

Syrian, to Elisha, when he came to be healed of his leprosy. The Prophet told him to go and wash himself seven times in Jordan. But Naaman rose up in a rage and said, in substance, "Have I not washed myself many a time in my rivers at home, and did it ever do me any good? Is there any more virtue in the waters of Jordan than the waters of my native place?" He did not believe the Prophet, and he turned to go away with a sorrowful heart. But his servant followed him and said: "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" This caused Naaman to reflect; and he went and dipped himself seven times in Jordan. He was not healed when he dipped himself once, nor twice, nor thrice; but when he had dipped himself seven times he was cleansed of his leprosy. Was it the waters of Jordan that healed him, or is it the waters of the brook that we are immersed in that cleanses us from our sins? Not at all. It is the blood of Christ that was shed for the sins of the world that cleanseth us from our sins; but the water is the emblem and the means by which we comply with the commandment of God.

And so with every other ordinance of the Gospel. So with the laying on of the hands of the Elders of Israel. The wicked will ask what virtue there is in the imposition of the hands of the Elders? Why, the virtue consists in obeying the commandments of heaven. For through the laying on of hands the sick are healed. Through the laying on of hands the Holy Ghost is given. Through the laying on of hands the Priesthood is conferred upon those who are counted worthy to receive

it. Herein is the hiding of the Lord's power. It is this that the Prophet Habakkuk refers to when he speaks of the Lord coming in glory, and says: "He had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power." Horns we know in the Scriptures are often used as figures to represent power. Horns in the Apocalypse and in the prophecies of Daniel represent kingdoms and dynasties, and when one horn fell, another came up in its place, thus representing the fall of one dynasty and the rising of another. And so on. And the same may be said of the Priesthood: the ruling power that God bestows for the salvation of the human family, is that which is given by the laying on of hands. But does this apply to the wicked, to the disobedient, or to the unbelieving? No, not at all; nor does remission of sins come to the wicked and unbelieving by merely being baptized. We have an example of this kind in the New Testament when Philip baptized the people of Samaria, and Simon the sorcerer, was baptized also; but he was a hypocrite and a corrupt man, and he only sought to gain power whereby he might hoodwink and deceive the people and filch money from them. And when Peter and John came down and prayed with the people, and laid their hands upon them, they received the Holy Ghost. When Simon saw this, he offered them money saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." This he sought, as I have said, that he might obtain power to carry on his craft and to make money; but Peter answered him saying, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. * * * I perceive that