



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 9th October 2022
Trinity 17

This morning's reading from 2 Kings, the story of Naaman's healing, is one of my favourites. Sometimes jokes in the Bible are hard to spot, but this is supposed to be a funny story. Naaman with all his pomp and circumstance, is entirely fobbed off by Elisha who doesn't even leave the house. And so we hear Naaman's slightly petulant complaint that 'I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy.' We're supposed to have a chuckle at poor Naaman's expense.

But I think this passage actually points us to a real dilemma in the life of faith. It asks us to confront the anti-climax of salvation, the unimpressiveness of God's action. Because how often do we long for God to do something spectacular, and make things so clear that we can't miss it? Maybe a dramatic healing, or an audible voice telling us what to do next. How often do we want all the drama and special effects of a miracle, but instead we get something that feels a little disappointing?

That's Naaman's experience, he wants drama and flare, and instead he's told to go away and wash in a river – something he thinks he could just as well have done back home. And yet, he is still healed.

So I think we're asked this morning to recognise the miracles of God in the unimpressive and the anti-climactic. Just because we hope for a booming voice and the finger of God, but instead we get a simple sense of direction, or a gentle whisper of leading, it doesn't mean that God isn't still powerfully at work. Or just because we hope for a miraculous healing that baffles the doctors, but instead, we get the ministry of those who care for us, and the work of professionals, and the simple knowledge of God with us in our trial, it doesn't mean that God isn't working miracles on our behalf.

So perhaps we might seek to open our eyes to the signs of God at work. To see him in gentle, simple, humble moments of grace. In the unimpressive and anti-climactic day-to-day miracles he works. And perhaps we might turn to God and give thanks for those moments, trusting that he is at work, whatever it looks like to us.

2 Kings 5.1-3, 7-15

Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy. Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." So the king of Aram sent a letter to the king of Israel: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!" When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Make the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'?" So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel."

Luke 17.11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to the Samaritan, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

TODAY

9:30am: Trinity Seventeen: Rev'd Gerard Rundell presides and preaches.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Mon 7:30pm, via Zoom: **Bible Study Group (see codes below)**
Wed 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**
Thurs 2.00pm, Community Room: **Film Club showing Dream Horse**
Fri 5.00pm, via Zoom: **Food for Thought (see codes below)**
Sat 10am- 2pm, Community Room: **Children Society Coffee Morning and opening of the collection boxes**
Sun 16th 9:30am **Trinity Eighteen.** Rev'd Ray Devenney presides and Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches from Jeremiah 31.27-34, 2 Timothy 3.14 - 4.5, Luke 18.1-8

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Tues 18th 7:00pm: Church, **Silverline Memories Jubilee Choir**
Thurs 27th 2:00pm: Community Room, **Chat and Craft**
Sun 30th 6:00pm: **Church, All Soul's Service**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link <https://bit.ly/Trinity17>

SILVERLINE MEMORIES JUBILEE CHOIR – have their first public performance here at St Aidan's Church on Tuesday 18th of October at 7pm. They have been practising hard and would love you to come along and support them. Entrance is donations on the door.

ALL SOULS SERVICE – will be held on Sunday 30th October at 6.00pm to commemorate those dearly departed. To have the name of a loved one read out during the service, please add their name to the list at the back of church. Names from previous years will not automatically be read out. If you are unable to add the name yourself, please contact the Administrator or a church warden who will add the name on your behalf.

ONLINE TALK - CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE: A CHRISTIAN DILEMMA - following our recent Just Stop Oil event, this online talk on 10th Oct 2022 at 7.00pm explores the crucial question: are Christians ever justified in resorting to acts of non-violent civil disobedience as a means of protest? Dr Carmody Grey is a deeply thoughtful and insightful commentator on the ethical issues of our day, particularly in relation to faith and the climate crisis. Click this link [via Facebook](#) to find out more. Advance registration for this event is essential. You can [REGISTER HERE](#).

BIBLE STUDY GROUP – has resumed on Zoom (see details below). Monday's at 7.30pm continuing to look at the gospel of Luke. The first few sessions cover Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Everyone welcome, whether for one session or all. Contact Ken Newitt for more details (kmnewitt@outlook.com).

HARVEST FESTIVAL – our food and £50 cash donations have been delivered to the People's Kitchen and Kenton Foodbank who are very grateful for your generosity.

FUNDRAISING FOR PAKISTAN – thank you to everyone who supported last weekend's fundraising. We have raised £300 for the Pakistan Flood Appeal.

ORDINAND – starting today, Sunday 9th Oct, we will have an ordinand joining us. Claire Lewis is studying at Cramner Hall, Durham and will be with us for 2 terms. Please introduce yourself to Claire to make her feel welcome.

PRISONS WEEK – beginning today, Sunday 9th Oct, is a week that asks Christians to pray for those in prison and those who work to offer them hope. Karen will explain more today.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09> Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS: if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link
<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – St Nicholas' Cathedral. Churchwardens and all involved in looking after our building

For the community – Groups using our Community Room and the Community Centre

For the world – particularly for Ukraine, her people, and refugees. For Pakistan suffering devastating effects of flooding. For our own national and political life.

For those in particular need - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Bill Hickey

For those who have died and those who grieve. On their anniversaries: Diane Beavers, Amy Cook, Mollie Rickaby, Sheila Fawcett, Ernest Terry, Denis Jockelson, Roy Dryburgh

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