

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Spring is finally in full swing. Trees are sprouting, tulips are blooming and lawn is turning green. Like most people do, I spread some lawn fertilizer at the end of every winter. It contains a pre-emergent weed-killer to control the growth of wild grass. Those tiny granules will gradually dissolve in the soil and the chemical will do its work. I cannot see the reactions under the ground. What I can observe from the surface is the end-result. After spending twenty dollars or so, I can get a better-looking yard. Similarly, we do not see God's work inside a person. But the effects should be quite evident. A saved soul will be visible in a changed person. Today we will continue our study on the stories about prophet Elisha. In particular, God performed a miracle through Elisha to heal a Gentile named Naaman. He was an army commander from Aram. He sought help from Elisha to cure his skin disease. God ministered His grace on Naaman. His health was restored. More importantly, Naaman also acknowledged Jehovah as the only God.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 病患 Ailment

First, we look at the ailment Naaman had. We will read **verse 1 to 7**. Naaman had a successful life people envied about. He rose to a high position in the army. He was trusted by the king. The author states that it was God who enabled Naaman to enjoy all those privileges. God is sovereign over every kingdom and person. He orchestrates the world history and our personal experience to accomplish His will. In 1 Kings 19, God gave prophet Elijah the last assignments to crown the next kings for Aram and Israel. In the Old Testament, God also calls Babylon "my servant." God is the Mastermind behind everything under the sun. Therefore, nothing happens in vain. Do not feel despair when you encounter a defeat or when you see chaos in the world. God has not completed His plan just yet. Put your faith in Him! Despite all his accomplishments, Naaman had an incurable disease. In the Bible, leprosy can be any kind of skin disorder. Some were contagious and even lethal. In Naaman's case, it seemed that the illness did not interfere his work. This world glorifies the rich and famous. They enjoy pleasure and material possessions. However, they are not immune to problems that are common to other people. It can be physical sickness, mental conditions or relational conflict. Some issues can be the results of their lifestyle. But there are troubles that money and power cannot solve. Naaman was in such a situation. It so happened that Naaman had a slave girl captured from Israel who was now serving his wife. This young lady suggested Naaman to consult a prophet in Israel. She was talking about the one true prophet, namely Elisha. She was confident that the prophet could heal Naaman. This maid showed genuine care to her master in a foreign country. She could have harbored bitterness in her heart, thinking that Naaman deserved what he got. Instead, she suggested a remedy for her new boss. Her attitude was the same as Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon. They remained

faithful to pagan kings. They bore beautiful witnesses for God in a foreign nation. You can complain all day that your supervisor is too harsh on you, or your neighbors treat you with prejudice because of your skin color. But it does not mean that you should be rude to them. Paul teaches us in **Romans 12:21** – Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Ask God for opportunities to show kindness to people who may not accept you. It can be as simple as greeting them with a smile or lending them a helping hand. What this woman did was basic evangelism. She referred someone who needed help to a person who could provide help. The first step is to show compassion. By consulting Elisha, Naaman would subsequently come to know the God Elisha served. Naaman believed in the words of the maid. There might be no other option anyway. Why not give it a try? Naaman thus brought his request to the Aram king. Ben-Hadad gladly sent Naaman to Israel. He wrote a letter to the Israel king Joram, assuming that prophets were royal officials. But in fact, Elisha worked for God to give spiritual counsel to the kings. Naaman also brought some generous gifts with him. The footnote in my Bible says the total amounts to 750 pounds of silver and 150 pounds of gold. Despite Naaman's friendly gesture, Joram reacted with paranoid. He torn his robe, which is an expression of grief. It was impossible for him to find a treatment for leprosy. Joram thought Aram was finding an excuse for an attack. Actually, Joram said it right: "Am I God?" When the idols he worshipped all failed, he should turn to Jehovah. Naaman was seeking a physical healing. But God intended to give him a spiritual healing too. Admitting one's deficiency is the first step to receive God's blessing. Difficulties will humble a person. It is when nothing seems to work, then he/she will say: "I'll do whatever necessary to find a solution." There are many people similar to Naaman around us. Their problems can be an entry point to the need of their souls. Lead them to Jesus. He is our ultimate help.

