


“However, may the Lord pardon me in this one thing: When my master the king goes into the temple of the god Rimmon to worship there and leans on my arm, may the Lord pardon me when I bow, too.” 2 Kings 5:18 NLT

## [lectio] // 2 KINGS 5:15-19a

Should this bother me? I don't know. Does it bother you? Don't tell anyone, but I don't think it bothers me and Elisha even ends up blessing Naaman and sending him on his way! Many believers and children who grew up in Sunday School knows Naaman. Ol Naaman went down to the river to dip...and he dipped, and he dipped  sung seven times. He was healed of leprosy and then came back so grateful that he wanted to give Elisha a gift. Elisha being a prophet and not running a non-profit (get it), refuses the gift. Then Naaman offers a weird confession. He says, “pardon me in this one thing...” He then tells Elisha why he needs future forgiveness - for my master and king. I don't think Naaman had memorized the big ten, but right at the top is “have no other gods.” Naaman had already declare that God is the ONE TRUE God and swore to only offer sacrifices to THE God, and not to fakes. So his head and heart are in the right place. However, he's not planning on making a big Daniel statement about bowing down as his king leans on his arm to steady him as he bows to an idol. Maybe it's a “new” to the faith phase. Maybe we don't know Naaman's heart here. Maybe we don't always know how to “read the room” as they say and make decisions that have a much bigger impact on those who don't believe. Why would Naaman ask forgiveness for a future decision to bow, with his king, to a fake god? Jeremiah recorded these stories with no commentary, thanks Jeremy. I don't have the answer. I just don't think it bothers me that Naaman who clearly had a significant life-changing moment of faith asks permission to serve his earthly king in this way.

## [oratio]

Dad,

Not everything is so easy to figure out, even in the clear-cut, no grey areas of the Old Covenant. I'd like to ask Naaman what that was all about when I get a chance to talk to him in heaven. He will be there, right? I won't have any way to write down reminders, so can I ask that the Holy Spirit reminds to get the whole story directly from him and Elisha too? That's so exciting to think about! There are so many things I don't know. I'm sure a bunch of smart people can give me a hundred different interpretations and cultural nuances of this story, but it would still puzzle me. I'm finding that I am more open to mystery than I was when I was younger. I don't have to force answers any more, and I like that.

## [contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root