

Template 2: Main Lesson, Activity and Discussion Questions | Ages 5 to 11, Read Aloud Lesson, Scripture Centered, Apologetics Rich, Christ Centered

WEEK 32 | SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2026

Elisha, God's Power and Compassion

Primary Scripture: 2 Kings 5

BIBLE TIMELINE PLACEMENT

Building on Elijah's ministry from last week, Elisha continues as God's prophet, and this account reveals that God's power and compassion reach beyond Israel's borders, even to an enemy commander.

BIG IDEA

God's power to heal and His compassion for people reach far beyond Israel's borders, offered freely to anyone humble enough to receive it His way.

1 OPENING BIBLE FOUNDATION

Before we begin, let's remember something wonderful. The Bible is not just one book. It is sixty six books, written by more than forty different people, across a very long time, in different places, facing different situations. And yet every single page tells one true story, God's story. Today's story reaches somewhere nobody would expect, and it points us straight to Jesus.

2 MEMORY VERSE

Our memory verse today comes from something the main character in this story says once everything changes for him.

MEMORY VERSE
2 Kings 5:15
<i>Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.</i>

Let's say it together. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Keep that verse in mind, because he is about to learn it is true in a way he never expected.

3 SETTING THE SCENE

Elisha now carries on the ministry Elijah began. Today's story centers on a powerful army commander from Aram, a nation often at war with Israel, who suffers from a serious skin disease that all his wealth and status cannot cure. A young Israelite servant girl, captured and enslaved in his household, is about to change everything for him.

4 MAIN LESSON NARRATIVE

Imagine being one of the most powerful, respected men in your entire country. Soldiers salute you. Kings listen when you speak. You have won battle after battle for your nation, and people whisper your name with respect wherever you go. And yet, underneath your clothing, you are hiding something you cannot fix, no matter how much power or money you have, something that no doctor, no general, no king can cure. That was Naaman's life. He was the commander of the entire army of Aram, a nation we would call Syria today. But Naaman had a serious skin disease, and nothing he owned, and no one he commanded, could cure it.

Last week we watched Elijah stand alone on Mount Carmel and prove that the LORD alone is God. Elijah's ministry as a prophet eventually passes to a man named Elisha, and today we get to see God's power and compassion at work through him, reaching somewhere nobody would expect.

Here is where our story really begins, though, not with Naaman, and not even with Elisha. It begins with a young girl, and the Bible does not even bother telling us her name. This girl had been captured during a raid by Aram's army and taken far from her home in Israel, torn away from her own family, forced to serve as a slave in Naaman's own house, waiting on the wife of the very commander whose soldiers had destroyed her old life. Think about that for a moment. This girl had every reason to resent Naaman, every reason to stay quiet and let him suffer. And yet, one day, she speaks up anyway. She tells Naaman's wife, if only my master would go see the prophet in Samaria, he would heal him of his disease.

Naaman hears this, and he is desperate enough to try anything. He goes to his king, who writes a letter to the king of Israel, and Naaman sets out with an enormous fortune, silver, gold, and fine clothing, ready to pay for his healing.

Our memory verse today comes from something Naaman says later in the story, once everything changes for him. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Let's say that together. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Keep that verse in mind, because Naaman is about to learn it is true in a way he never expected.

When the king of Israel reads the letter, he panics completely. He tears his own clothes, certain the king of Aram is trying to pick a fight, since curing a disease like this seems impossible. But Elisha hears about it and sends a message to the king. Let Naaman come to me, Elisha says, that he may know there is a prophet in Israel.

So Naaman arrives at Elisha's house, with his horses, his chariots, and all his officials. This is a huge, impressive entrance for such an important man. He probably expects Elisha to come rushing out, wave his hands dramatically, call loudly on the name of the LORD, and heal him on the spot, the way important people expected to be treated everywhere else in his life.

Instead, Elisha does not even come out of his house. He simply sends a messenger with a short, simple instruction. Go and wash in the Jordan River seven times, and your flesh will be restored, and you will be clean.

Naaman is furious. Absolutely furious. He expected ceremony, drama, importance, something worthy of who he was, maybe the prophet standing over him, waving a hand grandly, shouting toward the sky. Instead he gets a plain river and a servant's message relayed through someone else entirely. Are not the rivers of my own country better than all the waters of Israel, he shouts. And he turns to leave in a rage, ready to go home diseased rather than swallow this insult to his pride.

Now, here is a moment worth stopping on, because it is easy to miss. Naaman's own servants, ordinary people with far less power than he had, gently reason with him. My father, they say, if the prophet had told you to do some great and difficult thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he simply says to you, wash, and be clean?

Think about how much courage that took, for a servant to challenge a powerful commander's pride. And thankfully, Naaman listens. He goes down to the Jordan, and he dips himself in the water. Once. Twice. All the way to seven times, exactly as Elisha said. And when he comes up that seventh time, his skin is completely healed, restored like the skin of a small child.

