

Gehazi - God knows the heart

Foundation

Bible passage: 2 Kings 5 & Ps 19.14

Gehazi's Greed

Naaman, the commander of the army of Syria had leprosy but being led to Elisha he was healed by God. As a result, Naaman came to believe in the Lord (v15) but he also wanted to give a gift to Elisha. In other places in the Bible we see people like Zacchaeus and Lydia doing this to show gratitude but Elisha refused the gift. Possibly that was because it wouldn't be right for Elisha to accept the gift when the healing had been the work of God. Or possibly it was because with Naaman's pagan background the commander would think that his gift was buying, or paying for, the favour of God whereas the Bible persistently teaches about the grace, that is the free and undeserved gifts, of God.

But, after Naaman had started back home Elisha's servant, Gehazi, followed him (v20) and invented a story about some visitors so that he could ask Naaman for silver and fancy clothes which he said would be given to the visitors. His tale was intended to explain why Elisha had apparently changed his mind, but it was a lie. Naaman was pleased to make the gift but since Elisha had refused the gift it is possible that this action by Gehazi also harmed Naaman's understanding and faith.

Upon returning Gehazi put the silver and clothes in the house (v24). When he met Elisha and was asked where he had been he had to lie again (v25), to try to conceal what he had done.

This is an example, as mentioned in unit 1, of how lies can pile up and we end up weaving a whole web of them to maintain the pretence.



God knows the heart

The words of Psalm 19 verse 14 are often said as a prayer by preachers in church but they are from one of the Psalms of David and are words we should all echo.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord my rock and my redeemer.

When we ask that the words of our mouth might be acceptable to God this should stir us up to tell the truth and not to lie, because we know that lies are wrong in God's sight. But we also pray that the meditation of our hearts would be acceptable to God and this reminds us of what we see elsewhere in the Bible, that

God knows the secrets of the heart (Psalm 44.21) even when we think we keep things hidden from Him. Gehazi thought his deception was hidden, but Elisha knew what had happened, presumably because God had told him.

**"Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight"**



Gehazi lied in order that he might gain personally from what God had done, but he could not deceive God.