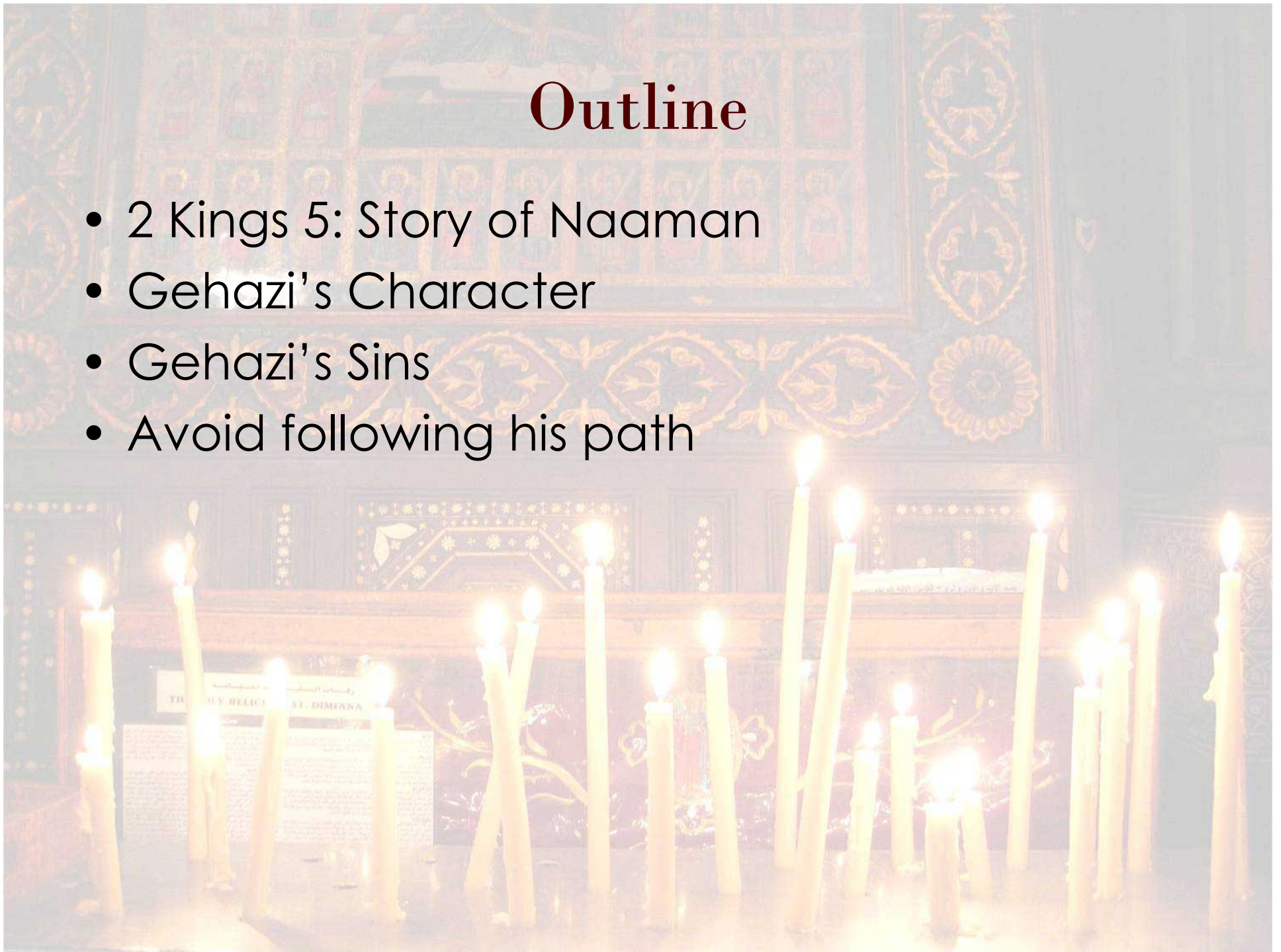


An illustration of Jesus with visible wounds on his arms and chest, looking upwards with a pained expression. A man in a white robe stands behind him, gesturing towards his wounds. The background is a soft, hazy landscape.