## 2. 醫治 Treatment

Naaman suffered from an incurable ailment. He followed the advice of his maid to look for a treatment in Israel. Let us continue to read **verse 8 to 14**. Elisha heard about Joram's reaction. He told the king: "No worry. Send Naaman my way." The prophet says in verse 8 that by healing Naaman "he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." In other words, Naaman would know there was a true God. Naaman then went to see Elisha. The prophet conveyed an instruction through a messenger: "Go wash seven times in the Jordan river and you will be well." Naaman was mad on hearing that. There were three possible reasons for his response. First, Elisha did not welcome a high official in-person. Second, Naaman had expected Elisha to perform a religious ritual. Third, if washing was all it took, then Naaman did not have to travel a long journey. Naaman's servants appeared to be wiser. They reasoned that Naaman would have complied if Elisha gave him more complicated advice. There was only one way to verify whether or not Elisha's prescription would work. Naaman followed the advice and verse 14 describes that his skin "became clean like that of a young boy" afterward. The healing power is from God and not from the water. Therefore, do not think that the water from the Jordan river can take away any pimple or wrinkle! The test to Naaman was obedience, since washing seven times looked silly. A person is blessed when he/she submits to God's Word. Very often, God does not even explain to us why it works. Those who receive God's salvation grace become His children. Admit that you are a sinner, believe that

Jesus died for your sin on the cross, commit your life to Him and make Him your Savior and Lord, then you will be saved. It works because God says so. Naaman received the treatment he was seeking after. Being an upright person, he fulfilled his promise. He told Elisha in **verse 15**: ... “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant.” Here, we see the first sign of his salvation. Naaman acknowledged Jehovah as the one true God. Naaman wanted to show his appreciation. But Elisha declined the offer. Elisha did not want to take credit for Naaman’s recovery. Naaman then made a few requests. Please continue to read **verse 17 to 18**. Did Naaman ask for a souvenir? I need to make a confession that many years ago I took some sand home when I visited a national park. The tour guide says explicitly that it is against the law to do so. Please do not follow my bad example. Naaman did something quite common in the ancient world. He took some “holy dirt” either to build an altar or to kneel on it when he prayed to symbolize that his heart was in Israel. What Naaman said next about offering was consistent with the idea. Here we see a second sign of his conversion. From now on he would only worship Jehovah. When we believe that Jesus is the only true God, then we must throw away the idols we worshipped in the past. It can be a false god, or the pursuit of fame and fortune. The third indication that Naaman had become a true believer is in verse 18. He asked Jehovah for forgiveness for bowing down to Rimmon, a major idol in Aram. Naaman had to worship in a pagan temple with the king as part of his job duties. It is like government officials burning incense in a Buddhist temple when they visit certain towns. It is to show respect to the local people and their religious culture. Elisha gave permission to Naaman’s request. Did Elisha encourage Naaman to compromise his new-found faith? We need to understand that Naaman might be the only worshipper of Jehovah in his country. Due to his rank, he could only worship Jehovah privately. Elisha did not want to put any extra guilt on Naaman. When his faith grew stronger, he might be able to wisely ask the king for an exception like Daniel did in Babylon.

### 3. 審判 Judgment

Naaman was cured of his ailment. Better still, he acquired a spiritual treatment for his soul. The story could have concluded here with a happy ending. However, a servant of Elisha committed sins. He received a judgment from God as a result. Let us read **verse 20 to 23**. Gehazi succumbed to the temptation of greed. He would not let go of this opportunity to get rich. He quickly chased after Naaman. This official got off his chariot, thinking that perhaps Gehazi had an important message for him. Again, we see the humility of this changed man. An army commander stepped down from his carriage to meet with a servant. It was bad enough for Gehazi to covet after money and material possessions. He lied that it was his master’s idea to ask for some gifts for two disciples. Naaman gladly doubled up Gehazi’s request. Two talents would be about 150 pounds, which is the average weight of an adult. That was a lot of money for a servant of a prophet. Two assistants of Gehazi helped carry the money back home. Also, most people now have extra wardrobes in the closet. Back then, new clothes meant a lot to the poorer people. We can imagine that Gehazi would be very happy by now. He hid away his treasure, thinking that no one knew about his crafty scheme. But God would not let his sins slip away unpunished. Please continue to read **verse 25 to 27**.

