



## *Nurturing Faith... Every Day in Every Way*

November 2, 2014

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost  
Narrative Lectionary

**Matthew 23:1-12**  
**2 Kings 5:1-12**

**Following God's Directions.** *Object:* A box of instant pudding or something similar.

One day last week I wanted a snack. I looked in the cookie jar... empty! I looked in the freezer for some ice cream... nothing there either. I looked everywhere, but all I could find was a box of chocolate instant pudding mix. I'm not much of a cook, so I wasn't sure I could make pudding. I looked at the directions on the box and this is what it said: (1) Beat the pudding mix into 2 cups of cold milk for two minutes. (2) Pour the mixture into small individual serving dishes. The pudding will be ready to eat in 5 minutes.

How simple! You don't even have to cook it. Anyone could do that, couldn't they? Well, I did it and the pudding was delicious. You know, there are many things in life that are really very simple. All we have to do is to learn to follow the directions. In our Bible lesson today, we will hear about a man named Naaman who learned that even serious situations can sometimes have a simple solution.

Naaman was the commander of the army of the King of Syria. Because he had won many battles for his country, Naaman was very powerful and famous. One might think that he had everything a person could want, but he had a very serious problem. Naaman had a disease called leprosy. One day while the Syrian army was raiding Israel, they captured a young girl, and she became a servant to Naaman's wife. The girl was talking to her mistress one day and said to her, "I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy." Naaman's wife told him what the young servant girl had said.

Naaman went to the king and told him what the girl had said. "Go ahead. I will give you a letter to take to the king of Israel. So Naaman left and carried the letter to the king of Israel. It said, "I am sending my servant Naaman to you. Please cure him of his leprosy."

When he read the message, the King became very angry. "Am I a god with power over life and death? Why does the king of Syria send orders for me to heal this man of his disease? What's going on here? That king is trying to pick a fight, that's what!"

When Elisha, the man of God, heard about the king's anger, he sent a message to the king, "Don't be angry. Send the man to me so that I can heal him and he will know that there is a true prophet here in Israel."

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia. Jesus says, I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last. Alleluia (John 15:16)

So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: "Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then you will be healed."

Do you think Naaman was happy? No! He was angry. "I thought the prophet would at least come out here to meet me!" he said. "I expected him to come out here and wave his hand over me and call on the name of the Lord his God to heal me."

Naaman's officers pleaded with him. "Think about it! If he had told you to do some great thing, you would have done it. Why not do what he told you to do? What have you got to lose?" So Naaman went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan River. When he came up out of the water for the seventh time, the leprosy was gone! It was a simple solution to a serious problem, but Naaman almost missed it because he didn't want to follow the directions.

We often face problems in our life. Sometimes we are willing to try almost anything -- anything, that is, except what God's Word tells us to do. God's Word has the solution to all of life's problems, if we will just follow the directions.

Heavenly Father, when we face life's problems, help us to be willing to follow the directions which you have given in your Holy Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## *Word Search Puzzle*

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R I V E R F O A W A S H M B A
B N S F L Q H P L T C V T E K
H L W L E S V L T E D M S D S
A U J K I K R T E W P U W Q B
R R R L U I M P C T O R D S G
Q K E T D N G V Q H T Z O L J
W V D R Z G L A R M Y E K S Z
T S I F D C N C C Y K I R L Y
L P O C O G H A L C U H N H E
W J R L T I R A A E U T L O H
B B O O D O S Q R M A R U R M
E A F R P I R R R I A N E S K
B R C O D H E Y A H O N C E Y
F A A V D A E R X E G T M S N
U M S E V E N T U L L A S O X
  
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ELISHA	VICTORY	LETTER	PROPHET	NAAMAN
ARMY	ARAM	CHARIOTS	CURE	ISRAEL
SOLDIER	KING	LEPROSY	CLEAN	HORSES
SEVEN	HOUSE	RIVER	WASH	JORDAN

# FOLLOWING GOD'S DIRECTIONS

