

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

It was not the mere water that would heal. Yes, the Abanah and Pharpar water was like the Jordan water. But the promise wasn't attached to the waters of the Abanah and Pharpar. The promise was attached to the Jordan waters. God works in mysterious ways, but He always keeps His Promises. There was a prophet in Israel, and the only true God spoke through him. Naaman put aside his sinful reason, his pride, his arrogance, and he submitted to the Word of God. And his flesh was restored.

The leper fell down in front of Jesus. The Scripture says he worshipped Him. He believed. The leper prayed according to the will of God. God is willing. The leper was healed, and sent to the priests as a testimony to them. Other men claimed to be healers as well. There were charlatans in those days just as there are in ours. But this sign was clear. To bespeak a leper clean was a sign that no mere man could do.

Naaman's healing was not simply the removal of the sores on his skin. That was a temporal healing. So too the healing of the leper. Both men were healed in a more fundamental, eternal way. They believed God and it was credited to them as righteousness. The leper believed and worshipped before his leprosy was removed.

Naaman's hardness of heart required a sign. The sign he was given was irrefutable, and he confessed Elisha's God as the only true God. While Scripture doesn't record it, it is safe to assert that both men, healed of leprosy, eventually died. Their cleansed flesh went the way of all flesh. But the true healing, the healing of their souls, endures forever. If they lay down in the faith they confessed, they will rise on the last day to everlasting life, and they will receive perfect, flawless, eternal bodies. That is the healing that endures, the true healing of the only True God.

The centurion's servant was paralyzed, dreadfully tormented. The Lord announced that He would go and heal the man. In the presence of God Incarnate, the centurion, a powerful, revered man felt his uncleanness, his unworthiness. He confessed his unworthiness to the Christ: "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof..."

But at the same time he knew was unworthy, he had great need. And he had great faith. Like Israel at the foot of Sinai he was a sinner in the presence of the Holy God. Unworthy but believing, he prayed "...but only speak a word, and my servant will be healed." His faith found its reward. His servant was healed that same hour.

These accounts are factual. They are true. They happened. And in them faith finds great comfort. The Only True God is the God That Heals. He has compassion on His creatures. He hears their prayers. And He is willing. And that is where Naaman, the leper, and the centurion's servant's stories meet you. They are signs, symbols, mysteries that reveal the very nature and power of God. And that brings comfort and hope to you.

As the centurion confessed of himself, you must confess of yourself. You are not worthy. You bear the transgression that came with your flesh, and to that transgression you have daily added. Like the centurion's servant, you have been paralyzed by your sin, unable to do the good things you ought to do, all the while the very things that God forbids you have done.

And like that paralyzed servant, you too have been tormented. For you know your sins merit death and separation from God. And you know, that like that servant, you are unable to help yourself. Like Naaman, your fallen flesh has rebelled in pride and arrogance, and you have given more credence to fallen reason than to the clear Commands of God.

So it is you who should, in your suffering, in your despair, in your tribulation, pray “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof.” But like the leper, like the centurion, God has given you His Word, His Promise. So yes, while unworthy, you too may pray “...but only say the Word, and my soul shall be healed.”

He hears your prayers. And the One True God, the God That Heals, is willing. He is willing to come down and heal. He entered under your roof when He took on your flesh. He came into the fallen, broken, distorted, sinful house of this world to heal you.

He is willing – He is willing to take on your sins. He is willing to stand silent against His accusers. He is willing to endure God’s wrath in your stead. He is willing to die for you. He is willing to fill the tomb in your place.

And as the centurion pled for the healing of his servant, so your Master pleads for you. You have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He Himself is the propitiation for your sins, and not for yours alone, but for the sins of the world. The proof is in His miraculous resurrection, where He defeated death for you. He alone can grant eternal life.

Another pleads for you. His Blood cries out, and by His Blood you are declared worthy. He speaks a Word, and your soul is healed. And by that Word He gives you faith, even great faith, faith that looks to Him in tribulation and suffering, in times of doubt and uncertainty. You cling to Christ. He will never leave you nor forsake you.

He commands that you wash, not in the Abanah or the Pharpar or the Jordan, but in the Waters of the Font, the Waters to which He has attached His Command and Promise. Seven is the number of the Covenant, so Naaman was directed to wash seven times. But for you there is a new and better washing, a washing that cleanses your soul. You wash once in the water comprehended with God’s Three-fold Name, and you are cleansed for eternity.

The Christ who speaks from afar and it is done works a miracle for you this day. His Words are spoken over bread and wine, and He places His Body and Blood with them for you to eat and drink. Although He can heal from afar, the same Christ who healed the centurion’s servant comes to you. He enters you and abides in you by His Spirit. And He enters you and abides in you through His Holy Sacrament placed into you. By faith you are declared worthy, He enters under your roof, and your soul is healed.

Faith returns thanks. So like the leper, you fall down before Him. You worship. You believe He is the God of Life, the God That Heals, the Only True God. You believe that in Him you have forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. And as you have believed, so will it be done to you.