



Study Guide: 2 Kings – Chapter 5

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This study guide provides an educational overview of 2 Kings Chapter 5 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

2 Kings Chapter 5 narrates the remarkable story of Naaman, a commander of the army of Aram, who suffers from leprosy and experiences a powerful healing through the prophet Elisha. This chapter highlights themes of faith, humility, obedience, and God's sovereignty in healing and salvation. It also exposes human tendencies toward pride and the importance of recognizing God's power beyond cultural and national boundaries. This study guide will explore the chapter in detail to understand its spiritual lessons and practical applications.

Context

The book of 2 Kings continues the historical account of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Chapter 5 is set during a time of conflict between Israel and Aram (Syria). Naaman, a high-ranking military commander, is afflicted with leprosy, a serious and isolating disease in biblical times. The narrative unfolds against a backdrop of political tension, yet it reveals God's intervention through the prophet Elisha. This chapter follows Elisha's role as a mediator of God's power and serves as a testament to God's concern for individuals regardless of nationality or status.

Outline

The chapter begins with the introduction of Naaman and his leprosy, followed by the account of a captive Israelite girl who suggests that Naaman seek healing from Elisha. Naaman travels to Israel with gifts, expecting a grand healing ritual, but Elisha instructs him to wash in the Jordan River. After initial reluctance, Naaman obeys and is healed. The story then shifts to Naaman's acknowledgment of the God of Israel and his offer to reward Elisha, which the prophet refuses. The chapter concludes with a brief mention of Gehazi, Elisha's servant, who deceitfully obtains gifts from Naaman and is subsequently punished with leprosy.



Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1-3: Naaman is introduced as a valiant soldier but afflicted with leprosy. The mention of a captive Israelite girl sets the stage for divine intervention through an unexpected source.

Verses 4-6: The girl informs Naaman's wife about the prophet Elisha in Samaria who can heal Naaman, demonstrating faith and hope despite her captive status.

Verses 7-10: Naaman seeks permission from the king of Aram and travels to Israel with gifts. The king of Israel reacts with distress, believing he cannot heal Naaman, highlighting human limitations in contrast to divine power.

Verses 11-14: Elisha sends a messenger to instruct Naaman to wash seven times in the Jordan River. Naaman initially resists, expecting a dramatic healing, but eventually obeys and is healed, illustrating the importance of humility and obedience.

Verses 15-17: Naaman returns to Elisha, acknowledging the God of Israel as the only true God. He offers gifts, which Elisha refuses, emphasizing that God's blessings are not for sale.

Verses 18-19: Naaman requests earth from Israel to worship the Lord on his own soil, showing his desire to honor God properly while remaining loyal to his homeland.

Verses 20-27: Gehazi, Elisha's servant, deceitfully obtains gifts from Naaman by lying about Elisha's request. Elisha confronts Gehazi, and as a consequence, Gehazi is struck with Naaman's leprosy, underscoring the seriousness of dishonesty and greed.

Key Themes

Faith and Healing: Naaman's healing is a profound example of faith in God's power, even when the method seems simple or unexpected. His obedience leads to restoration.

Humility: Naaman's initial pride almost prevents his healing. The story teaches that humility is essential to receive God's blessings.

God's Sovereignty: The narrative reveals that God's power extends beyond Israel to Gentiles, affirming His universal authority.



Integrity and Honesty: Gehazi's punishment highlights the consequences of deceit and greed, contrasting with Elisha's integrity.

Gratitude and Worship: Naaman's response includes worship and acknowledgment of God's supremacy, illustrating the proper response to divine blessing.

Cross-References

The healing of Naaman parallels other biblical healings, such as the cleansing of lepers in the New Testament, demonstrating continuity in God's healing power.

Elisha's refusal of gifts echoes the principle found in Acts where spiritual gifts are freely given and not sold, emphasizing God's grace.

Naaman's request for earth recalls the importance of proper worship locations and reverence, similar to instructions given to the Israelites about the tabernacle and temple.

Gehazi's punishment is reminiscent of Old Testament warnings against dishonesty and greed, reinforcing the moral standards expected of God's servants.

The story anticipates New Testament themes of Gentile inclusion and faith transcending ethnic boundaries, as seen in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles.

Application

This chapter encourages believers to approach God with humility and obedience, even when His instructions seem simple or counterintuitive. It challenges pride and self-reliance, urging trust in God's ways.

Naaman's story reminds us that God's grace is available to all people, regardless of background or status, prompting us to extend faith and compassion beyond our immediate circles.

The example of Gehazi warns against the dangers of greed and dishonesty, calling for integrity in all aspects of life, especially in ministry and service.

Believers are invited to respond to God's blessings with gratitude and worship, recognizing His sovereignty and goodness in their lives.



Finally, the chapter encourages patience and perseverance in faith, demonstrating that God's timing and methods may differ from human expectations but are always perfect.

Summary

2 Kings Chapter 5 offers a rich narrative of healing, faith, and the power of God working through His prophet Elisha. Naaman's journey from pride to humility and from sickness to health illustrates the transformative power of obedience to God. The chapter also serves as a warning against greed and dishonesty through Gehazi's example. Ultimately, it reveals God's universal sovereignty and His desire for all people to acknowledge and worship Him. This story continues to inspire faith, humility, and integrity in the life of the believer.