

“How Can Water Do Such Great Things?” ✠ Rev. John M. Fraiser
2 Kings 5:1-14 ✠ February 12, 2012

I. The Narrative Background

- A. Naaman as general
- B. The scourge of leprosy
- C. The fear of the Israelite King
- D. The role of the Elisha the Prophet
- E. A cleansing river

II. The Parallel with Baptism

- A. God uses ordinary means. “But God chose what is foolish...God chose what is weak...”
 - 1. Under God’s word of power, anything can do anything. Water can cleanse leprosy and it can rescue from sin, death, and the devil.
 - 2. God often does not work directly. He works through his creation.
 - 3. To receive the work of God through means is to truly receive the work of God. – Baptism is no false sign.
You really are cleansed. It has all been done for you. “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” – Galatians 3:27
- B. We naturally balk at God’s use of ordinary means.
 - 1. It is we who regard things as ordinary or extraordinary, not God. “From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.” – Psalm 8:2
 - 2. It is pride and arrogance to despise how God would choose to come to us.
Avoid the temptation to chase after grand and glorious experiences that we might see God on our terms. Encounter him as he chooses to come to us.
- C. Just as Naaman was humbled, so Baptism humbles us.
 - 1. A humbling malady - leprosy
 - 2. A humbling messenger – a slave girl
 - 3. A humbling means of healing – a dirty river in an inferior land
- D. We are humbled, that all glory should be to God.

Baptism is a humbling thing. It humbles you that you may only be exalted with him and in his way. The path to exaltation for Christ was humiliation. Our life will be no different. God continues to humble you through ordinary means that all the glory will be his, and that you would be exalted as he chooses. Do not despise his means.