

## 2 Kings 5

Verses 1-4

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man in the view of his master, and eminent, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, *but* afflicted with leprosy. <sup>2</sup> Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife. <sup>3</sup> And she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy." <sup>4</sup> And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "The girl who is from the land of Israel spoke such and such."

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man in the view of his master, and eminent, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram.

See map 505

Aram (Syria)



The timeframe for this story is around 850 BC.

See timeline 510

### 2nd Kings timeline Part 1

Ch.	Event	Other	Year
3	Jehoram (Joram) king of Israel	9n	852
3	Joram destroys the memorial stone of Baal		
3	Moab rebels		
4	Water from Edom	m4	
4	The widows olive oil	m5	
4	Son of rich woman brought back to life	m6	A
4	Bad stew made good	m7	period
4	Feeding of 100 people	m8	of
5	Naaman healed of Leprosy	m9	4 years
6	An ax head floats	m10	
6	Army struck with blindness	m11	
6	Famine in Samaria		
7	Arameans hear sound of a great army	m12	
7	Famine ends	m13	
7	Unbelieving Officer gets trampled	m14	848

The king of Syria during this time was Hadadezer (Ben Hadad II)

See pic 515      Kings of Syria

### Kings of Syria

King	Reign
Ben-Hadad I	885-865 BC
Hadadezer (Ben Hadad II)	865 - 842 BC
Hazael	842–805 or 796 BC
Ben-Hadad III	796 to 792 BC
Rezin	754 BC–732 BC

**<sup>2</sup> Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife.**

It was a common practice for the victor of war to take woman and children captive. Some became their servants while others were taken as wives.

**<sup>3</sup> And she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy."**

It's interesting that this young girl knew about Elisha and his reputation for doing miracles since he had only been doing miracles for about two years prior to this event. This tells us that there must have been regular communication getting to Syria from Samaria.

**<sup>4</sup> And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "The girl who is from the land of Israel spoke such and such."**

This good news traveled from a young slave girl to her mistress, to her husband Naaman and then to the king of Syria.

Verses 5-7

**<sup>5</sup> Then the king of Aram 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 clothes. <sup>6</sup> And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, "And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, so that you may cure him of his leprosy." <sup>7</sup> But when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to keep alive, that this man is sending *word* to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me."**

**<sup>5</sup> Then the king of Aram 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 clothes.**

This gift was intended for the prophet Elisha but he was not the kind of prophet that was looking for a reward.

**<sup>6</sup> And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, “And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, so that you may cure him of his leprosy.”**

The King of Aram sent a letter to the King of Israel explaining why his commander of the army had come to Israel least there be any undo concern.

**<sup>7</sup> But when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to keep alive, that this man is sending *word* to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me.”**

In chapter 3 Jehoram thought God had set a trap for the three kings (himself, Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom) and that they were all about to die at the hands of Moab. Now he thinks that the King of Syria is looking to destroy him. Perhaps he needs a few sessions with Tony Robbins. ☺

However, it was not totally unreasonable for him to think this way. In the very next chapter Benhadad will attack Israel.

See 2 Kings 6:8

**<sup>8</sup> Now the king of Aram was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, “In such and such a place shall be my camp.”**

Knowing when to trust a nation and knowing when not to trust a nation, can be precarious and dangerous at best.

Verse 8

**<sup>8</sup> Now it happened, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent *word* to the king, saying, “Why did you tear your clothes? Just have him come to me, and he shall learn that there is a prophet in Israel.”**

Elisha wanted the king to know that he had over reacted to the letter from the king of Aram and there was no reason to do so. His reaction indicated that Jehoram did not recognize or refused to acknowledge that Elisha was the preeminent prophet of Israel. He should have understood that the King of Aram did not expect the king to do the healing but rather that he should know who the prophet of his land was and send Naaman to this prophet.

Verses 9 - 12

<sup>9</sup> So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the doorway of Elisha's house <sup>10</sup> And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and *you will* be clean." <sup>11</sup> But Naaman was furious and went away, and he said, "Behold, I thought, 'He will certainly come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the site and cure the leprosy.'" <sup>12</sup> Are Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, not 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.

