

miracles there because of their unbelief. What a great pity it was that Jesus had not some of the learned divines of the present day to instruct him! They would no doubt have told Jesus that because of the greatness of the unbelief in his own neighborhood and among his acquaintances he must perform some greater miracles among them than he did anywhere else. That would have been consistent with the present ideas of theologians. But in those days Jesus operated among the people according to their faith, and the greater the unbelief, the less the miracles.

We find the same principle existing long before Jesus came to the earth. Jesus himself testifies that in the days of Elisha the Prophet, there were a great many lepers in Israel. You know that is a very loathsome disease, and that people would naturally be very glad to be healed. But none of them were healed in Elisha's day, says Jesus, except a man, not of Israel, but a foreigner—Naaman the Syrian. What was the reason? Their unbelief. How came this Naaman the Syrian to have faith? He believed in the testimony of a Jewish maiden, who had been taken captive by the Syrian army and carried into a far country, and while conversing with the people there she told them about a great Prophet in Israel, Elisha by name. "Would to God," said she, "that my master could see this prophet and be healed!" She seemed to have faith, and when the report of her conversation came to her master's ears he took great riches and started out for the express purpose of going to visit this Prophet in Israel. When he reached the region of Palestine in which the Prophet lived he presented himself first before the king; but he being filled to a

great extent with the spirit of unbelief, thought that Naaman had come to seek some occasion for war. "Am I God," said the king, "that I should perform this work?" The Lord revealed to his servant the Prophet, that this man had come, and the purpose of his visit, and Naaman and his servant found out Elisha and went to his dwelling place. But Elisha, instead of being very polite, and welcoming Naaman into his house, sent a message to him, telling him to go and dip himself seven times in Jordan and he should be healed. This did not seem to be in accordance with the mind of Naaman. He perhaps thought that, as he had come a long journey in great grandeur and with great gifts, the Prophet would be exceedingly respectful to him, and he was very wrathful in his mind, and said—"Are not the waters of Syria just as good as the waters of your Jordon?" and he turned away in a great rage. Finally, one of his servants said unto him—"If the prophet had required thee to do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he said to thee, Wash, and be clean?" "Yes," said Naaman, "I expected he would come out to me, place his hand upon my head and rebuke the leprosy, and I should be healed; but he has told me to go and dip myself seven times in Jordan, and he sent this message by a servant instead of coming to see me himself." But he was finally prevailed upon by his servant to go and do as the Prophet said, and he went and dipped himself seven times in Jordan and immediately his flesh came anew upon him like the flesh of a little child. All the rest of the lepers, throughout Israel, remained unhealed, but this foreigner was cleansed and made whole.