Outline

- 2 Kings 5: Story of Naaman
- Gehazi's Character
- Gehazi's Sins
- Avoid following his path



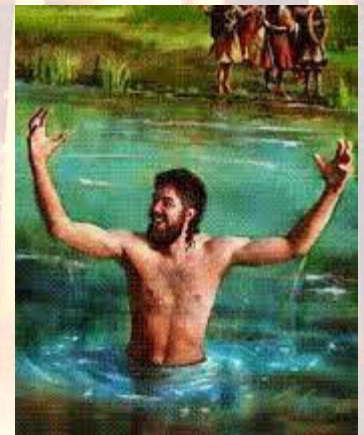
2 Kings 5

⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall be clean*." ¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out *to me*, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.



2 Kings 5

¹² Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *if* the prophet had told you *to do something great*, would you not have done *it*? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"



2 Kings 5

¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. ¹⁵ And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him;



2 Kings 5

and he said, "Indeed, now I know that *there* is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant."
¹⁶ But he said, "As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take *it*, but he refused.



2 Kings 5

¹⁷ So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD. ¹⁸ Yet in this thing may the LORD pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD please pardon your servant in this thing." ¹⁹ Then he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance.

2 Kings 5

²⁰ But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him." ²¹ So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *him* running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?" ²² And he said, "All is well.



2 Kings 5



My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'" ²³ So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* on ahead of him. ²⁴ When he came to the citadel, he took *them* from their hand, and stored *them* away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed.

2 Kings 5

25 Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, “Where *did you go*, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.” **26** Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? **27** Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, *as white as snow*.



Gehazi

- "valley of vision" or "valley of avarice."
- The servant of Elisha the prophet
 - Disciple/assistant/representative
- With the Shunammite woman:
 - He explains to the prophet her desire to have a son (2Ki 4: 14).
 - Later, when she visits Elisha at Carmel, beseeching his aid in behalf of the child that has died, Gehazi rudely thrust her aside.
 - Elisha, charges him to hurry to Shunem, saluting none on the way, and lay the prophet's staff on the child's face (2Ki 4: 27-29).
 - He fails to recall the child to life.

In Rabbinical Literature

- Gehazi denied the resurrection of the dead
- On his way to Shunam with Elisha's staff:
 - He considered the whole procedure a joke
 - Instead of obeying the order not to talk to anyone, he asked sarcastically of those he met whether they believed the staff had the power to restore the dead to life.
 - For this reason he failed.

