of Israel. What did God tell him through Elisha: Go in peace. The power in every circumstance is measured by the peace in your life. More peace equals more power.

Are you dealing with difficult people? Peace be with you. Are you facing hardships? Go through them with peace. How is this possible? By God alone.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Verse 6-7: Naaman presented his request and God answered with peace. The disciples were living in fear and Jesus answered with peace. You are in a world that is filled with godlessness, pain, turmoil, and crisis. If you know Jesus, you can pray to Him and share your burdens with Him. And then you can have peace. Your relationship with Jesus Christ is the path to peace. The way of peace is the way of power.

Up Close and Personal

Praise the Lord that through Him we may have peace in all of our circumstances.

What obstructs the power of peace in your life?

How will you remove it?

Explain how peace is the pathway to power in the believer's life.

DAY 5

The Word

Today's Scripture:

2 Kings 5:19-27; 1 John 1:9

I hate failure. I am a perfectionist and cannot stand when I do not do things well. As a child I would throw a fit if I got anything less than an A plus. Now that I'm grown up, what breaks my heart more than anything is spiritual failure. I look at my life and realize how often I fall short of the glory of God. He is holy. I am not. I think that is why my heart breaks every time I study this next passage. It could be me. Please read the verses with a solemn reminder that any of us are prone to failure.

2 Kings 5:19-27

¹⁹ "Go in peace," Elisha said.

After Naaman had traveled some distance, ²⁰ Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, "My master was too easy on Naaman, this Aramean, by not accepting from him what he brought. As surely as the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something from him."

²¹ So Gehazi hurried after Naaman. When Naaman saw him running toward him, he got down from the chariot to meet him. "Is everything all right?" he asked.

²² "Everything is all right," Gehazi answered. "My master sent me to say, 'Two young men from the company of the prophets have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two sets of clothing.'"

²³ "By all means, take two talents," said Naaman. He urged Gehazi to accept them, and then tied up the two talents of silver in two bags, with two sets of clothing. He gave them to two of his servants, and they carried them ahead of Gehazi. ²⁴ When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the things from the servants and put them away in the house. He sent the men away and they left. ²⁵ Then he went in and stood before his master Elisha.

"Where have you been, Gehazi?" Elisha asked.

"Your servant didn't go anywhere," Gehazi answered.

²⁶ But Elisha said to him, "Was not my spirit with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you? Is this the time to take money, or to accept clothes, olive groves, vineyards, flocks, herds, or menservants and maidservants? ²⁷ Naaman's leprosy will cling to you and to your descendants forever." Then Gehazi went from Elisha's presence and he was leprous, as white as snow.

Verse 19-23: We have studied this week about how to live a powerful life. Today, we will end with a warning. You can forsake power in your life.

Gehazi was a servant of the most powerful prophet in Israel. In a momentary lapse of judgment, his life was changed. When we look at the temporal world instead of keeping our eyes on the eternal God, we will lose power in our lives. That loss of power leads to a destructive cycle. First, Gehazi deceived himself in thinking he knew more than Elisha. Next, he made the choice to follow Naaman. Third, he lied to Naaman. Fourth, he manipulated Naaman's servants by taking the articles so he could hide them in his house. Fifth, he lied to Elisha. Sin begets more sin. It led to his downfall.

When sin creeps into your life, confess it and repent before it leads to something worse. This will reconnect you with the Lord.

1 John 1:9

9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Verse 9: The Lord will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We may deal with the consequences of our sins but we are restored to the relationship with the Lord.

Gehazi sinned however he was not abandoned. He is mentioned later on in the book of 2 Kings. He was still Elisha's servant. The grace of God was evident in his life for he was still ministering before the prophet of the Lord.

Do not cut off the power of God in your life. Confess your sins daily so that you may experience His mercy.

Up Close and Personal

Spend time in confession. Ask the Spirit to reveal any sins harbored in your heart.

How will you incorporate a time of daily confession into your schedule?

When have you experienced being cut off from the power of God because of sin in your life?

How did the Lord graciously restore you?