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Churches of Christ Salute You with a Herald of Truth: Naaman

James Nichols

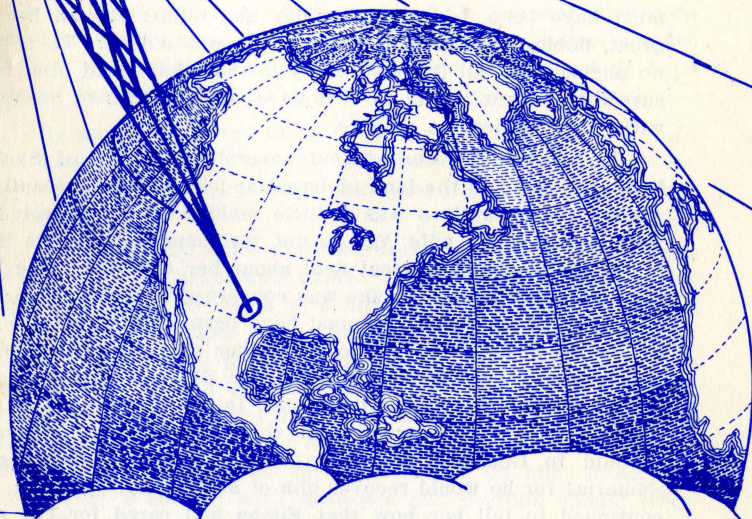
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*Churches of Christ—
Salute You
with a*



Naaman

James W. Nichols

March 22, 1953

Herald of Truth

Naaman

James W. Nichols

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There once was a great man; great in the eyes of his own people and great in the eyes of the world as a military leader. He was successful, valiant and noble, but he was a leper. We find the Holy Spirit speaking of him in this manner in II Kings 5:1: "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper." What a blight this must have been, haunting him day and night; though he was great, noble, wealthy and powerful, he was a leper. There was no physician in all the land of Syria that could heal him. I am sure that he was confident that he would go down to his grave with that loathsome disease.

We also find recorded that several companies of Syrians had gone down to the land of Israel and brought back captives. Among those captives was a little maid who was selected to wait on Naaman's wife. We do not read much about this little maid, but we know a great deal about her character. She was kind and considerate, for she was concerned over the welfare of her mistress' husband; she must have been faithful and diligent in her work, for when she spoke to her mistress concerning a possible cure, her mistress believed her. She was courageous and unafraid to profess her faith in God. In the third verse of that 5th chapter, it is recorded that she said unto her mistress: "Would to God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." Perhaps, she continued to tell her how that Elisha had cared for the poor widow by giving increase of oil and meal throughout the drought. Perhaps she told how that the widow's two sons were saved from slavery by the prophet, and, maybe, she told of how Elisha had raised the child of a poor woman from the dead. But, regardless of what else she told, she did believe and profess that Elisha could cure Naaman's leprosy and they listened to her.

When Naaman and the king of Syria heard the words of the maiden, the King was so thrilled that he said, "I will send a letter of recommendation to the king of Israel." He must have thought, as men do today, that it is the men of authority and power who are the greatest; if a thing was to be gotten, it must be from the king.

So we can see this man starting out to the king of Israel

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with all of his letters of introduction, with gold and silver amounting to something like \$50,000, and raiment. He had great hopes, but those hopes were soon dashed when he presented the letters to the king of Israel. The letters frightened the king. He knew that he could not cure Naaman of his leprosy. With all of his power, prestige and honor, he could not save him. He immediately thought that this was some trick by which the king of Syria could bring war against the land of Israel. In the 7th verse, the Holy Spirit says: "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." When the king rent his mantle and cried aloud, it soon spread throughout all the land that the king was grieved.

By and by the word came to Elisha, and he sent word unto the king saying, "Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

When Naaman heard these words, he immediately took leave of the king of Israel and rushed to the home of Elisha, the scripture says, "He came with his horses and with his chariot and stood at the door of the house of Elisha." I do not know anything about the prophet's house, but we might be led to believe that it was an unassuming dwelling. However, there stands a mighty general of Syria with all of his servants and attendants awaiting at the door. Perhaps Naaman thought he was doing Elisha a great favor by calling on him. It was an honor that a man of such influence and position should come to such a humble abode. By faith, I can picture Naaman as he haughtily sent word in for Elisha to come out. Do you know what Elisha did? He sent back word that he should go wash himself in the Jordan seven times. Think of it; Naaman, a mighty man of honor, possessing letters of introduction from no less than the king of Syria and Elisha didn't even come out to see him, but told him to go wash himself in the Jordan—as if to indicate that he had not kept himself clean. The scripture says, in the 11th and 12th verses: "But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned away in a rage."

