

VBS 2019



1st-5th Grade

TUESDAY LESSON PLAN

God Speaks through People

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The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word

Objective This lesson will show the students how God spoke in the Old Testament through prophets, and today He still uses people to speak to us.

Key Verses

2 Kings 5:1-19—Main Teaching Passage
Ephesians 6:1-3

Memory Verse - Proverbs 1:8

“My son, hear the instruction of your father,
And do not forsake the law of your mother.”

Hook

Review yesterday’s memory verse, John 10:27

Have a student come up to the board. Whisper a message in their ear and have them say it or write it on the board. Then ask the class, “Whose message was this? Mine or the student’s?”

In the example, the student spoke the message, but the message came from you. This is what prophets did in the Old Testament. They heard messages from the Lord and spoke them to the people. We will see an example of this in today’s story.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Today's story introduces us to a man named Naaman, a general in the Syrian army. Naaman was a great commander, but he had leprosy, a terrible skin disease that could not be cured. One of his servants, an Israelite woman, told Naaman that in Israel there was a prophet who could heal him, and so Naaman asked the king of Israel for permission to see this prophet. The king was worried because Syria and Israel were fighting at that time, but the prophet, Elisha, said he wanted Naaman to come so that he could prove God's power to him.

When Naaman arrived at Elisha's house, Elisha sent a messenger to him with a word he had received from the Lord: Naaman was to go down to the Jordan River and wash himself seven times. At first, Naaman was angry at this message. He was expecting Elisha to come out himself, wave his hand over him, and heal him, but that was not what the Lord said. Besides, there were plenty of rivers in Syria where he could wash himself. But Naaman's servants pointed out that Naaman would have done much harder things to heal himself if that's what Elisha said, and he should try listening. So Naaman went down to the Jordan and dipped himself in seven times, and he was completely healed.

When Naaman saw what had happened, he returned to Elisha, proclaiming that he now knew that Elisha's God was the one true God. Naaman offered him great gifts, but Elisha refused. Then after vowing never to worship any god but the Lord, Naaman left and returned to his country.

LOOK

The Old Testament is filled with prophets. Over a quarter of the Old Testament was written by them, and they appear throughout the history of Israel. There are famous ones like Daniel, Elijah, and Jonah, and less well-known ones like Amos and Habakkuk. Some were advisors to the king, others preachers to the people, farmers, and a number of other jobs. But who were these men and women?

Prophets were servants of the Lord who spoke messages from God to a person or group of people. Many times, they would hear God speak directly to them, and they would tell the people what God said. The Lord used prophets to encourage His people, tell them what to do, correct them when they were sinning, and even predict future events. Sometimes the people listened to them. Unfortunately, however, most of the time the Israelites ignored the words of the prophets. When they did that, they were not disobeying the words of a man. They were disobeying God Himself and would face consequences.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

Today's story is a great example of what prophets did. Elisha told Naaman to wash in the Jordan because the Lord told him to say that. He didn't come up with this message on his own, it was the Lord's message. When Naaman heard this message, he had to choose either to obey or reject the message. He chose obedience, and as a result he was healed, because when he obeyed Elisha, he was really obeying the Lord. Prophets were a way God would speak to people in the Old Testament.

Today, God still uses people to speak to us. We don't often run into prophets like Elisha, who hear the Lord's voice directly and speak it to us, but God still uses people to speak to others. The primary example of this for kids is our parents (and grandparents, guardians, etc.) In Ephesians 6:1-3, children are told to obey their parents in the Lord. We should do this first of all because God has given us our parents to speak wisdom to us, and obeying or disobeying them is really obeying or disobeying God, but also because God promises life and blessing to those who do so. This is true of all of our parents and grandparents, but especially those who are believers. God also uses pastors and Sunday School teachers to speak to us. When they study God's Word to teach it to you, they are listening to the Lord's voice in Scripture and speaking those things to you. God can use all kinds of people to speak to us. When he does, it's important for us to respond in obedience.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 1:8.

Review the lesson by asking the class how God spoke to Naaman. Ask what a prophet is. Does God still speak to us through people today? How?

Pray: Thank the Lord for giving us parents, pastors, teachers, and others to speak His Words to us. Ask Him to help us be obedient to Him when He uses others to speak to us.

Parent Question: How does God use people to speak to us today?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Kings 5 by David Guzik

NAAMAN THE LEPER

A. Naaman comes to Elisha.

1. ([2Ki 5:1](#)) Naaman's problem.