Sin is always ugly. Gehazi had to tell another lie to cover his first lie. Sin must be revealed before it can be dealt with. It is either a confession or a confrontation. God gave Elisha the special knowledge about Gehazi's sin. It would ruin the reputation of Elisha. Naaman believed that it was Elisha who asked for those gifts. Elisha explained that it was not the time to seek after personal gain. The kingdom of Israel indulged in idol worship. False gods operate by granting your wish in exchange for something you offer. But Jehovah cannot be manipulated by such a bribery system. He freely bestows grace to His children, and He demands a whole-hearted devotion and obedience. Naaman's concept of God had to undergo a revolutionary change. As such, Gehazi became a stumbling block to a new follower of Jehovah. In this instance, God's judgment on Gehazi would be extended to his future generations. In the Old Testament, leprosy was considered a form of uncleanness. The concern is not only about spreading of the disease. Patients became ceremonially unclean to worship God. At the end, Naaman received God's grace whereas Gehazi suffered disgrace. God cares about His glory. The non-believing world may not recognize the good work we do. But people will associate our sins with our belief. A private sin can become a public spectacle. It will bring shame to God. May the Lord always remind us to live in the awesome fear of His presence. Integrity is the character that drives us to do what God sees as right even when no one is watching. The apostle Paul was a noble person. He testified to some church leaders in [Acts 20:33-34](#) – 33 "I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions." Interestingly enough, silver and clothing are also mentioned here. Paul did not ask anyone for anything when he preached the gospel. He did not even launch a fund-raising among believers. Instead, he used his expertise in tent-making to support himself. Nowadays, it is not unusual for pastors of smaller churches to work on part-time jobs when the churches cannot afford a decent salary. I am always thankful to the Lord for His provision. I do not need to fry hamburgers or clean office buildings in the evening to make up for what is lacking. God's grace is sufficient.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

A saved soul will be visible in a changed person. Naaman, an idol worshipper, was now a God-follower. He was supposed to be an enemy of Israel. The faith of a foreigner in God is a stark contrast to the rebellion of God's people. The disbelief of God passed down like a genetic disease to this day. Knowledge about God cannot save a person. One must commit his/her life to Jesus and receive Him as Savior and Lord. God's grace can come upon anyone just like He blessed Naaman. Regardless of nationality or social status, any person can be saved by responding God's grace by faith. Those who do not know Jesus needs to receive God's grace. Those who know Him needs to share God's grace.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

春天已經到了。樹木長出新芽、鬱金香在盛開、草坪早已變綠。像大多數人一樣，我在每個冬天結束後會撒一些草坪的肥料。它包含一種除草劑，可以控制野草的生長。這些細小顆粒將逐漸溶解在土壤中，其中的農藥便發揮作用。我看不到地底下的化學反應。我只能從地面看到最終的結果。花了二十美元左右，我就能得到一片比較好看的草坪。同樣，我們看不到神在一個人心中的工作，但是最終的結果是明顯的。一個得救的靈魂會反映在改變的生命中。今天，我們將繼續學習關於先知以利沙的故事。神通過以利沙施行神蹟，醫治了一個名叫乃縵的外邦人。他是亞蘭國的元帥。他尋求以利沙的幫助來治療他的皮膚病。神賜下恩典，使乃縵康復了。更重要的是，乃縵也承認耶和華是唯一的真神。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 病患 Ailment

首先，我們看一下乃縵的病患。我們將閱讀第 1 至 7 節。乃縵很有成就，令人羨慕。他在軍隊中擔任重要職務。他受到王的信任。但是作者指出，是神使乃縵享有這些特權。神的主權超越任何人和國度。神藉著世界歷史和我們的個人經歷，成就祂的旨意。例如在列王紀上 19 中章，神給先知以利亞最後的任務，要他立亞蘭和以色列的下一位君王。在舊約中，神還稱巴比倫為「我的僕人」。神策劃日光之下所有事情。因此，沒有任何事情是無緣無故發生的。當你遇到失敗或看見世界上的混亂時，不要感到絕望。神還沒有完成祂的計劃。相信祂！儘管乃縵甚有成就，但是他患有不治之症。在聖經中，大麻風包括各種不同的皮膚病。一些是有傳染性，甚至致命。就乃縵而言，他的疾病似乎並沒有影響他的工作。這個世界抬舉有財有勢的人。他們享受快樂、物質和財富。但是，他們並不能倖免於其他人會遇到相同的問題。可能是身體疾病、精神病患或是人際關係的衝突。一些問題可能是他們生活型態的結果。但是金錢和權力無法解決一切的麻煩。乃縵正處於這種情況。碰巧的是，乃縵有一個被俘虜的以色列女孩，她現在正好服事乃縵的妻子。這個女孩建議乃縵去見以色列的先知。她所指的是真正的先知以利沙。她相信以利沙可以醫治他。這位女僕真誠地關心一個異國的主人。她大可以