<sup>9</sup> So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the doorway of Elisha's house <sup>10</sup> And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and *you will* be clean." <sup>11</sup> But Naaman was furious and went away, and he said, "Behold, I thought, 'He will certainly come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the site and cure the leprosy.'"

Naaman felt slighted that Elisha did not come to the door and address him personally. He also wanted his healing to take place right then and there but Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan River which was a good distance away (30 miles).

See map 520

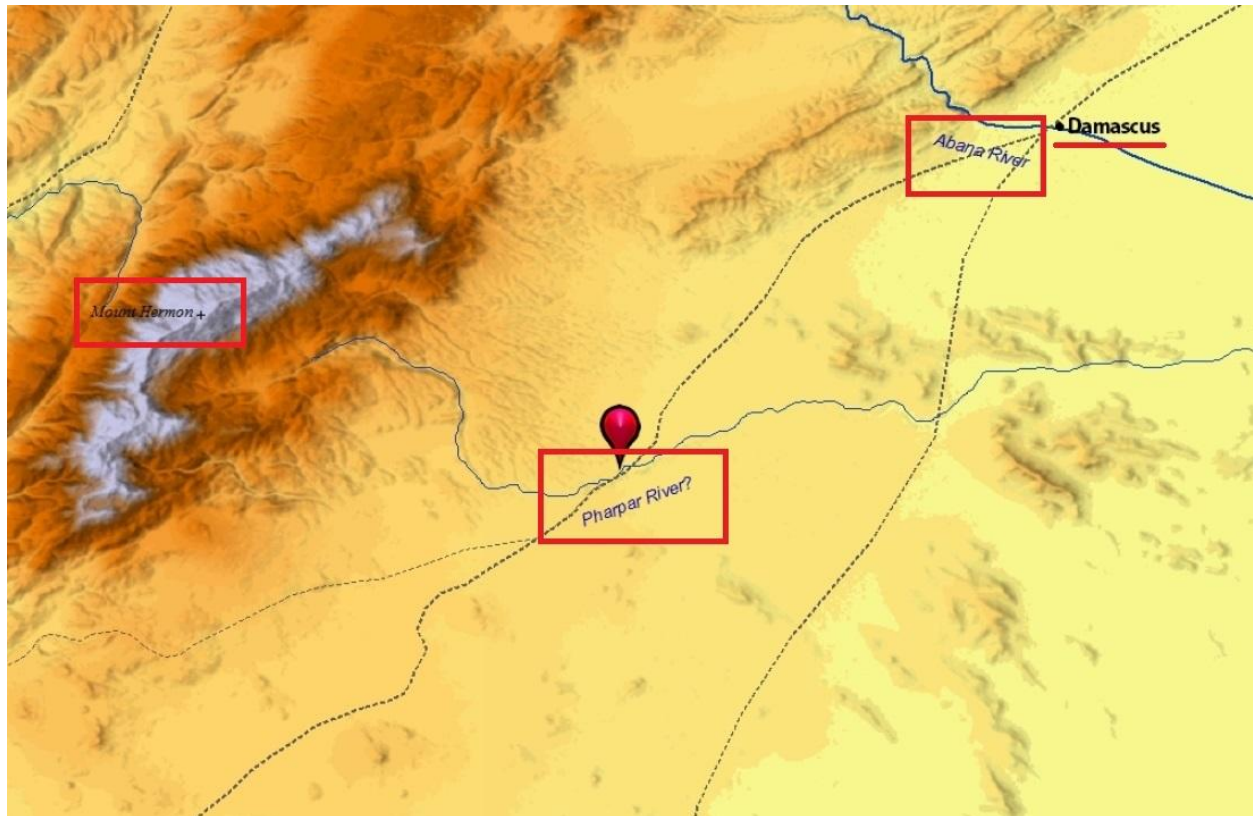




**<sup>12</sup> Are Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, not better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.**

Naaman also complains that if he had to wash himself in a river it should be one that was in his own country. For a man that has been promised to be healed of his leprosy what exactly has put him in such a “rage”? Perhaps his self-important ego!

