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| 1st Wednesday Reflection & Prayer HourAugust 20MMI keeps the first Wednesday of the month as a day for corporate prayer. Please use these notes to pray for an hour at some time during the day. Do please share with us any scriptures pictures or insights that you receive as you spend time reflecting and praying.Reflection: Seniority does not equal spiritual maturity**Read 2 Kings 5.1-16, and on to v27** if you have timeElisha has taken on Elijah’s mantle.   The Northern Kingdom of Israel is under threat from Assyria where King Aram reigns, and his Captain of the Army is Naaman.We don’t know who is the unnamed King of Israel, but the year is about 850Bc and so it would have been J(eh)oram or Jehu – but since all the Kings of the Northern Kingdom were bad – we can assume that this nameless king was not on Message.Of the four ‘Earthly’ characters in the story – who are YOU like.  As I doubt any of us would dare identify with the Elisha, the Heavenly Man, each of us today can identify with one of these four:   • Naaman – who leads the Army of the nation attacking the people of God.   You are now leprous so set apart from your own people, your king and of course your army?• The servant girl with not stature, no rights, no opportunity in the Aramite community?• The King of Israel, notionally under the sovereignty of God, but in fact doing evil in His sight?  Or• Gehazi who works for and clearly lives alongside Elisha, this great man of God?Let’s track them in status order.The King of Israel – none of these northern Kingdom kings walked with The Lord.   So he should know The Lord and Torah…..but was far from observant of it.    Just imagine how wary, or even scared, he would have been when the Captain of Aram’s army who had for years been attacking Israel out from Damascus, would have felt when Naaman knocked on his palace door. The king feigned allegiance to God, and yet had nothing of Jehoveh Rapheh’s power to heal to offer Naaman.  Naaman – mighty conquering general, yet an outcast pariah because of his leprosy.    Humble enough though to listen to the servant girl, and to visit Elisha, yet offended that Elisha would not meet him face to face (why, do you think – two reasons\*?)   But once he saw the power of God to cleanse, he gave allegiance to the God of Israel. I wonder how the rest of his life panned out.\*Elisha was clean both medically and spiritually, so could not contaminate himself on either account until Naaman was clean both medically and spiritually…then they met!Gehazi – Elisha’s servant so he must have been absolutely aware and in tune with God’s power, and yet his higher allegiance was to wealth, and so he lied twice, once to Naaman and once to Elisha.    And with the typical humour of The Lord, Gehazi inherits Naaman’s leprosy.    And finally - The unnamed servant girl – captured by these Aramite Assyrians; guess what probably happened to her before she was handed over to Naaman’s wife.    And yet she held onto her faith that the God of Israel is the one true and only God.    So she bears witness to Naaman and his wife.    Just imagine how thrilled she will have been when she heard of Naaman’s medical and spiritual healing. And I wonder how the rest of her life panned out.This servant girl, of no worth in either Israel and then Aram, was a Nobody; yet she was an Everybody.    As Jesus said (Mark 9.33ff), he who is least on Earth will become the greatest in Heaven through humility and service.Compared with the King of Israel who potentially had it all, and yet had nothing; or Naaman who was, like New Testament Saul, very anti-God but in humility came to living faith; or Gehazi who threw it all away because his god was wealth.This servant girl is the heroine of this story.Take some time to reflect on who of these four you are most like?Richard Meryon RTL Middle East Aug 20Prayer **We give thanks in July for:****MMI Trustee meeting** on 9th July at which Homfray Vines stood down as Chair and Rev Mark Chester became the Chair of Trustees, having served 2 years as Vice Chair. Please pray for Homfray, giving thanks for all his work and for wisdom and clear guidance for Rev. Mark. Read about Mark’s army career on our website at [https://www.mmi.org.uk/2020/07/28/new-chair-of-trustees/](https://www.mmi.org.uk/?email_id=162&user_id=650&urlpassed=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubW1pLm9yZy51ay8yMDIwLzA3LzI4L25ldy1jaGFpci1vZi10cnVzdGVlcy8&controller=stats&action=analyse&wysija-page=1&wysijap=subscriptions)**The EMCM Prayer meeting** held on Sun 5th  which was a follow-on to the teaching programme the previous Sunday and was well attended. **Development of online prayer groups** across each region, developing fellowship and friendship as well as increasing understanding of regional prayer needs. **We Pray in August for:****Summer Adventure Retreat (SAR) 23 Aug- 30 Aug.** The main prayer item for August is around the possibility of a Summer Adventure Retreat in Bulgaria for neighbouring countries, as Bulgaria is open to visitors from neighbouring countries and vica-versa. Please pray for Grozdan and the SAR team as they have to constantly adapt the procedures and programme to fit with what is permitted within the Covid context. Pray for safety for those taking part, and for all those who would benefit from attending from countries neighbouring Bulgaria to be able to attend.**Italian MCF**: Pray for their legal appeal to allow their formal registration.**Online MMI regional prayer groups**.Pray for the continuation of the regional online Prayer groups and for discernment on the frequency of the meetings in each region. **Middle East:**Praise The Lord for the deepened friendships across the ME region.Praise God for the ME RPPG being so supportive.Pray for:* The good relationships developed this year to grow deeper and deeper in the future.
* Those who are serving and join the prayer group, who are facing difficulties, and those who are unable to join by zoom.
* The in-region pastor helping the RTL to communicate in Arabic across the region
* Planning future visits to the ME in 2020 and 2021.
* Openings in the many countries (Algeria, Libya and the Gulf States) in which we have no contacts
* The protection of Christians serving in Iran’s National Guard.

**Franco phone Africa:** Please pray for• **Mali,** which is facing four crises at the same time: Social Crisis, Political Crisis, Security Crisis and Health Crisis. Let us pray for the Lord to bring peace to this country.  • **Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea**, which will have presidential elections before the end of this year. The outgoing presidents eventually want to serve a third term and the opposition contest that decision. Moreover, there is no consensus on the electoral process. Let us pray that God will intervene in these countries to help politicians make peace.• **Cameroon.** Currently, it seems that there is a dialogue between the separatists and the government. Pray that (if dialogue is indeed underway) these negotiations will produce results that will be accepted by the parties not participating in the negotiations.• **Central African Republic (CAF)**. This country is also in an election year and the presidential elections will be held before the end of the year. The former president has declared himself a candidate. On the other hand, the country is practically in the hands of armed groups. Let us pray that these elections will be peaceful, that the results will not be contested and that the government that emerges from them will control the whole country.  **IF YOU** **USE THE MMI PRAYER BRIEF** **please note the following:**• The current Prayer Brief runs up to the end of July• The next mailing of the newsletter is the end of September• We need to get the Prayer Brief onto the same cycle as the new MMI News mailing, so it is incorporated into that mailing.• With no activities or travelling in August and September, with the exception of SAR, this is a good time to extend the current prayer brief and send a new one with the MMI News.• **For August and September please :**a. Continue to use the April-July Prayer Brief, with the additional prayers listed in this 1st Wednesday Reflection.b. Continue to use the Prayer Fuel from the 6th June (Zoom) International Prayer Day. If you would like a copy of the prayer points please email prayer@mmi.org.ukc. Watch out for prayer updates on PrayerLink.   |