在心中懷著苦毒，覺得乃縵是活該的。但是她卻向她的新老闆提供建議。她的心態與在埃及的約瑟和巴比倫的但以理相同。他們仍然忠於異邦的君王。他們在外國為神活出了美好的見證。你可以整天抱怨你的主管對你太苛刻，或是你的鄰居因為你的膚色而對你有偏見。但這並不意味著你應該對他們漠不關心。保羅在羅馬書 12:21 中教導我們 - **你不可為惡所勝，反要以善勝惡**。祈求神給你機會向那些對你並不友好的人表達恩慈。最簡單的方法是向他們打個招呼或向他們伸出援助之手。這個女孩所做的其實是基本傳福音的步驟。她將有需要的人推薦給可以提供幫助的人。第一步是要表達同情心。通過向以利沙求助，乃縵隨後認識了真神。乃縵相信女僕的話。反正也沒有其他選擇，為什麼不試試看呢？乃縵就這樣將他的要求告訴亞蘭王。便哈達很樂意地將乃縵送到以色列。他寫信給以色列王約蘭，因為他以為先知是朝廷的官員。但實際上，以利沙是為神服務的，並向君王提供屬靈的指導。乃縵帶著大批禮物。我的聖經中的附註說總共有 750 磅的銀和 150 磅的金。儘管乃縵表現出友好的態度，但是約蘭還是很害怕。他撕裂了衣服，這是難過的表現。他不可能找到醫治大麻風的方法。約蘭認為亞蘭正在找藉口要攻打以色列。其實他說得很對：「我豈是神？」當他崇拜的偶像全部都不管用時，他應該求助於耶和華。乃縵正在尋求身體上的醫治，但是神打算連靈裡的醫治也要賜給他。承認自己的不足是獲得神的祝福的第一步。困難會使人謙卑下來。當一個人遇到困境的時候，他會說：「只要能解決困難，我什麼都願意做。」我們周圍有很多像乃縵的人。他們的問題可能使他們察覺到靈魂的需要。帶領他們來到耶穌面前。唯有耶穌才是我們的最終幫助。

## 2. 醫治 Treatment

乃縵患了不治之症。他聽從女僕人的建議去以色列尋求醫治。讓我們繼續閱讀**第 8 至 14 節**。以利沙知道約蘭的反應。他告訴王：「不用擔心。請乃縵來我家吧。」先知在第 8 節中說，通過醫治乃縵，「他就知道以色列中有先知了。」換句話說，乃縵便知道有一位真神了。乃縵然後去見以利沙。先知通過一位僕人傳達指示：「去約旦河洗七遍，你就會好起來的。」乃縵聽到之後很生氣。他的反應可能有三個原因。首先，以利沙沒有親自出來迎接高官。其次，乃縵期望以利沙會進行某些宗教儀式。第三，如果只需要沐浴的話，那麼乃縵就不必長途跋涉。乃縵的僕人們顯得更有智慧。他們認為，如果以利沙給他更複雜的建議，乃縵一定也願意照著做。只有一種方法可以驗證以利沙的建議是否有效。乃縵遵循了指示，第 14 節描述「他的肉復原，好像小孩子的肉」。醫治的能力是來自神，而不是水。因此，不要以為約旦

河的水可以去掉青春豆或皺紋！對乃縵的考驗是順服，因為洗七次看起來很傻。順服神的話語才會得到祂的祝福。很多時候，神甚至沒有向我們解釋背後的原因。例如接受神救恩的人便成為祂的兒女。承認你是一個罪人，相信耶穌為你的罪死在十字架上，將你的生命交託給他，接受祂成為你的救主和生命的主，你便得救。這樣做是有效的，因為神如此說。乃縵得到了醫治。他是個正直的人，因此他實現了他的諾言。他在第 15 節中對以利沙說：…

「如今我知道，除了以色列之外，普天下沒有神。現在求你收點僕人的禮物。」在這裡，我們看到了他得救的第一個跡象。乃縵承認耶和華是獨一的真神。乃縵想表達他的感激，但是以利沙拒絕了他的禮物。以利沙不希望乃縵把功勞歸給他。乃縵然後提出了一些要求。請繼續閱讀第 17 至 18 節。乃縵是否要帶一些紀念品回家？在這裡我需要懺悔，很多年前，我參觀一個國家公園時，我把一些沙子帶回家。旅遊指南上明確表示，這樣做是違法的。請不要學我的壞榜樣。乃縵做的事情在古代世界是很普遍的。他拿一些「聖土」回家可能是要建一個祭壇或是跪在上面禱告，象徵他的心是在以色列。這和接下來乃縵談到獻祭是相關的。在這裡，我們看到了他得救的第二個跡象。從現在開始，他只會敬拜耶和華。當我們相信耶穌是唯一的真神時，我們就必須拋棄過去崇拜的偶像。可能是假神，也可能是對名利的追求。乃縵已經成為真正信徒的第三個跡象是在第 18 節。乃縵因為工作的緣故，必須與王一起在異教的寺廟裡敬拜。就像現在一些政府官員在訪問某些城鎮時在寺廟中燒香一樣。這是為了表達對當地人民及其宗教文化的尊重。以利沙允許了乃縵的要求。以利沙是否鼓勵乃縵在信仰上妥協？我們需要了解，乃縵可能是在他的國家中唯一敬拜耶和華的人。由於他的官階，他只能私底下敬拜耶和華。以利沙不想增加乃縵的罪惡感。當他的信心更堅定時，他也許可以有智慧地向王要求特例，就像但以理在巴比倫一樣。