Naaman goes back to Elisha, and this time he does not come with anger. He comes with his whole household of officials, and he stands before Elisha and says the very words we are learning today. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Let's say it together again. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.

Naaman tries to give Elisha the silver, the gold, the fine clothing he had carried all this way. But Elisha refuses every bit of it. As the LORD lives, whom I serve, Elisha says, I will not accept a thing. Elisha wants Naaman, and everyone watching, to understand something important. God's healing was never for sale. It was a gift, freely given, and it could not be bought, not even by someone as wealthy and powerful as Naaman.

Naaman asks for one more thing before he leaves, two mule loads of Israelite soil, to carry home with him. In Naaman's time, people often believed a god's power stayed connected to a specific piece of land. Naaman wanted to worship the LORD, even while living far away in Aram, so he wanted a piece of the LORD's land to stand on while he did it.

Now, someone might wonder, could a whole army commander really change his mind so completely, and could a skin disease really be healed just by washing in a river seven times? That is worth asking. This account is recorded as careful historical narrative, not vague legend, complete with named kings, real geography, and a story honest enough to include Naaman's embarrassing anger and a servant's humble correction, details no one trying to make Naaman look impressive would have included. And notice something important. It was never really about the water. Seven washes in any river cannot cure a skin disease on their own. It was God's power, responding to simple obedience, that made the difference.

There is one more part of this story worth knowing, even though it is a quieter, sadder ending than the rest. Elisha had a servant named Gehazi, who watched his master turn down a fortune and could not stand it. Gehazi secretly ran after Naaman once Elisha had already refused any payment, inventing a story about needing supplies for two visiting prophets. Naaman gladly gave him even more than he asked for. Gehazi hid it away, then lied again to Elisha's face about where he had been. Elisha already

knew the truth before Gehazi even opened his mouth, and Gehazi ended up with the very disease Naaman had just been healed of. It is a sober reminder that God's gifts are never meant to be a way to get rich or to trick others, even when no one else seems to be watching.

Here is where we begin to see our need for Jesus. Naaman was an outsider. A foreigner. Even an enemy, from a nation that fought against God's own people, someone with every reason to be considered outside the reach of Israel's God entirely. And yet God's compassion and power reached him anyway, healing him completely and bringing him all the way to faith in the one true God. Hundreds of years later, Jesus stood up in His own hometown synagogue, in front of people who assumed God's favor belonged to them alone, and reminded everyone listening about this exact story. There were many people with this disease in Israel in Elisha's time, Jesus said, and none of them were healed, only Naaman, the Syrian, an outsider. The crowd did not respond well to that reminder, but Jesus was making an enormous point anyway. God's grace has never been limited to the people who seem to deserve it most, or belong to the right group, or have the right background. It reaches out to whoever comes to Him in humble faith, exactly the way Naaman finally did.

So what does this mean for you, this week? Maybe you have never had a skin disease like Naaman's, but all of us carry something we cannot fix on our own, no matter how hard we try or how much we have, a habit, a fear, a mistake we keep repeating, a sadness that will not lift no matter how hard we push it down. And maybe, like Naaman, part of you wants God's help to look impressive, complicated, or dramatic, when His actual invitation is far simpler than that. Come to Jesus. Trust Him. Receive what He freely offers. That is the whole of it, even when pride makes it feel like it should be harder than that.

Let's say our memory verse one final time, because it captures exactly what Naaman discovered, and exactly what is still true today. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Not because Israel earned that truth, but because the LORD chose to reveal Himself there, and through Jesus, to reveal Himself to the entire world, outsiders included, enemies included, you included.

Naaman arrived at Elisha's door expecting to pay a fortune for something impressive. He left instead having received, completely free, exactly what he actually needed, carrying home not just healed skin but a changed heart. That is exactly how grace works, and it is exactly what Jesus still offers today, to anyone willing to stop insisting on impressive and simply come and wash.

5 WHY WE CAN TRUST GOD'S WORD

This account is recorded as careful historical narrative, complete with named kings, real geography, and details that are honest rather than flattering, including Naaman's embarrassing pride and a servant's humble correction. Stories meant to make someone look impressive rarely include such humbling details. When the Bible tells us this happened, we can trust that fully. If you ever wonder whether something in the Bible actually happened, that is a good question, and it is always welcome here.

6 WHAT THIS SHOWS US ABOUT JESUS

This account shows that God's compassion has never been limited to Israel alone, or to people who seem to deserve it most. Naaman, an outsider and even an enemy commander, received God's free healing through simple, humble obedience. Centuries later, Jesus pointed back to this exact story to make the same point about Himself. Jesus lived a perfectly obedient life, died on the cross to pay for sin, and rose again, offering the same free healing and forgiveness to anyone humble enough to receive it, regardless of where they come from or what they have done.