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper.

a. **Namaan, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man:** Naaman was the chief military commander of a persistent enemy to both Israel and Judah. As recently as the days of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, Syria had fought and won against Israel ([1 Kings 22:35-36](#)). His position and success made him a **great and honorable man**, and personally he was a **mighty man of valor**.

i. This same title was applied to Gideon ([Judges 6:12](#)), Jephthah ([Judges 11:1](#)), David ([1 Samuel 16:18](#)), Jeroboam ([1 Kings 11:28](#)), and Eliada ([2 Chronicles 17:17](#)). It seems that this is the only *specific* Gentile mentioned as a **mighty man of valor**.

ii. According to Jewish legends, "The Rabbins tell us that it was he [Naaman] who shot the arrow wherewith Ahab was slain." (Trapp)

b. **But a leper:** Naaman had a lot going for him, but what he had against him was devastating. He was a **leper**, which meant that he had a horrible, incurable disease that would slowly result in his death. No matter how good and successful everything else was in Naaman's life, he was a **leper**.

i. "Here was a heavy tax upon his grandeur; he was afflicted with a disorder the most loathsome and the most humiliating that could possibly disgrace a human being." (Clarke)

ii. Ancient leprosy began as small, red spots on the skin. Before too long the spots get bigger, and start to turn white, with sort of a shiny, or scaly appearance. Pretty soon the spots spread over the whole body and hair begins to fall out – first from the head, then even from the eyebrows. As things get worse, finger nails and toenails become loose; they start to rot and eventually fall off. Then the joints of fingers and toes begin to rot and fall off piece by piece. Gums begin to shrink and they can't hold the teeth anymore, so each of them is lost. Leprosy keeps eating away at your face until literally the nose, the palate, and even the eyes rot – and the victim wastes away until death.

2. ([2Ki 5:2-3](#)) The testimony from the servant girl.

And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy."

a. **Had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel:** This girl was an unwilling missionary, taken **captive** from Israel and now in Syria. Yet God allowed the tragedy of her captivity to accomplish a

greater good.

i. The **young girl** illustrates the mysterious ways God works. She was probably raised in a godly home, yet taken from her family at a young age. It was an irreplaceable loss for her parents, and one they no doubt grieved over every day. Yet, she was greatly used in a simple way.

b. **If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria!** This **young girl** was an outstanding example of a faithful witness in her current circumstance. She *cared* enough to speak up, and she had *faith* enough to believe that Elisha **would heal him of his leprosy**.

i. “And see the benefits of a religious education! Had not this little maid been brought up in the knowledge of the true God, she had not been the instrument of so great a salvation.” (Clarke)

3. (2Ki 5:4-7) Naaman comes to the king of Israel looking for healing.

And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, “Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel.” Then the king of Syria said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy. And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.”

a. **Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel:** Considering the record of wars between Israel and Syria described in the previous chapters, it seems strange that the king of Syria would send a letter of recommendation with his General Naaman. It seems that 2 Kings is not necessarily arranged chronologically, so this probably occurred during a time of lowered tension between Israel and Syria.

i. **And took with him ten talents of silver:** Dillard estimated that by the values of his own day, Naaman took more than \$1.2 million with him to Israel. All this together shows how *desperate* Naaman’s condition was, and how badly the King of Syria wanted to help him.

b. **I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy:** When the king of Israel (Jehoram) read the letter, he was understandably upset. First, it was obviously out of his power to heal Naaman’s leprosy. Second, he had no relationship with the prophet of the God who *did* have the power to heal. He thought the king of Syria sought a **quarrel**.

i. The king of Syria assumed that the king of Israel was on a much better relationship with Elisha than he really was. It is easy for others to assume that we have a better relationship with God than we really do.

4. (2Ki 5:8-9) Naaman comes to Elisha’s house.

So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.” Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house.

a. **Why have you torn your clothes?** Elisha gave a gentle rebuke to the king of Israel. “This is a crisis to you, because you have no relationship with the God who can heal lepers. But it is a needless crisis, because you *could* have relationship with this God.”

b. **Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel:** Naaman would never

know there was a prophet in Israel by hanging around the royal palace. The true **prophet** in Israel wasn't welcome at the palace.

B. Naaman is healed.

1. ([2Ki 5:10-12](#)) Naaman's anger at Elisha's instructions.

And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean." But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' "Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

a. **Elisha sent a messenger to him:** Naaman took the trouble to come to the home of Elisha, but Elisha refused to give him a personal audience. He simply **sent a messenger**. This was humbling to Naaman, who was accustomed to being honored.

b. **Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean:** These were simple, uncomplicated instructions. Yet as Naaman's reaction demonstrates, these were humbling instructions.

c. **He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy:** Naaman had it all figured out. In his great need, he anticipated a way God would work, and he was offended when God didn't work the way he expected.

d. **He turned and went away in a rage:** Because his expectation of how God *should* work was crushed, Naaman wanted nothing to do with Elisha. If the answer was in washing in a river, Naaman knew there were better rivers in his own land.