### 3. 審判 Judgment

乃縵的病患得到了醫治。更美好的是，他的靈魂同時也得到了醫治。這個故事在這裡可以有一個圓滿的結局。但是，以利沙的僕人犯了罪。結果他得到了神的審判。讓我們讀第 20 至 23 節。基哈西降服於貪婪的試探。他不想放過這個發財的機會。他馬上追趕乃縵。這位軍官下了馬車，以為基哈西要告訴他什麼重要的信息。再一次，我們看到了神改變了這個人。一名元帥從馬車上下來與一個僕人見面。基哈西追求金錢和物質已經夠糟糕了。他還撒謊說，是主人的主意想為兩個門徒要一些禮物。乃縵很樂意地將基哈西所要求的加倍。二他連得大約 150 磅，大概是一個成年人的平均體重。對於一個先

知的僕人來說，這是很多的錢。基哈西的兩名助手幫助把錢帶回家了。另外，現在大多數人的衣櫃裡都有多餘的衣服。在那時，新衣服對窮人是珍貴的東西。我們可以想像基哈西現在應該很高興。他把財物藏起來，以為沒人知道他的狡猾計劃。但是神不會讓他的罪就這樣溜走。請繼續閱讀第 25 至 27 節。罪總是醜陋的。基哈西不得不講另一個謊言以掩蓋他的第一個謊言。罪必須先被揭露，然後才能被對付。要不然是自己承認，要不然是被別人指出。神向以利沙啟示基哈西的罪。這個罪會損壞以利沙的名聲。乃縵會以為是以利沙要那些禮物。以利沙解釋說，現在不是追求個人利益的時候。以色列王陷在偶像敬拜中。假神通過達成你的願望來交換你所供獻的東西。但是耶和華不會被這種賄賂的方式操縱。祂自由地將恩典賜給祂的兒女，同時祂要求人們全心全意的委身和順服。乃縵對於神的觀念必須有革命性的改變。因此，基哈西成為這位新的信徒的絆腳石。在這個事件中，神對基哈西的審判將延伸到他的後代。在舊約中，大麻風被視為是不潔淨。重點不僅是疾病的傳播。患者在禮儀上變得不潔，無法敬拜神。最終，乃縵得到了神的恩典，而基哈西受了羞辱。神在乎祂的榮耀。不信的世界可能忽略我們的善行。但是人們會將我們的罪與我們的信仰聯繫起來。私底下的罪可以變成公眾的話題，並使神蒙羞。願主常常提醒我們活在祂同在的敬畏中。正直的品格驅使我們去做神看為正確的事，即使沒有人在看。使徒保羅是一個品格高尚的人。他在使徒行傳 20:33-34 中向一些教會領袖作見證：33「我未曾貪圖一個人的金、銀、衣服。我這兩隻手常供給我和同人的需用，這是你們自己知道的。」有趣的是，這裡也提到了銀子和衣服。保羅在傳福音時沒有向任何人尋求經濟支助。他甚至沒有在信徒之間發起募捐活動。相反，他利用自己織做帳篷的技術來養活自己。如今，有不少小型教會付不起牧師的全額薪水。因此牧師要做兼差來幫補家用。我總是感謝主的供應。我不需要在晚上煎漢堡或打掃辦公樓來補足收入。神的恩典總是充足的。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

一個得救的靈魂會反映在改變的生命中。偶像崇拜者乃縵現在是神的追隨者。他本來是以色列的敵人。一個外邦人對神的信心與神百姓的背逆形成了鮮明的對比。直到今天，對神的不相信像遺傳病一樣傳給每個人。關於神的知識不能拯救任何人。一個人必須將自己的生命交託給耶穌，並接受祂成為救主和生命的主。神的恩典可以臨到任何人身上，就像他祝福乃縵一樣。不論國籍或社會地位，通過信心回應神的恩典，任何人都可以得救。那些不認識耶穌的人需要接受神的恩典。那些認識耶穌的人需要分享神的恩典。