

# "A Little Maid."\*

2 Kings 5. 2.

A LITTLE maiden had been taken prisoner, taken away from her home and friends. Possibly you say, "What a shame!" And it is sad, sadder even than you realize, that people should be willing to kill, or hurt others, and make the hearts of many sorrowful. But the ROOT of all the trouble is deep down in EVERY heart, including yours: it is sin. Wars are only one fruit of the tree, for this tree has many branches. And not only great men but little people SIN, and "the wages of sin is death."

The little girl had been taken far off, but I am glad to tell you that she was not unkindly treated. Some have been made slaves, and then have suffered much. How grateful you ought to be for a home, and for all the love your parents have shown to you. I have seen boys and girls who are ungrateful. Some seem to think "home" is only a place where they get food, clothing and shelter: they are so selfish that they never return loving thoughtfulness to those who love them. They grieve their dear parents' hearts, and are quite unconcerned about it. I hope many who read these lines are not like this. Every boy and girl ought to be thankful to God for "home."

If troubles came, I wonder how you would meet them. If you were cruelly snatched away

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\* The companion-message "There is a Lad Here" has been reprinted, and is available.

from your loved ones, would you fret and feel angry against those who were unkind? It seems that this little maid knew to Whom to turn in her trouble. She thought much of the power of God, and heart-knowledge of Him is the only real comfort. And so she had a concern for others. A boy or girl may say, "I am little; what can I do?" Ah, love finds out a way of blessing to others, and very beautifully this little girl was the means whereby her master was healed of leprosy—and this healing was a type, or picture, of SALVATION. It is still more precious if we can bring any to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But we must know Him ourselves first. And this thought may well remind us all that there is a worse slavery than that of an Israelite maiden in Syria: the worst slavery is sin, and the only freedom is by the death of the Lord Jesus. When we come to Him in faith there is a real "liberty to the captives" (Isa. 61. 1): Satan remains no longer the master. Have you had this experience? Have you trusted in the Lord Jesus for salvation? If not, what is the hindrance? You need Him, do you not? We all need Him MUCH, and need Him TO-DAY.

But to return. The little maiden was not angry with her captors; instead of this, she desired God's blessing for them. Her faith in God was very simple. No lepers had been healed in Israel just at this time (Luke 4. 27), but she was quite sure that if her master went to God's prophet he would be healed. And so she said to her mistress, "O that my master were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for

he would recover him of his leprosy" (2 Kings 5. 3). Was not that an unselfish thought? Many would have almost said, "He deserves to have leprosy," or "O that I were back in Samaria."

Leprosy is a horrible picture of sin: it gradually eats away the body. Ah, boys and girls, you have no idea how ugly and dangerous sin really is. But Elisha (whose name means "GOD IS SAVIOUR") speaks to us of the gracious Saviour, Who was God, and Who became Man; and the washing in Jordan seven times reminds us that the Lord Jesus went under the waves of judgment that sinners might believe in Him and be saved, and then live with a new life to please Him. Can you say, "Christ is my Saviour," or must you say, "I do not know"?

If you are among those who are saved, you too will desire that others too may be saved. It was not much that the little girl did, but her simple words were not forgotten by those who heard, and God has never forgotten them, and the story of Naaman's healing that has so often helped in preaching the gospel, was brought about through God's use of "a little maid"—I must describe her in this way, for I do not know her name! But that does not matter, provided that our names are in the Lamb's Book of Life, and that He says, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine" (Isa. 43. 1).

I like the thought too that she WAITED on Naaman's wife. In the Hebrew language it is, "She was to the face of Naaman's

wife," and we think of Psalm 123. 2, and the way in which God's people, even little ones, can wait on Him with the eye of faith toward Him. He says, "I will guide thee with Mine eye" (Ps. 32. 8, 9). When we are saved by the precious blood of Christ, we delight to look to Him and His word for everything. A Christian has such a changed life, and so I would ask once more, Is this life yours? If you cannot truthfully say "Yes," I am thankful to be able still to tell you that God's salvation is free to boys and girls, who feel their sins as a burden, and who hate these sins, and desire His deliverance, even to-day.

A little maid far from her home was brought,  
Yet blessing for her captors gladly sought;  
Like Joseph she remembered God, and He  
Answered her faith, and set her master free.

Her master was a leper! Who could cure?  
Could not God's prophet? She of this was sure.  
And thus the precious record gives us joy,—  
For God can use the youngest girl or boy.

But first we need Himself to know and love:—  
We all are lepers. Cleansing from above,  
Because Christ died, is first each sinner's need,  
Then would we others to our Saviour lead.

And can you say—"Yes, He has welcomed me,  
I felt my burden, and He has set me free"?  
If not, a sinner NOW these words may hear—  
"Seek ye the Lord, and call while He is near."

In Christ we find salvation, by God's grace,  
Faith sees God's glory in His lovely face,  
And rests on Him Who died, and THEN can bring  
Others to Him, His praise for aye to sing.