

Haftarah for Tazria

II Kings 4:42 - 5:19

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh

42 A man came from Baal-shalishah and he brought the man of God some bread of the first reaping — twenty loaves of barley bread, and some fresh grain in his sack. And [Elisha] said, "Give it to the people and let them eat." 43 His attendant replied, "How can I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give it to the people and let them eat. For thus said the Lord: They shall eat and have some left over." 44 So he set it before them; and when they had eaten, they had some left over, as the Lord had said.

Chapter 5

1 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was important to his lord and high in his favor, for through him the Lord had granted victory to Aram. But the man, though a great warrior, was a leper. 2 Once, when the Arameans were out raiding, they carried off a young girl from the land of Israel, and she became an attendant to Naaman's wife. 3 She said to her mistress, "I wish Master could come before the prophet in Samaria; he would cure him of his leprosy." 4 [Naaman] went and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. 5 And the king of Aram said, "Go to the king of Israel, and I will send along a letter."

He set out, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. 6 He brought the letter to the king of Israel. It read: "Now, when this letter reaches you, know that I have sent my courtier Naaman to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy." 7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he rent his clothes and cried, "Am I God, to deal death or give life, that this fellow writes to me to cure a man of leprosy? Just see for yourselves that he is seeking a pretext against me!" 8 When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, he sent a message to the king: "Why have you rent your clothes? Let him come to me, and he will learn that there is a prophet in Israel."

9 So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and halted at the door of Elisha's house. 10 Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go and bathe seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean." 11 But Naaman was angered and walked away. "I thought," he said, "he would surely come out to me, and would stand and invoke the Lord his God by name, and would wave his hand toward the spot, and cure the affected part. 12 Are not the Amanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? I could bathe in them and be clean!" And he stalked off in a rage.

13 But his servants came forward and spoke to him. "Sir," they said, "if the prophet told you to do something difficult, would you not do it? How much more when he has only said to you, 'Bathe and be clean.'" 14 So he went down and immersed himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had bidden; and his flesh became like a little boy's, and he was clean. 15

Returning with his entire retinue to the man of God, he stood before him and exclaimed, "Now I know that there is no God in the whole world except in Israel! So please accept a gift from your servant." 16 But he replied, "As the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will not accept anything." He pressed him to accept, but he refused. 17 And Naaman said, "Then at least let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will never again offer up burnt offering or sacrifice to any god, except the Lord. 18 But may the Lord pardon your servant for this: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow low in worship there, and he is leaning on my arm so that I must bow low in the temple of Rimmon — when I bow low in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord pardon your servant in this." 19 And he said to him, "Go in peace."

When he had gone some distance from him,