YOU MAY HEAR THE HERALD OF TRUTH OVER THESE STATIONS

Alabama, Anniston	WHMA	1450	1:00 p.m.
Auburn	WAUD	1230	1:00 p.m.
Birmingham	WSGN	610	8:00 a.m.
Florence	WJOI	1340	9:30 a.m.
Gadsden	WGAD	1350	1:00 p.m.
Greenville	WGYV		4:00 p.m.
Huntsville	WHBS	1490	1:00 p.m.
Marion	WJAM	1310	9:30 a.m.
Mobile	WABB	1480	6:30 a.m.
Montgomery	WAPX	1600	1:00 p.m.
Selma	WGWC	1340	1:30 p.m.
Tuscaloosa	WJRD	1150	9:00 p.m.
Arizona, Phoenix	KOY	550	7:00 a.m.
Tucson	KCN	580	3:00 p.m.
Arkansas, Eldorado	KDMS	1290	1:00 p.m.
Ft. Smith	KFSA	950	1:00 p.m.
Hot Springs	KTHS	1090	1:00 p.m.
Little Rock	KGHI	1250	1:00 p.m.
Springdale	KBRS	1340	6:00 p.m.
Calif., Bakersfield	KPMC	1560	10:00 a.m.
Blythe	KYOR	1450	3:30 p.m.
Brawley	KROP	1300	3:30 p.m.
Eureka	KIEM	1480	8:00 a.m.
Fresno	KARM	1430	3:30 p.m.
Indio	KREO	1400	3:30 p.m.
Los Angeles	KECA	790	3:30 p.m.
Modesto	KTRB	860	3:00 p.m.
San Francisco	KGO	810	3:30 p.m.
San Luis Obispo	KATY	1340	3:30 p.m.
Colorado, Craig	KRAI	1230	5:30 p.m.
Denver	KVOD	630	3:00 p.m.
Conn., Bridgeport	WNAB	1450	2:00 p.m.
Hartford	WHTD	1230	2:30 p.m.
Delaware, Wilmington	WILM	1450	2:00 p.m.
Florida, Gainesville	WGGG	1230	1:00 p.m.
Jacksonville	WPDQ	600	8:30 a.m.
Leesburg	WLBE	790	check sta.
Miami	WQAM	560	1:00 p.m.
Panama City	WPCF	1400	1:00 p.m.
Pensacola	WEAR	1230	11:00 p.m.
Tallahassee	WTNT	1450	5:00 p.m.
Tampa, St. Pete	WSUN	620	1:00 p.m.
Georgia, Atlanta	WGST	920	1:00 p.m.
Augusta	WGAC	580	2:00 p.m.
Brunswick	WGIC	1440	1:00 p.m.
Cairo	WGRA	1300	3:00 p.m.
Columbus	WGBA	1460	7:30 a.m.
Dawson	WDWD	990	2:00 p.m.
Macon	WNEX	1400	1:00 p.m.
Rome	WLAQ	670	1:00 p.m.
Savannah	WDAR	1400	1:00 p.m.
Valdosta	WGAF	910	1:00 p.m.
Idaho, Boise	KGEM	1140	3:00 p.m.
Pocatello	KEIO	1440	9:30 a.m.
Twin Falls	KTFI	1270	7:30 a.m.
Illinois, Chicago	WENR-WLS	890	2:30 p.m.
Quincy	WGEM	1440	8:00 a.m.
Indiana, Anderson	WHBU	1240	1:30 p.m.
Bloomington	WTTT	1370	1:00 p.m.
Evansville	WJPS	1330	10:15 p.m.
Ft. Wayne	WGL	1250	1:00 p.m.
Iowa, Cedar Rapids	WMT	600	7:30 a.m.
Davenport	WOC	1420	check sta.
Des Moines	KSO	1460	1:00 p.m.
Sioux City	KSCJ	1360	10:30 p.m.
Waterloo	KXEL	1540	5:30 p.m.
Kansas, Coffeyville	KGGF	690	2:00 p.m.
Topeka	WREN	1250	1:00 p.m.
Wichita	KWBB	1410	3:30 p.m.
Ken., Bowling Green	WKOT	930	1:00 p.m.
Harlan	WHLN	1230	3:00 p.m.
Louisville	WKLO	1080	1:00 p.m.
Mayfield	WKTM	1050	4:15 p.m.
Newport	WNOP	740	2:00 p.m.
Paducah	WKYB	570	check sta.
Louisiana, Baton Rouge	WLCS	910	1:00 p.m.
Monroe	KMLB	1440	2:00 p.m.

