

# HINDRANCES TO SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

By Mark Beard\*\*

## Text: II Kings 5:1-14

Do you feel that you need a closer and or deeper walk with God? Would you like a spiritual walk with God that is refreshing and full of life? Do you want to see God at work in your life? If so, one might ask, “What is it that is keeping you from receiving your request from God?”

Some want to blame the devil and some want to blame others, but I want to talk to you about the true *hindrances* that keep most of us from receiving spiritual blessings.

In the story of Naaman there are several *hindrances* that we can see that we need to steer clear of if we want the blessings of God to be in our lives.

### I. **PRECONCEIVED IDEAS WILL HINDER US FROM SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (vv. 10-11).**

- A. **Naaman assumed that the prophet would give him a great deal of attention—like others did (v.11).**
- B. **Naaman assumed that Elisha would give him instant relief (v.11).**

### II. **BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENT WILL HINDER US FROM SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (v.11).**

- A. **Naaman was resentful for not being treated as he thought he should be.**

Resentment usually begins to grow at the place where we feel we have been mistreated. Sometime our resentment is directed at people—sometimes toward God. However, you and I will always lose when we give into bitterness and resentment.

**EXAMPLE:** Two men were in a hospital ward together. One man's bed was by the only window in the room. The other man, who could not set up, was in the bed next to him.

Every day the man by the window would set up on the side of his bed and describe to the other man, who could not move from his bed, what he saw.

He described a beautiful park full of flowers, trees and laughing children. He described the young lovers as they walked hand in hand around the beautiful lake in the center of the park. One day he described a parade going through the park and the people

who were watching it.

Each day the man looked forward to his friend's description of the park until one day he began to think, "why is it he gets to be by the window?" Why do I have to be stuck over here?" He became more and more bitter as he thought on this perceived injustice.

Not long afterward, in the middle of the night, the man by the window began choking and was unable to reach the button to call the nurse. However, the other man lay there quietly knowing the man was choking but refusing to call the nurse because of the bitterness and resentment that he had allowed to take over. The man choked to death before long.

The next morning the nurse found the man and systematically removed the body from the room. When the man who was left felt it was appropriate he asked to be placed by the window - which he was. After everyone had left, he forced himself up on an elbow and looked out the window. But there was no park, no trees, and no people; only a blank brick wall.

**B. Naaman found himself on the verge of missing out on his miracle because of his own pride.**

Bitterness and resentment will always cause us to lose out.

**III. PRIDE AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL HINDER US FROM SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (v.12).**

**A. Naaman wasn't being treated like he thought he should be; after all he was accustomed to being exalted.**

Naaman was like Teddy Roosevelt. One of Teddy Roosevelt's children said of him: "Father always wanted to be the bride at every wedding and the corpse at every funeral".

It is not the one who lifts him/herself up that is renewed but the one who humbles himself before God. Revival and Renewal involves broken hearts.

**B. Make no mistake; Naaman wanted the miracle. He just did not want to humble himself.**

II Chronicles 7:14 says, *"if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways...then I will hear from heaven...and will forgive their sin... and (I will) heal their land."*

“Christ sends none away empty but those who are full of themselves.”

--Donald Gray Barnhouse in Revelation. Leadership, Vol. 1, no. 2.

## **CONCLUSION for Part 1 or intro for part 2 (if divided)**

It was to be a majestic evening. On Friday, October 18, 1991, the world-class Chicago Symphony presented the final concert in its year-long celebration of the symphony's one hundredth year. For the first time in United States symphony history, the present conductor and two former conductors of an orchestra stood on the same stage:.... At a centenary celebration dinner before the concert, patrons had received souvenir clocks as gifts. As the pianist sat down at the piano and the conductor lifted his baton to begin Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, a great sense of drama filled Chicago's historic Orchestra Hall. And the beauty of the music took over.

A few minutes later, however, at 9:15 PM, the music began to unravel. Out in the auditorium a little beep sounded. Then another, and another. Little beeps were sounding everywhere. The pianist and the symphony plowed ahead, but everyone was distracted and the music suffered.

Finally, after the first movement ended, Henry Fogel, the executive director of the symphony, walked on stage to explain what had happened. The manufacturer of the souvenir clocks presented at the preconcert dinner had set the alarms to go off at 9:15.

Now there was only one way to get on with the concert. Fogel asked everyone who had one of the clocks to check them in with an usher.

Trivial things have terrible power to disrupt—or even make a farce—of what is important. (Larson, 104)

It's amazing how Naaman almost allowed several small distractions to become *hindrances* to receiving his miracle.

## **Part II**

### **IV. UNWISE COMPARISONS CAN HINDER SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (v.12).**

#### **A. We are always comparing what and how God is doing something somewhere else or for someone else.**

We are always thinking the grass is greener on the other side of the fence; not realizing it's because it's over the septic tank.

Naaman was comparing the waters at home with the Jordan. God has a plan just for us regardless of its comfort.

**B. The key to receiving is our faithfulness to what God has called us to do.**

*General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was asked the secret of his amazing Christian life. Booth answered, "I told the Lord that he could have all that there is of William Booth."*

**V. A CRITICAL SPIRIT WILL HINDER SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (v.12).**

**A. Nothing is good enough for someone with a critical spirit.**

There's the story of the conscientious wife who tried very hard to please her ultra critical husband, but failed regularly. He always seemed the most cantankerous at breakfast. If the eggs were scrambled, he wanted them poached; if they were poached, he wanted them scrambled. One morning, with what she thought was a stroke of genius, the wife poached one egg and scrambled the other and placed the plate before him.

Anxiously she awaited what surely this time would be his unqualified approval. He peered down at the plate and snorted, "Can't you do anything right, woman?" You've scrambled the wrong one!"

For Naaman, the Jordan River was not good enough. He wanted the cool, clear, clean waters of his homeland.

**B. For a critical person, their way is the only right way!**

But if we are going to receive God's blessings we are going to have to do things His way.

Alexander Graham Bell said that, "When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

-- Alexander Graham Bell, Leadership, Vol. 10, no. 1.

**VI. ALLOWING OUR CIRCUMSTANCES TO BECOME TOO BIG WILL HINDER US FROM SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (v.13).**

**A. As humans we are masters of making mountains out of molehills and this is what Naaman was doing (v.13A).**

Suddenly, something petty and small had become a great obstacle to this great commander and general. Why? It was all in his mind. His way of thinking was threatening to separate him from his miracle.

Three people were visiting and viewing the Grand Canyon—an artist, a pastor, and a cowboy. As they stood on the edge of that massive abyss, each one responded with a cry of exclamation. The artist said, "Ah, what a beautiful scene to paint!" The minister cried, "What a wonderful example of the handiwork of God!" The cowboy mused, "What a terrible place to lose a cow!"

**B. If we would attempt something difficult to obtain help, how much more should we do those things that are simple (v.13B)?**

## CONCLUSION

Paul Yongg Cho, Pastor of the largest Pentecostal church in the world, was asked the secret to his success. His response was simple, "I pray and I obey".

All Naaman needed to do to be healed was to obey. How many of us have missed our blessing because we did everything but obey? How can I be renewed, revived, blessed?

- 1. You must hear the voice of God**  
Hear Him saying, "I will" to your request.
- 2. You must obey the voice of God in what He tells you to do.**  
Remember:
  1. God's ways are best.
  2. God wants our obedience more than anything else.
  3. God can use anything to accomplish His purpose.

### References

\*\*6 main points came from a lecture by Peter Lord in early 1990's in Huntsville Alabama.

Larson, Craig B. Ed. (1996). Contemporary illustrations for preachers, teachers and writers. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.