

TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY



Just a little slave girl

We don't know her name. We don't know who her parents were, or even where exactly she was from. We don't know what became of her later, after the brief mention of her in Scripture. We know so little about her, yet, we see much about her faith. We get a powerful glimpse of the treasure that came forth from this small vessel of clay. She is an example to us.

She was an Israelite girl who had been captured by the Syrians (also referred to as Aram). Just one among so many who met this fate. Her people had been chosen by God to show Him to all the nations. They were to bring light and hope and redemption to a lost world. Instead, they had joined the darkness that they were to expel. So God had turned them over to the Syrians, a long standing enemy. What atrocities had this girl witnessed? Had her family been killed, or had she only been torn away from them, never to see them again? What future had she dreamed of

back in Israel? Had she been betrothed? How many brothers, sisters, and friends, had she left behind? How was she being treated now? Was she treated well by Naaman's wife? What did her future hold now? How did she feel toward her captors, the enemy who had taken so much from her? And, most importantly, how did she feel about the God who had allowed all this to happen to her?

What example does she give to us in living among the ungodly?



"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

2 Corinthians 4:7

READ:

- 2 Kings 5

Living to God's purpose

Leprosy was often seen as God's punishment on an individual. After all, hadn't Miriam been made leprous for her grumbling against Moses? Couldn't Naaman's leprosy be a punishment by God for his opposition to the Israelites? Why would she want to interfere with what could easily be considered the righteous act of God?

According to 2 Kings 5:1, what words are used to describe Naaman? _____

What indication do we have that the slave girl truly wanted Naaman to be healed? _____

What risk was she taking? _____

Who was the prophet of God that she suggested that Naaman go to? _____

Why this act of grace toward her enemy? _____

How was she filling the commission that God had given her people in Exodus 19:5-6? _____

What commission has God given to His people today? _____

We too are foreigners living in a land where many other gods are worshipped, and precious few really know the one true God. How can we follow this young girl's example of grace among the nations? _____

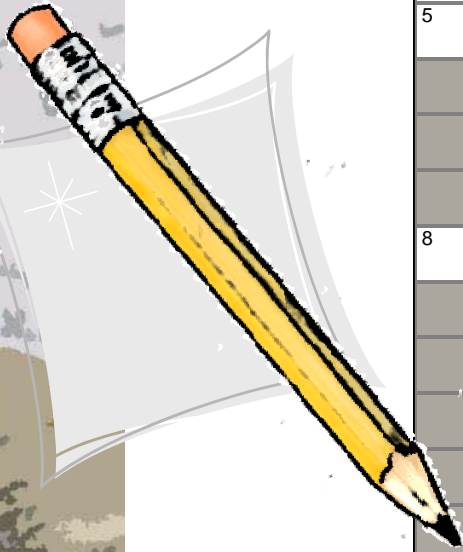
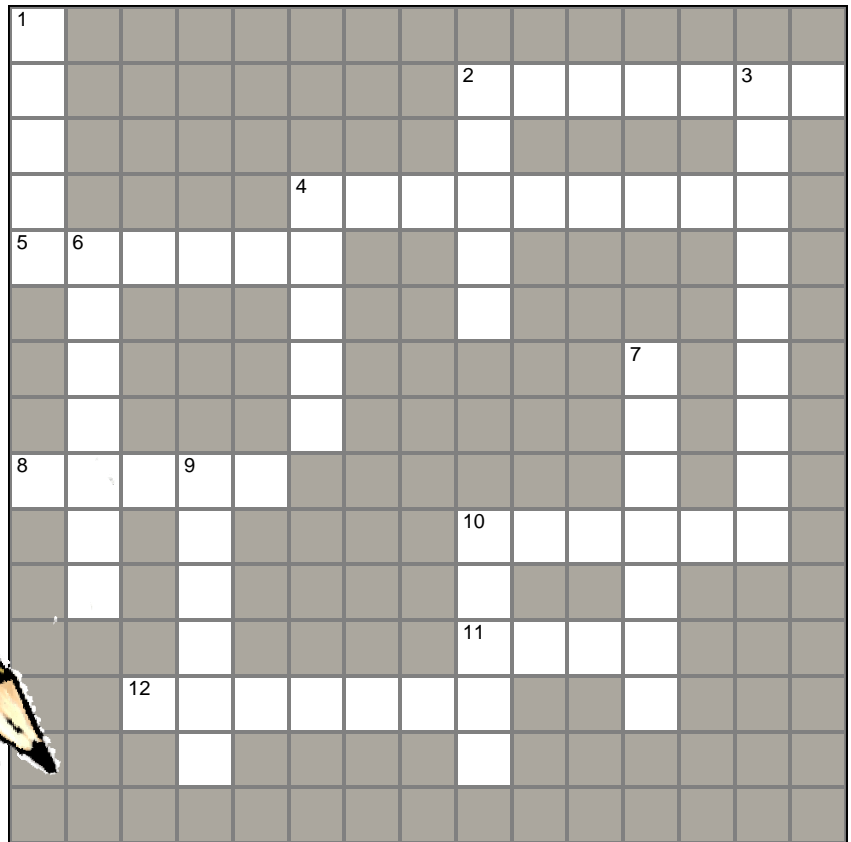
Our natural tendency is to rejoice in the suffering of our enemies, or even just the ungodly, feeling justified that they "got what was coming to them." When you have seen them suffering and in need, did you extend God's grace to them? Did you tell them about Jesus, and how He can cure them? _____

