

..."Is All Well?" And He Said "All Is Well"...

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[0 : 00] Now we turn together and read the Word of God, if we can. In the Book of Second Kings, and chapter 5 verse 15.

It's titled, Gehazi's Greed and Punishment. We'll read that section together. Let me read the Word of God.

Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him, and he said, Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.

So accept now a present from your servant. But he said, As the Lord lives before whom I stand, I will receive now.

And he urged him to take it, but he refused. Then Naaman said, If not, please let there be given to your servant two mule loads of earth, for from now on your servant will not offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any God but the Lord.

[1 : 36] In this matter, may the Lord pardon your servant. When my master was into the house of women to worship there, leaning on my arm, and I bowed myself in the house of women, when I bowed myself in the house of women, the Lord pardon your servant in this matter.

He said to him, Go in peace. But when Naaman had gone from him a short distance, Gehazi the servant of Ilyusha, the man of God said, See my master has spared this Naaman, this Syrian, and not accepting from his hand what he has brought.

As the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him. So Gehazi followed Naaman.

And when Naaman saw someone running after him, he got down from his chariot to meet him and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well.

My master has sent me to say, There have just now come to me from the whole country of Ethiopia two young men of the sons of the prophets.

[2 : 54] Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothing. And Naaman said, Be pleased to accept two talents.

And he urged them and tied up two talents of silver and two bags with two changes of clothing and laid them on two of his servants. And they carried them before Gehazi.

And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and put them in the house. And he sent the men away. And they departed. He went down and stood before his master.

And he looked at said to him, Where have you been Gehazi? And he said, Your servant went nowhere. But he said to him, Did not my heart go when the man turned from his chariot to meet you?

Was it a time to accept money and garments? All of orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male servants and female servants.

[4 : 02] Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever. So he went out from his presence, a leper like snow.

Amen. The scene of God's word be blessed to us this day. And I just want to take for our text the words of verse 21.

The final words there where Naaman asks Gehazi is all well. Gehazi responded to Naaman all is well.

Now we jumped into that chapter in the middle. And I'll just give you a recap here of where we are before we look at the passage.

We need to understand what is going on here. We follow on from probably the more well known story of Naaman.

[5 : 19] The Syrian commander who was, if you recall, was told by Elisha to go and dip himself seven times in the river Jordan because he had come to him covered in leprosy.

And that was a cure for him to dip seven times in the river Jordan though he was initially reluctant to do so.

He wanted to go to another river that was far cleaner and better in his eyes. But by the encouragement of his own servants that were with him, he went and dipped himself in the river and his flesh was restored to that of our little child as it says in the concluding verse 14 of that section.

So in the passage we have come to ourselves today, we follow on and meet the healthy Naaman who has just been restored and returns to the man of God Elisha confessing his belief in the Lord and with the desire to leave with him gifts of thanks.

None of which Elisha is willing to receive nor has any desire to receive. Now this man Naaman as commander of the Syrian army most likely responsible for having planned and orchestrated a number of raids upon the land of Israel.

[7 : 07] Essentially this Naaman character was Israel's enemy. He would have already have stripped Israel of many valuable treasure and maybe now having been healed by the power of the Lord that he is feeling inclined or even guilty to return some form of something of significant value.

And although Elisha refuses, it's in a sense quite comical that he ends up going away with Moa and he came with again.

He leaves even if it is only with two mule loads of soil for grounds to build an altar. He's returning again once Moa with the fruits of Israel.

But our man that we meet in the passage Gihazi goes running after Naaman once he leaves because his heart's been seduced.

He's been beguiled by Naaman's treasure that he was offering before Elisha to take. He himself has been instructed by the voice of greed in his heart but he has ultimately been deluded by the devil.

[8 : 31] And today I would like to consider and apply the question Put to Gihazi by Naaman. We are familiar with asking each other how are you or are you well?

And automatically respond with good or fine or quite often as I say myself not bad. But that's not really a great answer either.

And say not bad it's essentially saying that there is nothing bad I want to talk with you about. And say not bad it is implying to others that all is well.