See Pic 525

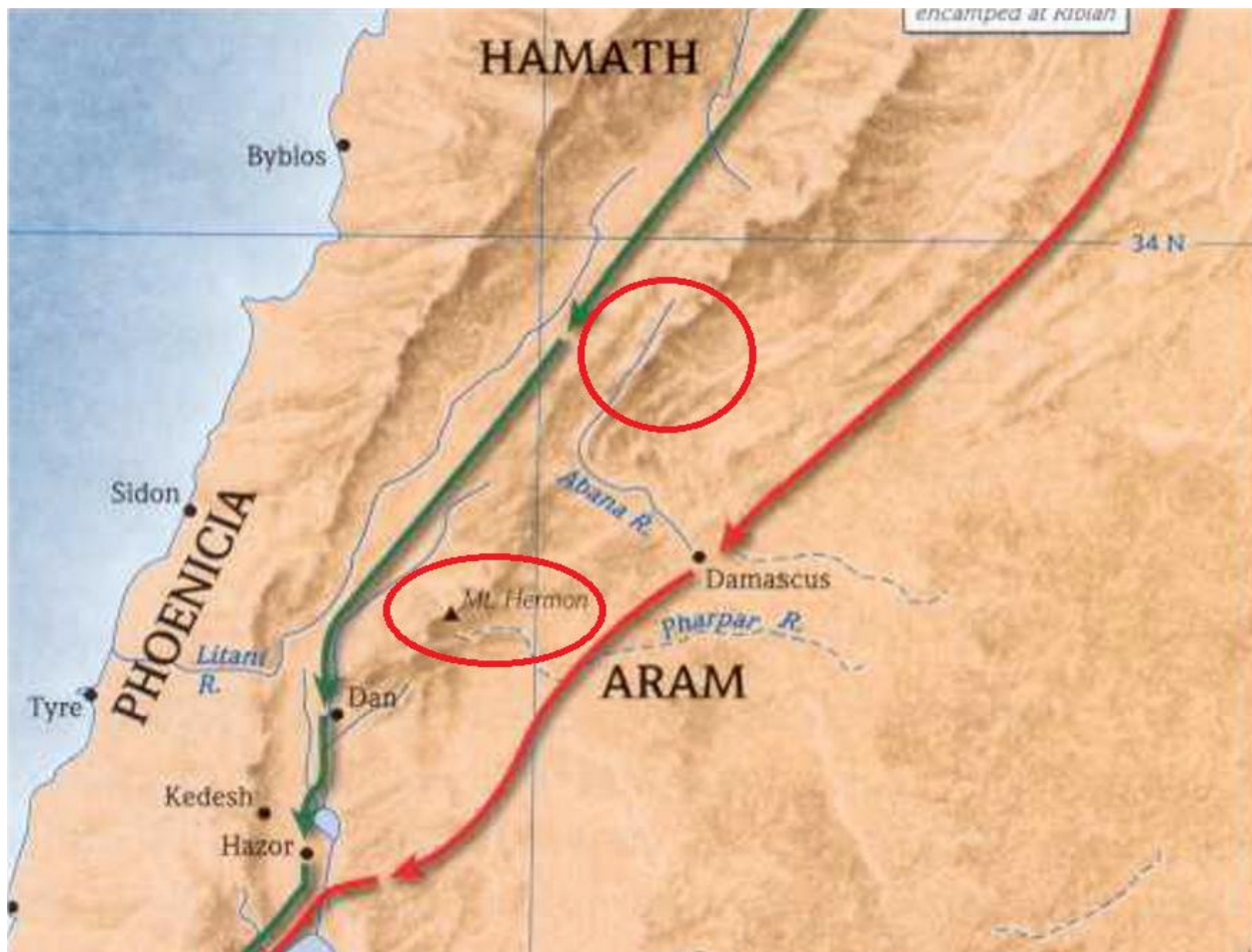


His complaint that these two rivers were somehow better than the Jordan doesn't hold much water. No pun intended. ☺

The Jordan River and the Pharpar River are both feed by the melting snow of Mount Hermon (pictured above). So how can the Pharpar River be better than the Jordan River?