2. ([2Ki 5:13](#)) The good advice of Naaman's servants.

And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'"

a. **His servants came near and spoke to him:** Thank God for faithful subordinates who will speak to their superiors in such a way. Naaman was obviously angry, yet they were bold enough to give him the good advice he needed to hear.

b. **If the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it?** The servants of Naaman used a brilliantly logical approach. If Elisha had asked Naaman to sacrifice 100 or 1,000 animals to the God of Israel, Naaman would have done it immediately. Yet because his request was easy to do and humbling, Naaman first refused.

3. ([2Ki 5:14](#)) Naaman is healed.

So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

a. **According to the saying of the man of God:** Naaman did exactly what Elisha told him to do. Therefore we can say that each dunk in the Jordan was a step of faith, trusting in the word of God through His prophet.

i. Wiseman on the ancient Hebrew word translated **dipped**: “Naaman ‘plunged’ in the River Jordan. This signified total obedience to the divine word.”

ii. Spurgeon saw Naaman attacked by two enemies: *Proud Self*, who internally demanded that Elisha come out and see him, and *Evil Questioning*, who questioned why he should wash in the Jordan when he had better rivers back in his homeland. Naaman overcame these two enemies and did what God told him to do.

b. **And his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean**: Naaman’s response of faith was generously rewarded. God answered his faith with complete and miraculous healing.

i. “The simple method of this miracle, performed without the prophet there, did give God the credit. It was obvious that the healing came from Yahweh rather than from the sort of magical incantation that Naaman had anticipated.” (Dilday)

4. ([2Ki 5:15-16](#)) Naaman offers to reward Elisha but the prophet refuses.

And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, “Indeed, now I know that *there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he urged him to take it, but he refused.*

a. **And he returned to the man of God**: This was a fine display of gratitude. Naaman was like the one leper out of the ten Jesus healed who came back to thank Jesus ([Luke 17:12-19](#)). He was also a foreigner, like the one thankful leper of [Luke 17](#).

i. Before, Naaman expected the prophet to come to him. Now he **returned to the man of God and stood before him**.

ii. “It is often the case that those who have least to value themselves on are proud and haughty; whereas the most excellent of the earth are the most humble, knowing that they have nothing but what they have received. Naaman, the *leper*, was more proud and dictatorial than he was when *cleansed* of his leprosy.” (Clarke)

b. **Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel**: It wasn’t just the healing that persuaded Naaman of this. It was the healing connected with the word of the prophet. Together, this was convincing evidence to Naaman that the God Elisha represented was the true **God in all the earth**.

c. **Please take a gift from your servant**: We can say that Naaman only meant well by this gesture. He felt it was appropriate to support the ministry of this man of God whom the Lord had used so greatly to bring healing. However, Elisha steadfastly insisted that he would receive nothing from Naaman.

5. ([2Ki 5:17-19](#)) Naaman’s new faith.

So Naaman said, “Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon; when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing.” Then he said to him, “Go in peace.” So he departed from him a short distance.

a. **Let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth**: Like many new believers, Naaman was superstitious in his faith. He held the common opinion of the ancient world, that particular deities had power over particular places. He thought that if he took a piece of Israel back with him to Syria, he could better worship the God of Israel.

i. “The transporting of holy soil was a widespread custom. Naaman’s faith was yet untaught; and with his personal need to follow publicly the state cults, Elisha may have felt that available Israelite soil may have afforded Naaman with some tangible reminder of his cleansing and new relationship to God.” (Patterson and Austel)

b. **When I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing:** As an official in the government of Syria, Naaman was expected to participate in the worship of the Syrian gods. He asked Elisha for allowance to direct his heart to Yahweh even when he was in the temple of **Rimmon**.

i. “The Hebrew ‘lean on the hand’ does not imply physical support but that he was the king’s ‘right hand man’ (cf. [2 Kings 7:2](#), [17](#)).” (Wiseman)

c. **Go in peace:** By generally approving but not saying specifically “yes” or “no,” it seems that Elisha left the matter up to Naaman and God. Perhaps he trusted that the Lord would personally convict Naaman of this and give him the integrity and strength to avoid idolatry.

i. Some commentators (Clarke and Trapp among them) believe that Naaman asked forgiveness for his *previous* idolatry in the **temple of Rimmon**, instead of asking permission for future occasions. Apparently, the Hebrew will allow for this translation, though it is not the most natural way to understand the text.

ii. Nevertheless, we can certainly agree with Trapp’s application: “Let none by Naaman’s example plead an upright soul in a prostrate body.”