There is nothing bad that I will speak of with you. But to ask is all well as we find it in verse 21.

That's something different. For that implies that there is something initially wrong. You know yourself if you've seen someone struggling with something you would ask is all well.

[9 : 45] Even though we do ask that question with that genuine concern we often ourselves defer from telling the truth that is not making as well.

I just want to put that question to each of us today. The simple yet quite profound question is it well with you?

But firstly we look at Gihazih. Was he well as he claimed he was? You can imagine this man most likely having been stood there surveying with Ilyusha what Naaman was offering to and craving that he would have accepted some form of treasure from him.

And possibly thinking and maybe justifiably so that he would take back a portion of Israel's stolen property.

And additionally note of regress that he had been healed of his leprosy. And it more or less says in verse 20 that it would be rude in a way not to accept this offering especially from Naaman the Syrian.

[11 : 14] He's the Syrian who has taken everything from us. We rightly deserve something back from him. And then in verse 20 he's speaking.

See my master has spared this name on the Syrian and not accepting from his hand what he has brought. He's speaking in text as enclosed in speech marks.

But who's he speaking to? Is it Ilyusha? Well definitely not Ilyusha. I would have corrected it. Is it another servant?

Well possibly he might be reasoning with another servant. But I believe the main person he is speaking to here is himself.

He's composing convincing talk of just getting something. Just a talent. Just a little bit more than I have.

[12 : 19] Just to get something back. And it's worth noting in passing that we are on very dangerous grounds when we have to start justifying our sinful desires to ourselves.

We almost need to talk ourselves into it being a good thing. We almost need to lie to ourselves and convince ourselves that it may be possibly the polite thing to do or the right thing to do.

And usually making that justification on a worldly basis. We need to be wary that we are most likely talking ourselves round into something that is at its core wrong.

Even though if we discuss with the world our justifying they may reason with us that it is right and good.

But it is not the world that is our guide. It is the word. It is the word of God that is our guide. And making these decisions and making it clear to us what we should do and how we should restrain from temptations that arise.

[13 : 50] But in this instance, Warsh still is that he justifies it in the Lord's name. He claims as the Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him.

And it just seems like we are hitting this downward spiral from now on with Kehazih. Is this what the Lord wants?

No, no, far from it. His speech to the people might sound good, but he is far from being well.

Justifying our sinful actions in the Lord's name will unquestionably face God's punishment. Not that he sees it, not that Kehazih sees it.

Not even when asked is all well. You know, this should have been an arrow to his heart. It is all well when a man asks him.

[14 : 53] Is there something wrong? Is essentially what he is saying to him? And he should have realized, yes, I am wrong, is what he should have realized.

But no, he continues in his plan. He should have turned on his heels and he should have gone back. But he didn't.

The temptation was too strong in him. His conscience was dead to assess his motivations and intentions.

The downward spiral just goes on and on. He claims all this well when we know that's a lie. Then he makes up a lie of this story in order to get something from Neyman.

He has to hide what he receives and then he lies to his master, Elisha, when he asks him where he was.

[15 : 58] And so justly receives a punishment in the form of leprosy. And the justification of a punishment takes no convincing, like the justification of our sinful desire.

The punishment is unarguably right and just. And I don't want to entirely focus on the mistakes that Gihazi has made, because we all make mistakes if we are honest with ourselves.

We make big mistakes, we make small mistakes, and we even make silly mistakes. The devil tempts us and tricks us and we often fall Christian or not.

But the first error made here, I believe, was that he did not follow his master's example. Elisha was his master.

Elisha refused the riches that Neyman had offered. But he desired them. He did not go with his master, but he went the other way.

[17 : 12] He did not consult with his master, but he listened to his own voice of reason. For had he followed his master's example, all would have been well.

Had he desired to be with the company of his master, he would have been kept from this. Had he consulted with his master, he would have advised him accordingly.

But the sad thing is, is in a sense that Elisha's words didn't mean anything to him.

He had just witnessed this miracle of Neyman being healed. He had left, left his full of leprosy, and come back cleansed.

