

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

III. The Latter Era Of The Divided Kingdom, 2 Kings 2:1-27:41

G. Humbling Ourselves Before God For Blessing

(2 Kings 5:1-19)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Personal arrogance abounds in today's world, but it is spiritually unproductive, a fact we can easily illustrate:

(1) George F. Will, generally considered to be a conservative columnist, last year in the Washington Post wrote of President Trump: "(I)t is up to the public to quarantine this presidency by . . . communicating to its elected representatives a steady, rational fear of this man" whom Mr. Will held to be "uniquely unfit to take the nation into military action" due in part to pride. (Evan Osnos, "Is Political Hubris An Illness?" May 5, 2017; new yorker.com)

(2) However, Christian Parenti's article, "The Hubris Of The Clinton Ground Water" (November 20, 2016; huffingtonpost.com) claimed the Democratic Party was equally unproductive due to pride, asserting: "(T)he DNC's arrogance and contempt for the working class produced a flawed political theory, which in turn produced a bad strategy, which in turn produced a tactically inept ground game" that cost them the presidency in the general election.

(3) The business world is afflicted by arrogance, too: "(C)ompanies with overconfident CEOs" could be "costing companies millions" since they are "33 percent more likely to face a class-action lawsuit -- a major, crippling money-suck." (Kelly Kasulis, "CEO hubris costs millions," October 13, 2018; msn.com)

(4) Pride affects religion: the article, "Pope accepts resignation of U. S. cardinal in scandal" (Republican-American, October 13, 2018, p. 4A) told how "Attorney General Josh Shapiro, who oversaw a grand jury report issued in August on rampant sex abuse in six Pennsylvania dioceses" said, "It is unacceptable that then-Bishop Wuerl . . . oversaw and participated in the systematic cover-up that he did when leading the Pittsburgh Diocese and that he is now able to retire seemingly with no consequences for his actions . . . We can't rely on the church to fix itself."

(5) False pride affects many evangelicals: Thom S. Rainer's article, "When Hubris Comes to Church" (August 1, 2011; christianpost.com) claimed, "So-called success in local church ministry often creates a sense of self-sufficiency," the very pride that Christ critiqued of evangelicals in our era in His prophecy in Revelation 3:17.

Need: *So we ask, "If arrogance abounds today and it is spiritually unproductive, what does God direct for us?!"*

- I. **2 Kings 5:1a,b,c,d reveals that Naaman was a great military commander whom even Israel's God had used to give the Arameans ("Syrians" KJV) victory, what would cause Naaman to become a proud man:**
 - A. Naaman was the commander of the army of the Aramean king who held him in high regard due to Naaman's victories that **Israel's** God, "Jahweh," (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 564) had granted him, 2 Kings 5:1a,b,c.
 - B. In addition, Naaman was a "valiant soldier" in his own personal life as a combat warrior, 2 Kings 5:1d.
- II. **However, Naaman was a leper, what threatened his position and long-term effectiveness, 2 Kings 5:1e.**
- III. **Though Israel had many lepers in Naaman's day, GOD knew that unlike Israel's lepers, Naaman would believe in Him (Luke 4:27) were he to face many HUMBLING events, so the Lord LET Naaman contract leprosy and face many other HUMBLING events that he might come to trust in the Lord, 2 Kings 5:2-16:**
 - A. God used Naaman's **little** Hebrew servant girl to inform him of a prophet in Israel who could heal him, v. 2-3.
 - B. God sent Naaman to find Elisha whom he and his king considered to be an **insignificant** prophet, v. 4-8:
 1. In the Ancient Near East, the king was considered the channel of blessing, Z. P. E. B., v. Four, p. 346.
 2. Thus, though Naaman's servant girl told him of God's prophet who could heal him, Naaman's king saw Elisha as **inferior** to Israel's king Joram, so he wrote a letter asking Joram to heal Naaman! (2 Kings 5:4-6)
 3. Joram thought the Aramean king was trying to create a war by expecting him to heal Naaman, so when Elisha heard of the incident, he offer to help were Joram to send Naaman to him, 2 Kings 5:7-8!
 - C. God had Elisha treat the Aramean commander Naaman as his **inferior**, infuriating him, 2 Kings 5:9-10a, 11:
 1. When Naaman arrived at Elisha's house, he stood in his chariot, waiting for Elisha to come out to see him since Naaman considered himself to be Elisha's social superior, 2 Kings 5:9; Ibid.
 2. Naaman later complained about Elisha's sending out his servant to tell him what to do to be healed as if Elisha were the social superior to Naaman: the phrase "to me" that Naaman used in 2 Kings 5:11 is in the emphatic position, and he employed the regular verb "come out" along with its infinitive absolute "to come out" that reads literally in the Hebrew Bible, "to me he would come out to come out." We translate this sentence as: "**Surely** he would come out to me . . .", 2 Kings 5:11; Ibid.; Ibid., Kittel, p. 564-565.