New Orleans	WDSU	1280	1:00 p.m.
Shreveport	KRMD	1340	1:00 p.m.
Maine, Bangor	WABI	910	1:00 p.m.
Portland	WPOR	1450	9:00 a.m.
Maryland, Baltimore	WFBR	1300	3:00 p.m.
Cumberland	WDYK	1230	8:00 a.m.
Mass., Gardner	WHOB	1490	1:00 p.m.
Lawrence	WLAW	680	1:00 p.m.
Springfield	WSPR	1270	2:00 p.m.
Worcester	WAAB	1440	2:00 p.m.
Michigan, Battle Creek	WELL	1400	1:00 p.m.
Bay City	WBCM	1440	1:00 p.m.
Detroit	WXYZ	1270	1:00 p.m.
Flint	WFDF	910	10:00 p.m.
Lansing	WILS	1320	1:00 p.m.
Ludington	WKLA	1450	1:00 p.m.
Mt. Pleasant	WCEN	1150	2:00 p.m.
Muskegon	WKBZ	850	2:00 p.m.
Minn., Minn.-St. Paul	WTCN	1280	7:30 a.m.
Mankato	KTOE	1420	2:00 p.m.
Miss., Centerville	WGIC	1580	8:00 a.m.
Aberdeen	WMPA	1240	1:00 p.m.
Columbus	WGHI	1340	6:00 p.m.
Greenwood	WABG	960	1:00 p.m.
Jackson	WJLI	930	2:00 p.m.
Kosciusko	WZ	1340	1:00 p.m.
Laurel	WLAN	1490	1:00 p.m.
McComb	WSKB	1250	9:30 a.m.
Missouri, Kansas City	KCMO	810	12:30 p.m.
Rolla	KPTR	1490	8:45 a.m.
St. Louis	KOK	630	2:00 p.m.
Springfield	KWTO	560	1:00 p.m.
Montana, Butte	KOPR	580	9:15 a.m.
Great Falls	KMON	560	7:30 a.m.
Nebraska, Lincoln	KFOR	1240	10:30 a.m.
N. Platt	KNBR	970	9:00 a.m.
Omaha	KOIL	1290	5:30 p.m.
Sidney	KSID	1540	9:30 a.m.
N. Hamp., Claremont	WTSV	1230	1:00 p.m.
Lebanon	WTSL	1400	1:00 p.m.
Manchester	WMUR	610	3:00 p.m.
N. Mexico, Albuquerque	KOAT	1450	3:00 p.m.
Carlsbad	KPBK	740	check sta.
Clovis	KCLV	1240	1:00 p.m.
Los Alamos	KRSN	1490	3:00 p.m.
Santa Fe	KTRC	1400	3:00 p.m.
New York, Albany	WXKW	850	2:00 p.m.
New York	WJZ	770	12:30 p.m.
Olean	WHDL	1450	1:00 p.m.
Rochester	WARC	950	3:00 p.m.
Saranac Lake	WEAV	960	2:00 p.m.
Syracuse	WAGE	620	12:00 n.
N. Carolina, Asheville	WOS	1380	1:00 p.m.
Charlotte	WYS	610	1:00 p.m.
Durham	WIK	1310	2:00 p.m.
Fayetteville (Sat.)	WFLB	1490	1:00 p.m.
Salisbury	WJAT	1280	1:00 p.m.
Wilmington	WUNI	1340	8:30 a.m.
Winston-Salem	WAIR	1340	1:00 p.m.
N. Dakota, Fargo	KFGO	790	1:00 p.m.
Ohio, Cleveland	WJW	850	1:00 p.m.
Columbus	WHKC	610	1:00 p.m.
Lima	WIMA	1150	9:00 a.m.
Youngstown	WBBW	1240	8:30 a.m.
Oklahoma, Ada	KADA	1230	1:00 p.m.
Enid	KCRC	1390	1:00 p.m.
McAlester	KTMC	1400	1:00 p.m.
Muskogee	KBIX	1490	2:00 p.m.
Oklahoma City	KTOG	1000	9:30 a.m.
Tulsa	KRMG	740	2:00 p.m.
Oregon, Eugene	KASH	1600	1:00 p.m.
Medford	KMED	1440	7:30 a.m.
Portland	KEX	1190	3:30 p.m.
Redmond	KSGA	1240	3:30 p.m.
The Dalles	KODL	1230	1:00 p.m.
Penn., Johnstown	WCRO	1230	1:00 p.m.