The Abanah River is feed by the same mountain range as the Pharpar River. The only difference being that the waters of the Abanah River begin a little farther north than Mount Hermon. So again, how is it better? Sometimes when a person feels like they have been treated with disrespect they then find issues to complain about that have no relevance to the issue at hand.

See map 530



Verses 13 - 14

<sup>13</sup> Then his servants approached and spoke to him, saying, “My father, had the prophet told you *to do some great thing*, would you not have done *it*? How much more *then*, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” <sup>14</sup> So he went down and dipped *himself* in the Jordan seven times, in accordance with the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Then his servants approached and spoke to him, saying, “My father, had the prophet told you *to do some great thing, would you not have done it*?

The question of his servants caused Naaman to reconsider his options and when he calmed down he decided to do the right thing.

**So he went down and dipped *himself* in the Jordan seven times, in accordance with the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.**

There we go, that wasn't so hard was it? So why was Naaman the only leper to be cured of that disease during the time of Elisha?

See Luke 4:27

**<sup>27</sup> And there were many with leprosy in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but *only* Naaman the Syrian."**

Why did God cure a foreigner of his leprosy but no Israelites? Apparently, no Israelites came to Elisha for help.

Verses 15 - 19

**<sup>15</sup> Then he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him. And he said, "Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; so please accept a gift from your servant now." <sup>16</sup> But he said, "As *surely* as the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will accept nothing." And he urged him to accept *it*, but he refused. <sup>17</sup> Then Naaman said, "If not, please let your servant be given two mules' load of earth; for your servant will no longer offer a burnt offering nor a sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Regarding this matter may the Lord forgive your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the Lord please forgive your servant in this matter." <sup>19</sup> He said to him, "Go in peace." So he went some distance from him.**

**<sup>15</sup> Then he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him. And he said, "Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; so please accept a gift from your servant now."**

Naaman had traveled 30 miles from Mt. Carmel to the Jordan River to be healed and then traveled back in order to offer Elisha a gift.

Naaman came to the conclusion that there was only one true God, something that most of Israel was unable to comprehend.

Because of his healing and new found faith he wanted Elisha to accept his gift.



<sup>17</sup> Then Naaman said, “If not, please let your servant be given two mules’ load of earth; for your servant will no longer offer a burnt offering nor a sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord.

Even though Naaman saw The Lord as the only true God, he was still under the false impression that the worship of God was limited to the land of Israel.

<sup>18</sup> Regarding this matter may the Lord forgive your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the Lord please forgive your servant in this matter.” <sup>19</sup> He said to him, “Go in peace.” So he went some distance from him.

Rimmon is perhaps the abbreviated form of Hadad-rimmon, the sun-god of the Syrians.

During Naaman’s return trip to meet with Elisha he had time to reflect on his situation back home and he wanted to learn from Elisha if the Lord would forgive him for bowing down before Rimmon. He would not bow down to Rimmon in an act of worship but rather to provide physical support to the king as he bowed to worship.

Commentators disagree about whether Naaman’s question about forgiveness was addressed by Elisha, or did his reply simply mean farewell.