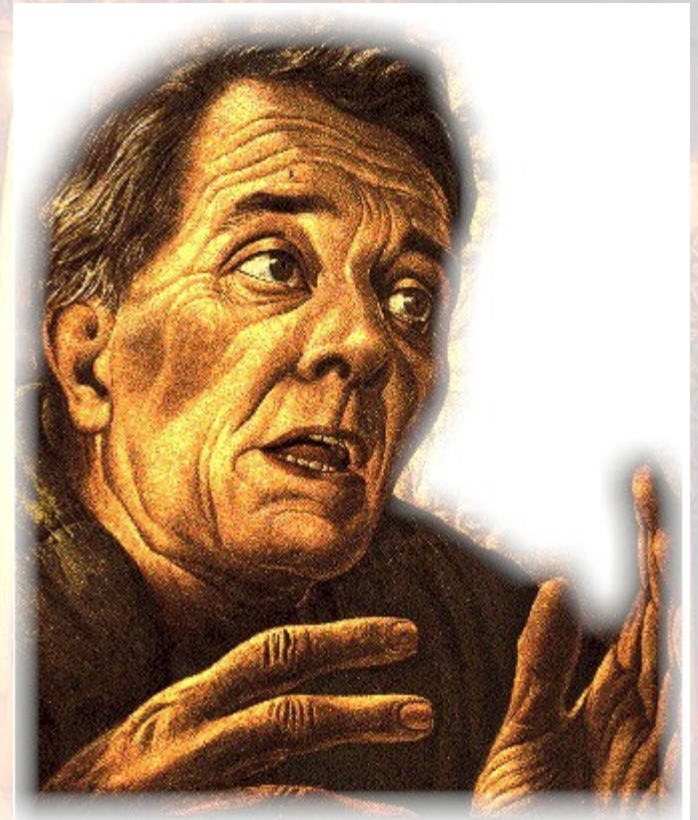


In Rabbinical Literature

- Elisha "thrust him away with both hands" instead of using one for that purpose and the other for drawing him toward himself
- Elisha went to Damascus to induce Gehazi to repent, but Gehazi refused, quoting his master's own teachings that a sinner who had led others into sin had no hope.
- Gehazi was interrupted in his conversation with the king: *"Tell me, please, all the great things Elisha has done..."* (2 Ki 8:4-5)
 - The praises of a holy man should not be sung by a sinner

Gehazi's Character

- Disrespectful to his teacher
- Although learned...
- jealous
- avaricious (greedy)
- unchaste
- a cynic (doubter)



Elisha Refuses Naaman's gifts

- Why?
- God's powers are not to be sold.
 - Not for personal gain
- To allow Naaman to contemplate on God's power, which are given freely to man
- So Naaman can feel indebted to God
 - As a military leader in Syria, he may refrain from invading the people of the God who healed him
- To allow Naaman's yearning to grow towards God.
- Elisha was seeking the good of Naaman and that of Israel

Gehazi Seeking His Own

- Gehazi was only seeking his own good!
 - He did not learn anything from his teacher
 - He lost spiritual and eternal benefits while seeking the temporal
 - *"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."* (Phil 2:3-4)



Gehazi's Sins

- Disobedience / Defiance – to his teacher
- Belittlement / Scorn – His teacher's words are of little value
- Avarice/Greed
- Love of money
- Selfishness (Stashing the gifts)
- Lying (to Naaman and Elisha)
- Instead of becoming a great prophet like his master, he became rejected, leprous
 - Lost his spirituality, leadership, eternity





**AVOID FOLLOWING GEHAZI'S
PATH....**

Root of the Problem?

Respect God's Gift



- Gehazi experienced God's gift with Elisha
 - He started to discount/belittle it after some time
 - It became commonplace, lost its significance
- If “miracles” were a daily experience, they wouldn't be miracles anymore
 - “It happens all the time!”
 - Monks sometimes skip liturgies...
- We need to continue to respect God's gifts regardless of its frequency:
 - *“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies.” (1 Thes 5)*

Don't Fall into the Routine



- Religion had become a formal affair of fulfilling certain duties
 - In his own life, he did not have a deep need of the power of God
 - He had no real appreciation of Naaman's need
 - No realization of the "miracle".
- Are we falling into the routine religion?
 - Has Worship become routine?
 - Are the Sacraments still "mysteries"?
 - Is Prayer still a conversation or senseless words?
 - Can I live without the Bible?
- *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing." (1 Thes 5)*

Understand the Power

- Miracles are windows into the power of God
 - It fills us with wonder and marvel
- Gehazi ceased to wonder at the miracle
 - He turned his attention to the profit: for his physical comfort and pleasure.
- Simon the sorcerer tried to buy the Power:
 - *“Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!” (Acts 8:20)*
- Miracles require faith
 - *“Now He [Jesus] did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” (Matt 5:58)*

Gehazi: The Blind Servant

- "valley of vision" or "valley of avarice."
 - Due to his greed, he lacked vision
- Serving a great prophet but learning nothing
- Many sins blinded his heart
- Disrespectful, jealous, greedy, unchaste and a cynic
- To avoid following his path:
 - Respect God's gifts
 - Don't fall into the routine
 - Understand the power of God's gifts