What was the result of this young girl's words in Naaman's life? _____

What if she had been too timid, or too vindictive to speak up?



PUZZLE PAGE



Clues

Across

- 2 location of the prophet (7)
- 4 she was this among Naaman's people (9)
- 5 prophet whom she suggest Naaman see (6)
- 8 her age (5)
- 10 she believed God's message was for all _____ (6)
- 11 she served Naaman's _____ (4)
- 12 she had been taken as one (7)

Down

- 1 this was her social position (5)
- 2 she was brave enough to do this (5)
- 3 her nationality (9)
- 4 hers was great (5)
- 6 disease Naaman had (7)
- 7 she knew Naaman would benefit from going to him (7)
- 9 commander of Aram's army (6)
- 10 despite her circumstances, she believed in God's _____ (5)

What does Hebrews 12:15 warn about bitterness? _____

Sources:

The photo used on page 1 was contributed by Kristi Kissick and was taken on a mission trip to an orphanage in India. I wonder what God has in store for this young girl.

Who were the people of Aram? p. 4

Pitard, Wayne T.. "Arameans." Peoples of the Old Testament World. Ed. Alfred J. Hoerth, Gerald L. Mattingly, and Edwin M. Yamauchi. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998. Print.



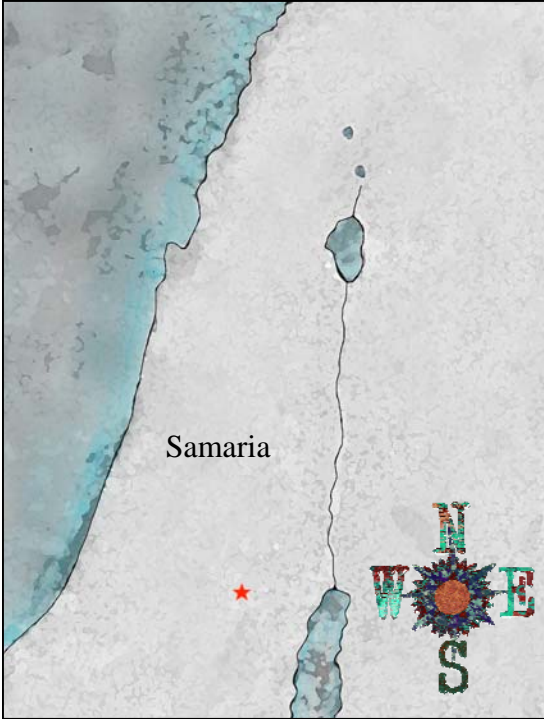
Down Victory Road

www.downvictoryrd.com

Puzzle answers:



Map



Who were the people of Aram?

Aram is the Hebrew name for the area NW of Israel referred to as Syria, Mesopotamia, or Padan-aram. Damascus and Antioch are two cities of Aram that are familiar to us. (Pitard 207-228)

Using the map in the back of your Bible, mark these cities.

Who was Aram, the ancestor of the Aramean peoples? (Gen. 10:22-23)

How were they related to the Israelites? (Deut. 26:5)

At least a portion of Aram had been conquered by David, but then lost again

during Israel's decline. Aram was soon to be conquered by Assyria along with Israel. What does the relationship between Aram and Israel at this point in time seem to be? _____

What happens to Aram in 1 Kings 6? _____