- D. Elisha told Naaman to dip in a river that he felt was **inferior** to his own nation's rivers, v. 10b, 12: Naaman fumed over Elisha's call to use Israel's muddy Jordan where the Abana (today's Barada) and the Pharpar (today's Awaj) were both "clear streams," 2 Kings 5:10b, 12; Ryrie St. B., KJV, 1978, fn. to 2 Kings 5:12.
 - E. God had Elisha tell Naaman to perform the **little** task of dipping himself seven times in the river, v. 10c, 13b: even Naaman's servants noted that dipping in the Jordan would be a simple, small task, 2 Kings 5:13b.
 - F. God used Naaman's **inferior** servants to plead with him to obey Elisha's directive, 2 Kings 5:13a.
 - G. When Naaman in faith obeyed God's order, God restored Naaman's skin to that of a **little** child, 2 Kings 5:14.
 - H. An appreciative Naaman and his whole company then acted as Elisha's **inferiors** by getting off of their horses and going into Elisha's house to stand before the prophet there, 2 Kings 5:15a!
 - I. Naaman then testified that all the pagan gods were infinitely **inferior** to Israel's God! (2 Kings 5:15b)
 - J. Elisha refused to accept Naaman's effort to pay him for his healing, for Elisha indicated **God** had *graciously* healed Naaman as Elisha was merely God's **inferior** servant, v. 15c-16; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 548.
- IV. When Naaman then sought to honor God, Elisha directed that he do so with God's blessing, v. 17-19:**
- A. Naaman asked Elisha if he might take two mule's worth of dirt from Israel to use in building an altar in his country of Aramea to honor only Israel's God, 2 Kings 5:17. Pagan polytheists thought one could not properly worship a god accept in that god's own territory or by use of earth as an altar from that god's territory (Ibid.), so Naaman, fresh out of paganism, wanted to honor Israel's Lord as best as he understood how to do so!
 - B. In addition, since Naaman was required to assist his king when he worshiped in his pagan god's temple, Naaman asked for clearance from God to fulfill his role with his king without displeasing the Lord, v. 18.
 - C. Elisha knew that Naaman was fresh out of paganism and ignorant of the Mosaic Law but that his motive as a new convert was pure, so he approved of Naaman's requests, telling him to go in peace, 2 Kings 5:19.

Lesson: *Through means of multiple events, God directed Naaman HUMBLY to TRUST in HIM for healing from leprosy, and when he DID so, he was greatly blessed and became a devout follower of Israel's Lord!*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, John 3:16. (2) May we like Naaman humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God to enjoy His blessing in our lives, cf. 1 Peter 5:6.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

One of the more recent additions to the introductory "address" that we give each Sunday morning has been a reference to the Biblical **role of women** in how they are to relate to men in the Lord.

However, that addition led to concerns from the congregation as it affects our pride! Allow me to explain:

(1) It largely began with the introduction of Marxism into America over the last several generations: two of the "Communist Manifesto" goals are the abolition of the family (p. 87) and of morality (p. 92) (learn-usa.com, "Goals, 'Communist Manifesto'"), so Marxists promoted immorality in Hollywood, leading to a lot of pornography that in turn led many men to view women as mainly objects of lust and abuse. That in turn produced feminism. Consequently, some men abuse women, some women are insubordinate to men and many men and women become defensive and irate if they think they are being critiqued on their respective behaviors toward the opposite gender.

(2) Applied to us, when I began to speak in our Sunday Morning introductory "address" on the Biblical roles of **only women**, I understandably received some objections, namely, (a) that I might be demeaning women who work outside the home to help their family with its income needs, (b) that I might be undermining a mother's teaching her sons as she might think she should not teach any male and (c) that I might appear to be biased against women by lacking balance in addressing only the Biblical role of women without also mentioning the role of men!

(3) In response, I wish to apply this sermon to reply to these concerns in a spirit of humility: (a) each Sunday in our address, we claim that women should make homemaking their "**primary focus**," **NOT** that they cannot work outside the home: though Proverbs 31:10-31 shows the "virtuous woman" is primarily a homemaker, she also buys a field to plant a vineyard in a business venture! (b) On mothers teaching their sons, 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits women from teaching **adult** men (*aner*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 722; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 65-66), **not** that mothers cannot teach their sons. Indeed, Ephesians 6:1 calls sons to submit to both parents! (c) On the concern about mentioning the role of men along with that of women in our Sunday morning address, since that concern is Biblical (Ephesians 5:22-33), we **now heed** it, and mention **both** the role of **women and** that of **men**.

Our goal is to teach the proper Biblical roles of women AND men toward combating Marxist apostasy and providing nurture, healing and discipling in the body in an ATTITUDE of HUMILITY before the LORD. May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we humble ourselves before the Lord for His rich blessing.