Elisha's words weren't valued by him. Elisha refused these riches, and he should have listened to that refusal.

[18 : 16] But he didn't. Hence, Elisha's words didn't satisfy his soul, and so he went from the presence of his master.

He was not content with these words, but he let his sinful desire lead him to these riches, no matter what lie he needed.

But Neyman was one who freely parted with riches. He parted with his wealth, as he was a well man.

And can we learn here from Gehazi, we should not cling or desire the riches, and hold on to them.

But that the well man freely shared them with the one in need. And is the Christians master not Christ?

[19 : 22] Is he not the Christians' example? Is Christ not the Christians' guide, the Christians' wisdom and understanding?

Do Christ's words satisfy you, and are we content in Christ, content to share our wealth?

And does our love towards Christ overcome and suppress any sinful desire that rises within us?

And I suppose in a century we must constantly ask ourselves, is it well? Is all well within me? Is the word of God asking me constantly, am I right, be related to Christ?

Am I close enough to Christ? Is it well with me in my relationship to Christ? But it is alive and searching within our soul, and maybe at times requires to pierce our hearts.

[20 : 37] Is your soul well? And we can only truly say that if we are secured in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Can you say without deceiving yourself that your soul is well? Has he deceived himself? He said his soul was well, but we know it wasn't.

Are you trusting faithfully in Christ as your Savior, that he takes all your wrong and makes you well?

Here's a Master who will keep the faithful servant from slipping. And it reminds me of Psalm 73, in a sense, you can find it here.

Psalm 73, the Psalmist is looking at the world and complaining that they seem to have it so easy, but the Christian's life is so difficult and he's struggling.

[21 : 39] And I'll just read through some of the verses that says, Yet God is good to Israel, to each pure-hearted one, and he admits, But as for me, my steps near slipped, my feet were almost gone.

And he says, as he looks at the wicked ones, their mouths are set against the heavens, and in their blasphemous talk, behold, these are the wicked ones, and yet they prostrate as they will.

In worldly things they do increase in wealth and riches still. But the key to this is that the Psalmist has seen all this, but he says, when I this thought to know, it was too hard a thing for me, till to God's sanctuary I went, and I, their end, did see.

That's what opened his eyes, coming close to God. And he says, assuredly they did them said, in a slippery place upon them, suddenly they cast down into destruction.

And he admits, my flesh and heart have fainted and failed, but God has failed me never, for off my heart God is the strength and portion forever.

[23 : 16] But surely it is good for me that I draw near to God. We need to draw near to God.

We need to be near our master, and following his every word, and being satisfied with what he has done for us. Satisfied with his example, that he is the one to counsel, conduct and guide, and to thy glory after word receive me to abide.

But he has it here, he's perceived by men to be close to God. He was one of elitious servants. So easily deceived by the devil, and the Christian must always be aware of this, though my flesh may faint and fail.

And surely they can easily be led astray. The fact is that the devil makes so many subtle attacks at every angle on the Christian to make him fail, and we must be vigilant against these attacks.

It's almost like he's throwing seeds of thorns and weeds within us. And they can sprout very quickly, especially if we allow them to.

[24 : 36] And you can turn around and see them sprouting un-aided within us. And we can be perplexed by the presence of these sins in our hearts, and question ourselves, how am I thinking like that, and where did that come from?

But yet we admit that at times we fail and allow them to grow and sprout. And maybe very rarely, in fact, we can say that all is well, completely well, especially when I look at myself on the Christian walk.

We are guilty at times of overvaluing people's perceptions and undermining God's. The sinful eye, how dangerous it is to each of us.

And I quickly require a suppression and self-control and private prayer. But we need to be able to identify these bad seeds and bad thorns.

Because as sooner they are killed, the better. Our natural eye will lead us to and through. It's almost like the kid's story, the detection of the fire.

[25 : 50] We need to be able to detect the sin within us. Maybe we are nearer the world than we are to God.

Maybe as Christians we are following the worldly ways too closely. Spurgeon said, discernment is not knowing right from wrong, but knowing right from nearly right.

