



## Lesson 131

# Gehazi's Greed

### Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Text:</b> 2 Kings 5:20-27</li> <li>• <b>Setting:</b> circa 845 B.C., near Gilgal</li> <li>• <b>Main Characters:</b> God, Elisha, Naaman, and Gehazi</li> <li>• <b>Plot:</b> Gehazi becomes greedy and takes the reward that his master had declined.</li> <li>• <b>Key word(s):</b> “I will run after him and</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: right;">take _____ of him” (v 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Climax:</b> 2 Kings 5:22 <i>And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments...</i></li> </ul> |
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### Background

1. (vv 1-9) Naaman was a high ranking military leader in the Syrian army afflicted with \_\_\_\_\_. He journeyed to Israel to seek out the healing powers of Elisha the prophet.
  - (a) (vv 10-14) Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan \_\_\_\_\_ times. Initially, Naaman refused, but he relented and did as the prophet said and was healed of his leprosy.
  - (b) (vv 15-19) Naaman returned to Elisha and gratefully offered Elisha a generous gift. Elisha \_\_\_\_\_ Naaman's generosity.

### Greedy of Filthy Lucre

2. (vv 19-21) Gehazi, Elisha's servant and disciple, was \_\_\_\_\_ – unlike his master. He saw Naaman's generosity as a great opportunity to accumulate wealth, and he pursued after Naaman's chariot to receive the gift.
3. (vv 22-24) Gehazi had to be careful not to raise the suspicions of Elisha and Naaman:
  - (a) He made up a story of some recent arrivals to Elisha's house: two sons of the prophets who needed a talent of silver and two changes of clothes. Naaman gave two talents of silver (about 150 \_\_\_\_\_).
  - (b) Naaman's servants helped carry the loot back to the house, but Gehazi dismissed them before they came within \_\_\_\_\_ view.
4. (vv 25-27) When questioned by his master of his activities, Gehazi lied.
  - (a) Elisha was not deceived because he had seen in a \_\_\_\_\_ all Gehazi had done.
  - (b) As a punishment, Gehazi, and his descendants, would be leprous. Ironically, Gehazi had wished to “take somewhat” from Naaman, so he got his \_\_\_\_\_. Matthew Henry points out, “*He was contriving to entail lands upon his posterity;*”

*but, instead of them, he entails a loathsome disease on the heirs of his body, from generation to generation.”<sup>1</sup>*

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## Application

5. Why do you think Elisha refused to accept Naaman's gift? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Gehazi's sin was not only greed:

(a) He allowed his greed to jeopardize the \_\_\_\_\_ of his master and God himself.

(b) He \_\_\_\_\_ to Naaman, his servants, and Elisha.

7. While the New Testament recommends that ministers receive an appropriate wage for their labor (1 Cor. 9:1-11; 1 Tim. 5:17-18), it also warns against ministers (and even deacons) from becoming \_\_\_\_\_:

*1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, **not greedy of filthy lucre**; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

8. Gehazi shows once again that those nearest to godly examples are often the meanest characters, while those who are surrounded by evil often demonstrate great faith. Matthew Henry notes, “*One would have expected that Elisha’s servant should be a saint (even Ahab’s servant, Obadiah, was), but even Christ himself had a Judas among his followers. The means of grace cannot give \_\_\_\_\_. The best men, the best ministers have often had those about them that have been their grief and shame.*”<sup>2</sup>

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): “somewhat” • 1. leprosy; a) seven; b) declined • 2. materialistic • 3. a) pounds; b) Elisha’s • 4. a) vision; b) leprosy • 5. Because false prophets were notorious for their greed and Elisha wanted Naaman to see the difference between the prophets of the true God and the others • 6. a) testimony; b) lied • 7. greedy • 8. grace

**How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study:** (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.