7 GOD REVEALED AS TRINITY

This passage does not show Father, Son, and Spirit acting together directly, but the whole Bible helps us see the larger picture. God the Father sent His prophet Elisha to reveal His power and compassion to an outsider. Jesus the Son later points back to this exact account to describe His own mission to the whole world, not only Israel. The Holy Spirit is the one who today helps people everywhere respond in humble faith rather than prideful resistance. God is one God in three Persons, always reaching beyond every border we might expect Him to respect.

8 LIFE APPLICATION

This week, think honestly about whether you want God's help to look a certain way, impressive, dramatic, complicated, rather than simply trusting His plain instructions. Naaman almost missed his healing because of pride. Simple obedience, even when it feels too plain or unimpressive, is exactly where God's power meets us.

9 DEFENDING THE TRUTH

What if a friend says Bible stories only make the good guys look good, so we cannot really trust them?

This story includes Naaman's embarrassing anger and pride, and a servant's humble correction of a powerful man, details that make Naaman look bad, not impressive, which is exactly the kind of honest detail that supports real history rather than flattering legend.

Scripture to remember, Luke 4:27. There were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.

How to say it kindly. You could say, this story does not make anyone look perfect, not even the hero, which is actually a strong reason to trust it as real history rather than a flattering tale.

10 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Core Questions for All Ages

Who first told Naaman about the prophet who could heal him?

A young Israelite servant girl in Naaman's own household.

Why did Naaman get angry at Elisha's instructions?

He expected something dramatic and impressive, and washing in a plain river seemed too simple for someone as important as him.

Who convinced Naaman to actually try Elisha's instructions?

His own servants, who reasoned that if Elisha had asked something hard, Naaman would have done it, so why not something simple.

Why wouldn't Elisha accept any payment from Naaman?

To show that God's healing is a free gift, not something that can be earned or bought.

Optional Deeper Questions

Why did Jesus bring up this exact story hundreds of years later?

To show that God's grace has always reached beyond Israel, to outsiders and even enemies, not just people who seem to deserve it.

What happened to Gehazi, and what does that teach us?

He lied to profit from Naaman's healing and was struck with the same disease, warning us against turning God's grace into personal gain.

Is there an area of your life where you want God's help to look impressive instead of simply trusting His plain instructions?

Personal reflection, no single right answer. Encourage honest sharing.

How does it feel to know God's compassion reaches people who seem like outsiders or even enemies?

Personal reflection. Encourage children to express hope for themselves and others.

11 HANDS ON ACTIVITY

Activity Name

Simple Obedience Relay

Purpose

Help children experience choosing simple obedience over wanting something impressive, connecting to Naaman's pride and eventual humility.

Supplies

None needed, or simple household items if available.

Time Needed

10 minutes.

Preparation Before Class

Prepare a short list of simple, slightly unglamorous instructions.

Step by Step Instructions

Give children a series of very plain, unimpressive instructions to follow, one at a time, for example, hop on one foot to the door, or stack three books quietly. Before each instruction, ask, would you rather do something impressive looking, or something simple that actually works? After each round, discuss how Naaman wanted something impressive, but God's simple instruction was what actually healed him. Close by asking children to think of one simple, unglamorous act of obedience they can choose this week instead of waiting for something that feels more impressive.

Scripture Connection

2 Kings 5:13 to 14, the servants' wise counsel and Naaman's simple obedience.

Debrief Questions

Did any of the simple instructions feel silly or unimpressive? Why do you think God often works through simple obedience instead of dramatic actions?

How to Adapt for Younger Children

Make every instruction physical and playful, like animal walks or silly poses.

How to Adapt for Older Children

Let children take turns creating instructions for each other.

12 OPTIONAL REVIEW GAME

Game Name

Wash and Be Clean

Purpose

Reinforce the memory verse and key story facts with an active, repeatable game.

Supplies

None needed.

How to Play

Ask a quick review question. If answered correctly, the whole group counts together to seven, like Naaman's seven washes in the Jordan, then shouts the memory verse together.

Review Questions and Answers

Who first told Naaman about Elisha? The servant girl. What did Elisha tell Naaman to do? Wash seven times in the Jordan River. What did Naaman want to give Elisha? Silver, gold, and clothing. What happened to Gehazi? He was struck with Naaman's disease for lying and taking payment.

13 TEACHER CLOSING

Today we learned about Naaman, a powerful army commander who could not fix the one thing that mattered most, and about a God whose compassion and power reached him anyway, even though he was an outsider and an enemy. We learned that pride almost kept Naaman from his healing, and that simple obedience, not impressive ceremony, is where he actually found it. And we learned that Jesus Himself pointed back to this story to remind us that God's grace has never been limited to people who seem to deserve it most. Jesus loves every single child in this room, exactly as you are, whatever you carry that you cannot fix on your own. Let's say our memory verse one more time together. Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. Let's pray. Dear God, thank You for reaching people everyone else might overlook. Help us come to You with simple trust instead of pride, and thank You for offering Your grace freely to anyone who receives it. In Jesus' name, amen.

14 TAKEAWAY TRUTH

God's compassion reaches farther than I expect, and His help comes through simple trust, not impressive effort.