That's true discernment. And sometimes that's easy, but most of the time that's pretty difficult. It's difficult to discern, but all the more difficult when we are not in a close relationship to God.

If we are not within the presence of our Savior, and not reliant on the Lord's counsel, conduct and guidance, it's extremely difficult to discern between wrong and right, even in its widest context.

But how do we deal with saying all is not well? We might be saying, I don't feel well. And I suppose it's a good thing, because you can see that there's something.

[27 : 13] You've detected the sin. There's an alarm going off saying that there's something wrong. And it's refreshing in a sense to hear the Christians say that they're struggling, and all is not well with me.

Because we can associate with that. We know what it's like when we feel that we're struggling, and we feel like all is not well, because it is not always well all the time within us.

But to know that all is not well shows you that the Lord is still working in you. You have not departed from the Lord's ways. For if we did say that all is always well, then surely we have.

We have not been alarmed by the passions and lusts that sprout within us. Not feeling the conviction of the conscience. When asked, it is all well.

I listened to your service a while back. It was probably worth sharing. It was based on Peter's denial of Christ. And he was so confident and willing to lay his life down for Christ when they took him away.

[28 : 28] But he denied him. He denied him three times. And though he went out in bitter tears, though he would have thought himself so unwell at that time, you know a good medicine for well-being is repentance in this sense.

But it was mostly because he was kept by Christ. Because Christ had prayed for him. And that's the key to our keeping that Christ has prayed for us.

We cannot keep ourselves, though often we fail. Though often all is not well. Things may even be terrible with us, but Christ has prayed.

Even though Satan demands to have you. Though he persistently keeps scattering thorny seeds. Though we fail in restraining the tuitations that spread within us.

And often fall by them, the Lord is praying. And it will be far better to follow that example of our master.

[29 : 45] As he Lusha gave the example to Gehazi, he should have followed his words and his actions. Receiving nothing from no other hand.

You should not have gone running after other hands to feed the satisfactions. His master was enough to satisfy him. Christ is enough to satisfy you.

We must do likewise and follow our master's example. Who prays, so must we. And ultimately we can say, for all around me does not seem well.

Nor my heart is considered well. My saviour is prayed. And his prayer will maintain and glorify the beautiful salvation within my soul.

He is my High Priest who prays on my behalf. And here is that sacrifice that was on the cross for me.

[30 : 58] And because of that I can assuredly say that all is well with me. The Christian resting in the Christ of the cross that died for them.

Portas blood out to justify them before God is well. But maybe you are sitting here today and you are saying all is well.

I am doing life my way and I am running away from the presence of your good master. Running after the world and always looking for a wee bit more satisfied with your own reasoning.

But never really finding yourself satisfied in life. Gihazzi had a love for money and appearances. And he longed for a religious rebuke of verse 26.

What is the time for talents and money and wealth and servants? That was Gihazzi's longing for these things.

[32 : 04] And though all is not truly well. We can certainly portray that things are well in our life. And we are almost inclined to in this day and age where we have these media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

That master how to portray ourselves well to others. To say all is well. To feed our pride and maybe you take pictures of yourselves telling yourself that all is well.

And you take pictures of yourself all as well. But equally when people do not respond to these pictures that you post or things that you share. That can instill a negative evaluation.

I don't know it is my own opinion but I don't think taking selfies is good for anyone. You know you assess it. You assess it minutely.

If you want to take a selfie, take a selfie of your soul and assess that. There will be no sharing of that over the internet when you see what is truly within you.

[33 : 17] Assessing your soul will be far will benefit you far more abundantly. But when you look at it what do you see? Is it a well person? You say when you look at your soul, my soul as well.

Where have you been Gehazi? Elisha asked him. Is this the master asking this of you today?

Where have you been? Have you stopped following me? Has your heart been drawn away by temptations and thorny seeds that have sprouted in you?

But that we would be honest in these matters before a God who knows all truth, who knows us better than ourselves. That we will not try to deceive him.

There is no point in doing that. He is the one who will exercise a just judgment on us.

[34 : 18] So ask yourselves is it worth running after riches for an eternity in hell? Come into His presence like the Samist of Psalm 73 and see that you are on a slippery place.