Verses 20 - 24

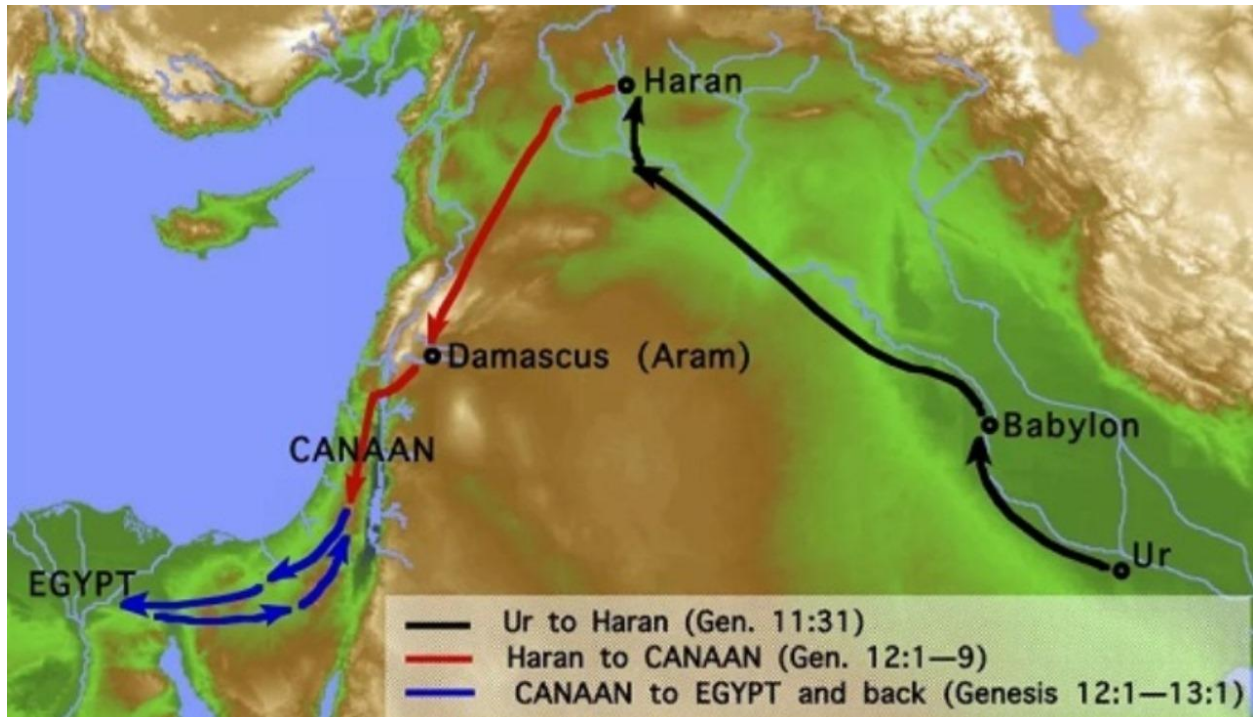
<sup>20</sup> But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, “Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean, by not accepting from his hand what he brought. As the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him.” <sup>21</sup> So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *someone* running after him, he came down from the chariot to meet him and said, “*Is everything well?*” <sup>22</sup> And he said, “*Everything is well*. My master has sent me, saying, ‘Behold, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.’”

<sup>23</sup> Naaman said, “Be sure to take two talents.” And he urged him, and tied up two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes, and gave *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* before him. <sup>24</sup> When he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed.

**But Gehazi thought, “Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean, by not accepting from his hand what he brought**

It appears that Gehazi despised Naaman because he was a Syrian. Perhaps he had forgotten that Abraham came from a foreign country.

See Map 535



In addition, all of the Jewish slaves that took over the Land of Canaan (now known as Israel) were also foreigners.

<sup>22</sup> And he said, “*Everything is well. My master has sent me, saying, ‘Behold, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.’*”

Gehazi told Naaman a number of lies.

1. My master has sent me.
2. Two sons of the prophets have come from the hill country of Ephraim.
3. The silver and clothes were for Gehazi.

Verses 25 - 27

<sup>25</sup> But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant went nowhere.” <sup>26</sup> Then he said to him, “Did my heart not go *with you*, when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept money and to accept clothes, olive groves, vineyards, sheep, oxen, and male and female slaves? <sup>27</sup> Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever.” So he went out from his presence afflicted with leprosy, *as white as snow*.

<sup>25</sup> But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant went nowhere.”

As we can see from this verse, lying always leads to more lying.

<sup>26</sup> Then he said to him, “Did my heart not go *with you*, when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept money and to accept clothes, olive groves, vineyards, sheep, oxen, and male and female slaves?

This was a time of famine.

See 2 Kings 4:38

<sup>38</sup> When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting in front of him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.”

Because of the famine it was not a time for the servants of God to be enriched while the common people struggled to keep food on the table.

Someone will say, but he could have used the money to help the poor. Is that why he put the money in his house and denied going anywhere?

<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever.” So he went out from his presence afflicted with leprosy, *as white as snow*.

His punishment was severe and immediate, and even worse; his descendants would suffer with this disease because of his sin.