Philadelphia	WFIL	560	2:00 p.m.
Pittsburg	WCAE	1250	3:00 p.m.
Wilkes-Barre	WILK	980	5:00 p.m.
R. Island, Providence	WPJB	1420	1:00 p.m.
S. Carolina, Columbia	WCOS	1400	1:00 p.m.
Florence	WJMX	970	10:30 a.m.
Orangeburg	WRNO	1450	7:00 a.m.
S. Dakota, Aberdeen	KSDN	930	10:30 a.m.
Huron	KJIV	1340	9:00 a.m.
Tenn., Chattanooga	WDEF	1370	1:00 p.m.
Jackson	WTJS	1390	1:00 p.m.
Johnson City	WJHL	910	10:30 p.m.
Knoxville	WBR	1240	1:30 p.m.
Memphis	WMP	650	9:30 p.m.
Morristown	WCRK	1450	check sta.
Nashville	WSIX	980	4:00 p.m.
Texas, Abilene	KRBC	1470	1:00 p.m.
Amarillo	KFDA	1440	1:00 p.m.
Austin	KNOW	1490	2:00 p.m.
Beaumont	KFDM	560	1:00 p.m.
Big Spring	KBST	1490	1:00 p.m.
Brownfield	KTFY	1300	4:30 p.m.
Brownwood	KBWD	1380	6:30 p.m.
Corpus Christi	KEYS	1440	9:00 a.m.
El Paso	KEPO	690	3:00 p.m.
Ft. Worth	WBAP	570	1:00 p.m.
Graham	KSWA	1330	4:30 p.m.
Houston	KXYZ	1320	8:00 a.m.
Longview	KFRO	1370	1:00 p.m.
Lubbock	KFYO	1340	4:00 p.m.
Midland	KCRS	550	1:30 p.m.
Nacogdoches	KOSF	1230	1:00 p.m.
Paris	KPLT	1490	4:00 p.m.
San Angelo	KGKL	960	1:00 p.m.
San Antonio	KMAC	630	9:00 p.m.
Texarkana	KCMC	1230	1:00 p.m.
Wichita Falls	KFDX	990	2:00 p.m.
Utah, Provo	KCSU	1490	3:00 p.m.
Salt Lake City	KUTA	570	7:30 a.m.
Vermont, Brattleboro	WTS	1450	1:00 p.m.
Burlington	WJOY	1230	1:00 p.m.
Montpelier-Barre	WSKI	1240	1:00 p.m.
Virginia, Charlottesville	WINA	1280	9:15 a.m.
Fredericksburg	WFVA	1230	check sta.
Marion	WMEV	1010	2:00 p.m.
Norfolk	WGH	1310	6:30 p.m.
Richmond	WRNL	910	1:30 p.m.
Washington, Aberdeen	KBKW	1450	10:30 p.m.
Omak	KOMW	680	9:15 a.m.
Pasco	KPKW	1340	3:30 p.m.
Seattle	KJR	950	3:30 p.m.
Spokane	KGA	1510	3:30 p.m.
Washington, D. C.	WMAL	630	1:00 p.m.
W. Virginia, Beckley	WVNR	620	1:30 p.m.
Huntington	WHTN	800	8:00 a.m.
Parkersburg, Sat.	WCOM	1230	5:30 p.m.
Wheeling	WKWK	1400	1:00 p.m.
Wisconsin, Green Bay	WDUZ	1400	5:30 p.m.
LaCrosse	WKTY	580	4:00 p.m.
Madison	WIBA	1320	8:00 a.m.
Milwaukee	WCAN	1250	2:00 p.m.
Neenah	WNAM	1280	8:00 a.m.
Wasau	WSAU	1400	9:30 a.m.
Wyoming, Casper	KSPR	1470	9:15 p.m.
Cheyenne	KFBC	710	12:00 p.m.
Cody	KODI	1400	12:00 p.m.
Laramie	KOWB	1340	12:00 p.m.
Rawlins	KRAL	1240	12:00 p.m.
Riverton	KWRL	1450	12:00 p.m.
Torrington	KGOS	1490	12:00 p.m.
World	KWOR	1490	12:00 p.m.
Alaska, Juneau (Sat.)	KJNO	630	1:00 p.m.
Canada, Trail, B.C.	CJAT	610	9:30 a.m.
Toronto, Ont.	CKEY	580	9:15 a.m.
Winnipeg, Man.	CKY	580	6:45 a.m.