That you would come. If you are willing, come and say to Christ, if you are willing make me clean, as so many have already done.

Trust the one that will hold you by your right hand continually and faithfully will never let you go as a loving father will do.

I just want to close. With all these considerations within our thoughts and minds today, there is a story of a man called Horatius Spafford.

He went to America and invested a lot of money in property in Chicago and lost most of it in the great fire of Chicago in 1871.

[35 : 24] And then as far as I gather, his daughters and his wife returned to UK. He stayed and the ship that they were sailing on collided with another one and the four daughters were drowned but the wife survived.

This man had lost everything to him more or less. His money and his family were gone. And he wrote to him, it is well with my soul.

I think he actually wrote it when he was coming back from America. It goes like this, when peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea bulls roll, whatever my lot there has taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buff it, though trials should come, let his blessed assurance control, that Christ has regarded my helpless estate and has shed his own blood for my soul.

My sin or the bliss of the glorious thought, my sin not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more, praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul.

[36 : 49] For me it be Christ, be it Christ hence to live, if Jordan above me shall roll, no pang shall be mine, for in death as in life, thou wilt whisper thy peace to my soul.

But Lord is for thee, for thy coming we wait, the sky not the gravest are go, O Trump of the angel, O voice of the Lord, blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul.

And Lord haste the day when faith shall be sited, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend, even so it is well with my soul.

This man he had learned to say in his province that it was well with my soul, though on outwardly all was not well, he was trusting and warm, he was close to warm, he was Christ, he was Christ who gave him life, the Christ who whispered peace to my soul.

And because of that he was able to say, whatever my Lord that has taught me to say it as well, it is well with my soul.

[38 : 22] How is your soul today? Is it well? Is it well? Will you assess it? By the word of God, will you be satisfied with the words of Christ?

Will Christ be your master? Will he be the one to lead you and guide you and pray that he will? And that you will see as you drop close to him that he is the one of good counsel, that he is the one of good and guidance to you.

Let us close by singing or listening to the words of Sam 39.

In Sam 39 in the sing Psalms, verse 1 to 6, I said, now let me watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin.

I'll put a muzzle on my mouth while I'm with wicked men. Verse 1, verse 2, verse 6, may these words and these thoughts be blessed to us this day, and afterwards I'll close with a word of God.

[39 : 40] Let us listen to these words. I'll put a muzzle on my mouth while I'm with wicked men.

All thy grace and need by tongue proceed. I would answer, love my heart, while I'm with wicked men, whether I am silent and disill, and family ever please.

Though speaking, even thought was true, is made by faith in peace.

Because of this my heart true holds, the fire and smoke will keep.

The more I lose, the more it runs, the lighter heathens to me.

[41 : 18] Though sure he that my life will end, of many days at sea, and cause me love to understand, the short my life will be.

O Lord, I'm sure to make my faith before I seek the death.

My years are running in your sight, my time is past the break.

And like a shadow holds above, he answers, love and pro.

He needs a wealth that does not know you, his death will prove.

[42 : 50] Just conclude with a word of prayer. Our heavenly Father, show us how brief our life will be, that we would make provision for our souls in Christ Jesus, that we would come and be made well by him, and that we can say, that each one of us can say that is gathered here, it is well with my soul, truly because of Christ Jesus, and what he has done for me.

He has redeemed, he has brought me back to himself, and my eyes are opened. When I come into his presence, and his presence satisfies me like the satisfaction I find nowhere else in this world, I know where else in this world can I go, to whom else can I go, but to you, O Lord Jesus Christ, be with us as we part, be with us within our thoughts and meditations, be with us in the week ahead.

May we not be running after riches, may we stay close to you, may the devil not deceive us, but may we stay on the narrow path of that life, that is promised to the believer who faithfully holds to you, regardless of what situation they are faced in, or put upon.

They could say it is well with my soul. Be with us in our parts, may our thoughts be blessed and our study, as food for the souls of you who are gathered, forgive us our sins with three, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.