

Naaman had doubtless tried every means in his power to get this, humanly speaking, incurable disease removed. But neither the friends who surrounded him, nor the physicians who attended him, nor the wealth which he possessed, nor the god which he worshipped in the house of Rimmon, could remove either the leprosy from his body or sin from his soul. We are not informed how long he had been afflicted with this terrible disease; but it is quite evident he had an intense desire to be cleansed. He was quite willing to pay a high price, subject himself to a painful operation, or perform a long journey if he could only be restored to health. But what was to be done? The king of Syria could not cure him; the physicians of Syria could not cure him; the gods of Syria could not cure him: and what was to be done? *There seemed to be no remedy;* and the last ray of hope was about to disappear. But man's extremity is God's opportunity; and one of the links of that chain which was to draw him to the proper source for help was in his own house, though he knew it not. The Syrians, as we are informed in the sacred narrative, had "gone out by companies and brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid: and she waited on Naaman's wife. And 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." These glad tidings soon reach the ear of Naaman; he informs the king and is sent by his sovereign to the king of Israel for a cure. For "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. And 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. And 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." Alas for poor Naaman, his hopes are once more blasted; the king of Israel cannot cure him of his leprosy, and every door seems now to be closed against him. Naaman erred in going where God did not send him; he was directed by the little Hebrew captive to go not to Israel's king for a cure, but to the prophet that is in Samaria. The man of God having heard the result of Naaman's interview