All times are Sunday unless otherwise indicated.

I want us to stop here for just a moment. Naaman was just like all sinners; he said, "Behold I thought." Naaman came seeking salvation from the leprosy, but he had some plan all devised by which he was to be cleansed. He said, "I thought," and when Elisha did not propose to do according to his plan, then he became angry. Today men seek salvation, but they have conceived some way in which they want God to save them, and if God's way does not conform to their way, then everything must be wrong and it must be changed. God said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." No man can enter the kingdom of Heaven until he gives up his thoughts and his pride and simply obeys the commands of the Lord, Jesus.

Just as Naaman thought that the prophet would come and bow and scrape and perform some mighty act, so men today look for something spectacular in connection with their conversion. But, God has not commanded anything spectacular; Christ has merely said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Just as money, prestige, and power could not obtain the salvation or the cleansing of Naaman, neither today can they obtain salvation from sin. Sin is nothing but spiritual leprosy, a disease that eats away the very soul of man.

So, Naaman left, angry because God wouldn't do it his way. But there was a servant. Notice how it is the humble men throughout this entire story who accomplish great things. It was the humble maiden, the humble prophet, Elisha, and this humble servant of Naaman's. This servant said unto his master, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he sayest to thee, wash and be clean?" That struck Naaman to the very core. Perhaps he began to think how he had accomplished great things, but with the leprosy he could do nothing and that with this man of God he could accomplish nothing, unless he, Naaman, was willing to hear his word. Perhaps there passed through Naaman's mind the fact that if Elisha had told him he wanted all of the money he had, he would have gladly given it, or if he had told him to use some medication for ten years, he would have willingly done it. But Elisha had said, "Go dip thyself in the river Jordan." And, so the scripture says in the 14th verse, "Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was

clean." Thus, we see the climax of this marvelous story. For years he had looked and searched, but found no cure. Now a man of God tells him to dip himself seven times in the river Jordan and he is cleansed. Was it because of the water? Why had not other lepers been cleansed by the river Jordan? If it had been the water, he would have been cleansed at the first dipping. Was it in the number seven? No. The power was in the word of God and the cure was accomplished only when Naaman was willing to submit himself, humble himself, and obey the word of God. He was a great man, a man of great valor, but he was a leper and only when he was willing to humble himself and obey the word of the Lord, could he be cleansed of his leprosy.

Today, my friends, I know that there are many good men and women in the audience. I know there are good men and women who have lived good lives, are good citizens, good neighbors, have been heroes in battle, but you are sinners. You have disobeyed the commandments of God. You have rejected the counsel of God; cursed His name. Maybe you've never done it openly, but in your hearts you've done it. You have done those things which are wrong according to the word of God. Above all, you haven't submitted yourselves in the sight of God. The only thing we can say is, "You're a great man, but you're a sinner."

My friends, sin will doom us to hell; will separate us from God and from heaven. I'm pleading as a servant of God today; reading from this word of God, that you humble yourselves and render obedience unto the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't go away wroth when you hear the commands of Christ saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Those are the words of Christ. No man has commanded you, but Christ and God themselves.

Here in the audience today are some who have believed upon Christ, the son of God; repented of every sin; confessed the name of Christ in obedience to the commands of the Lord; been buried with him in baptism. Why don't you do something about it today? Why don't you come to your senses as Naaman did, and say, "I will arise and go to the Lord; I will obey his commands." I'm hoping and praying that you'll make your decision now, and that today you'll obey the commands of God. Won't you do that? Do it, that you might travel beyond this life, having been cleansed of sin; yea, of leprosy of the soul, that you might be there in that fair land where there is no night. Won't you do that? We're praying that you'll make the right decision now.

