

Heartsease.

In the fifth chapter of the Second Book of Kings, in the 11th and 15th verses, you will find these two little sentences: "Behold I thought," and "Behold, now I know." They were spoken by the same person, Naaman, the Syrian, who was captain of the host of the King of Syria, a great man, an honorable man, and a mighty man of valour, but he was a leper. Through the little captive maid of Israel, who waited on his wife, he heard that there was a prophet in Samaria who would be able to recover him of his leprosy. Some one told the King of Syria about this prophet, and he sent a letter to the King of Israel by a messenger carrying costly presents with him, and asking the King to cure Naaman's leprosy. The monarch was unable to do it, but Elisha said "Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman went in his chariot, with all his retinue to the door of the prophet's house, and Elisha sent him a message by a servant telling him what to do. Naaman was affronted. He went away angry, and said: "Behold I thought" that such and such things would happen, and, instead only this message comes, and that, too, by the hands of a servant.

Naaman was evidently a good master. He treated his servants kindly, and they desired his recovery so much that they begged him to consider what an easy thing it was the prophet had told him to do, just "wash and be clean." So Naaman obeyed the message, and he went back and washed seven times, as he was told, in Jordan, and came back a different man within and without, for he stood at Elisha's door once more calling himself the prophet's servant, and confessing, "Behold, now I know there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."

We all know this history. We have heard it many times, perhaps, but I want to draw your attention to those two little sentences: "Behold I thought" and "Behold, now I know."

Do you remember how, when Moses, the Man of God, was told that all the people in the wilderness were to have flesh to eat instead of manna for a whole month, he questioned "Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them?" or "Shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them?" Again, when Samuel was sent to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be king over Israel, he looked on Eliab and thought "Surely the Lord's anointed was before him because of his fine countenance and the height of his stature; but God's ways are not man's ways and 'the Lord seeth not as man seeth.'"

Even David, when he thought that it was not right for him "to dwell in a house of cedar and the ark of God within curtains" was mistaken, for though Nathan, the prophet, at first said to him to "Go,