

Naaman the Leper

by Charles Alexander

God intervenes in human affairs and gives people the skills and abilities they need to achieve great things.

Duration: 13:32

Topics: "Naaman"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of divine intervention and deliverance in human affairs. He uses the example of Admiral Lord Nelson, a historical figure who was believed to have a charmed life and was appointed by God to bring deliverance to his country and the world. The preacher also mentions the passing of a great man, possibly referring to Winston Churchill, and emphasizes the uncertainty of the future and the need for God's intervention in a dangerous world. He then refers to the biblical story of Naaman the Syrian, highlighting the unusual occurrence of God delivering a heathen nation through a specific individual.

Transcript

Kings chapter 5 and verse 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. One has to speak very carefully these days and accurately, make sure of those facts.

Two young men sat upon me at the doorway last Sunday night to remind me that there was an English monarch at one time of the name of George III, whom I'd overlooked when I was suggesting, drawing of course only from a very, very defective and rapidly degenerating memory, making the statement that, as I had made that evening, that as far as I could think at the moment, there were only two monarchs who had ever reigned amongst us for a greater period than 40 years, and both of them were women. I was very soon reminded of George III as soon as the service was over. Well, I'm glad I had a rate of this token that I am listened to critically, and I hope that it will ever be so.

Mind you, I can say in extenuation that George III is a right good monarch not to think about. His reign is well worth forgetting, I should think, as far as he himself personally was concerned. But still, there was no excuse, was there? I shall never forget now that there were three who reigned more than 40 years.

The matter arose, of course, over the fact that Solomon had reigned 40 years. I was remarking that it was not a very frequent occurrence for people to reign so long as that, nor is it. If the world goes long enough,

we might well be living in a reign now which will last, please God, not length of time.

For Her Present Majesty came to the throne very young indeed, as she lives out the allotted span, and she certainly will be one of the longest reigned monarchs. But that's looking very far ahead, isn't it? Very, very far ahead. No one knows our tomorrows or our next years.

It's the unexpected that happens. We're living in a dangerous world, a world for which Mr. Churchill could see very little future indeed. Which brings me to the point of our talk tonight.

I don't think it would be right for me to let such an occasion pass without making special reference to the passing of this great man at 8 o'clock this morning. I'm well aware of the fact, of course, that a large section of the community have been born since he attained the greatest pinnacle of his greatness during the last war. And even some who were alive at that time were so young, were born, were so young at that time that they have little or no recollection of what those days meant.

Which seems rather strange to us older people. We don't realize, do we? I'm speaking now to the older ones. We don't realize what a great length of time has passed since 1945.

A long, long time, you know. I must be very careful with my arithmetic, of course. Yes, it'll be 20 years this year, of course.

I nearly said 19. I suppose my arithmetic is worse even than my history. But there it is, 20 years is a longer time, and some of our young people present, quite a number of them, can number up in birthdays.

Some of those who can, well, they say, well, so long ago, I was so early in my life that I have no clear recollection. It doesn't mean a thing to me anyway. Just like the Boer War or the Crimean War mean to some of us.

But those of us who've lived through two world wars know something, I think, by experience and by very vivid impression of what it meant. I suppose that those who lived in Napoleonic times, in the name of the famous, time of the famous George III that we've been referring to, by the way, remember that great young, or have great recollections of that great young Prime Minister of England, William Pitt the Younger, who was perhaps one of a triumvirate of men who saved Europe at that time. The other two, of course, were Nelson and Wellington.

Again and again, God has intervened in human affairs and has given extraordinary skill, energy, and genius to certain individuals which have resulted in the alteration of the probable course of history and have brought great deliverance for mankind. And if we want a text to vindicate our remarks this evening, as being very appropriate indeed to a Sunday evening gathering of an evangelical congregation, we shall find them in our text. The text about Neaman the Syrian, captain of the host of the King of Syria.

By him, the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria. Now this is a very, very remarkable statement in the Old Testament. The word of God doesn't, as a general rule, hand it out to heathen nations that they had been delivered by the intervention of God through a particular man.

The Bible is largely taken up, though not entirely, but largely taken up with the history of God's people, not of the heathen. The heathen only come into it according as their history impinges upon ours. This was one of the occasions.

Syria was a neighbor of Israel, and a very awkward neighbor too, a very destructive and very dangerous neighbor to her. And yet, God had wrought deliverance to Syria through the hand of Neaman, the captain of the host. In other words, God had taken a military general and had given him, so developed in him, the military and strategic genius that this man, at the time his country was threatened, was able by the wise leadership of his troops to bring deliverance unto his country.

And because of that, he was highly and justifiably honored amongst his people by his king. But the Bible claims that whatever this deliverance was that Neaman was responsible for on the human level, it was God who had given it. It was God who was ultimately responsible.

And indeed, that is the case with all earthly achievements. The Duke of Wellington was the appointed man. At the time of the Napoleonic War, he bore a charmed life.

He hazarded his life, never spared himself, either in the peninsular operations or in the Waterloo campaign, or anywhere else. Those of you who have studied his life, his career, know that this is just only too true. That again and again, he was appealed to on the very field of Waterloo, the scene of his last and greatest triumph, he was appealed to by his officers that he should take greater care and not expose himself so much to the shot and shell which had already mown down every member of his staff, so that he was the only member of that staff still alive and upon his feet or unwounded at the height of the battle.

Yet he bore a charmed life through it all. You see, God had purposed to give deliverance. It had to come through the leadership of this man.

And God turned aside all danger. God suffered it not that he should be slitten down. His life was preserved.

Now we say this closed positions which he selected in order that he might have proper control of his battles and of his campaigns. He did not expose his life merely for the purpose of bravado or of bringing it to an end. Lord Nelson was the same.

He never spared himself. How that man survived to Trafalgar is something which can only be a divine secret. It cannot be explained any other way.

In the battles where he first of all lost an eye and then lost an arm, in other battles besides, when his life hung upon a hair's breadth, it was obviously obvious to all that he bore a charmed life. The providence of God has his hand over him. Why? Because he was the appointed man to bring deliverance, not only to this country, but to the world from a great and immense peril similar to the one through which we have but recently passed.

The day when he went forth to his death, he knew that it was his appointed day. He spoke to Captain Hardy and to others. He says, I know, he says, I shall not return from this battle.

And on the quarter deck as he paced up and down with Hardy at the height of the battle, he wore all his honors upon his breast. All his gold braid was there. His admiral sash was around his shoulders.

He exposed himself in all his complete uniforms so that the French sharpshooters in the fighting tops would have no mistake as to their mark. They knew their man. They pleaded with him, did his men, to take off his uniform and appear like an ordinary seaman.

It would make no difference.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16364.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-alexander/naaman-the-leper/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net