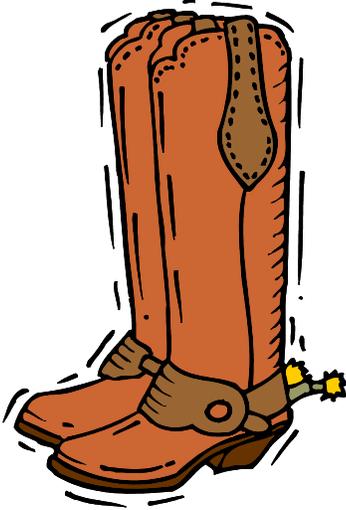


## **7 Muddy Ducks**



### **Scripture References:**

*II Kings 5: 1-14*

**INTRO:** Have you ever heard “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps”? As kids growing up in SW Oklahoma it was a common saying, a sort of “code of the West” if you will. A typical pair of cowboy boots has straps at the top that are not there just for decoration in many cases. You can grab a hold of them and more readily facilitate getting into your boots. While this phrase is commonly associated with improving your situation by your own efforts, we use the phrase more in the realm of reality, that is, that when God points you or moves you to follow His leadership, then He expects you to get on with the task at hand because He is able and therefore you are able as a result to get the job done.

**With that in mind and a pair of boots at your disposal the lesson 7 Muddy Ducks unfolds.**

Usually when this story is told or preached it centers on an unsaved man that is introduced to a miraculous God by the prophet Elisha. To only preach/teach that from this miraculous account of God’s merciful grace really short-changes the whole story. This is actually about the faith of 3 different people. Let’s read the passage and look for the 3 people of faith.

**Read *II Kings 5: 1-14 (King James Version)***

*1Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.*

*2And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.*

*3And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.*

*4And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.*

*5And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.*

*6And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.*

*7And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.*

*8And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.*

*9So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.*

*10And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.*

*11But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.*

*12Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.*

*13And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?*

*14Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean*

This story is like any soul winning experience where you have been able to lead someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. God's Word points out that some plant, another may water, but God gives the increase. There is no singular "Hero" soul winner in this story. Just as in any witnessing efforts, we are only one of many that may have had an influence on leading someone to Christ. We know that the healing was performed by God, but the events of 3 people came together in a way to focus on a lost man in a pitiful state and provide him with hope in a God that was bigger than his wretched condition.

**Naaman's faith was based on desperation:** *Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"*

- He was well respected by the king of Syria.
- He was a mighty man of valor so he was respected by his countrymen and both feared and respected by his enemies.
- However, he had an incurable disease called leprosy.
- He was from a heathen country meaning he knew not God. His leprosy was an outward manifestation of his inward rottenness. He was a sinner without a savior. No act that he could do in his flesh, no matter how strong and mighty he was, would save him.
- His favor with the king could not buy his way from his problem.
- But into his life comes a little Hebrew slave girl that had every right to despise and hate Naaman. [She was a captive slave in his house].
- Instead she wanted to introduce him to a miracle working God.

**The little Maid's faith was based on Compassion:** *Jude 22 "And of some have compassion, making a difference:"*

- The little maid was taken captive from her home.
- She may have seen her parents killed, or maybe not, but she was not isolated from her friends, family, and culture. She could have hated every Syrian she saw, but instead she saw these captors through compassionate eyes.
- Even at a young age in a strange land she focused on what was important.

- Instead of seeing herself in trouble, she saw opportunity to tell about her great God.
- Since she knew of the great miracles that God wrought through the prophet Elisha, she desired to get Naaman to Elisha.
- Obviously, Naaman would not take notice of what she had to say. She had to relay the message to him rather than deal with him directly, but that did not stop her.

**Elisha's faith was based on testimony:** *Psalm 19:7 "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul ; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."*

- Elisha had studied under and served Elijah for 10 years. He saw many miracles done through his master and had faith enough to ask for a double portion of the blessing on Elijah.
- Elisha had seen the mighty hand of God and understood that God is always there and ready to reveal Himself.
- Elisha knew that if he held up his end of the bargain, glorify God in EVERYTHING, then God would hold up His end, that is to reveal Himself.
- You see, Elisha had the easiest part in this story of healing and converting a heathen into someone that knew God and had been cleansed by Him.

### **Summary:**

This wonderful story has all the elements needed for someone to get saved:

- Desperation in their helpless and hopeless condition and headed for a horrible death.
- A soul winner had compassion and went out of her way to point him to a savior.
- We see a miracle working God who will always hear the desperate cry for help and is always willing to save.

Elisha is not the only one that God will reward in Heaven for this miraculous healing. In fact, God will probably ask Elisha to step aside while the little maid is ushered forward to receive a soul winner's crown. Don't ever think that your soul winning efforts are not important. You won't get every person you witness to on their knees in prayer, but you will be blessed and you will please our Lord every time you witness in any way about His saving power.

### **AN ADDITIONAL TEACHING METHOD NOTE:**

When telling the story when there is time I have had great fun illustrating Naaman and all the commotion it MUST have caused as a mighty warrior of Syria is insulted and then humbles himself by going under the muddy waters of Jordan.

How he must have looked at his skin each time he came up to see if it had changed at all; How he must have held his nose & closed his eyes with each dip in the river. He must have been quite a sight, a man of renown dipping in this river first in skepticism and then in faith. The process can be comical in presentation and the illustration I leave to you and your imagination as you read the scripture and are led by the Holy Spirit.