

## SALVATION FOR THE BODY

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Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
And forget not all his benefits:  
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;  
Who healeth all thy diseases.  
Psalm 103:2, 3.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her,  
O woman, great is thy faith:  
Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.  
Matthew 15:28

The salvation of the Lord is complete. It is for the whole man - spirit, soul, and body. Christ came to undo entirely, what Satan shamefully did, and much more. His reconstruction goes as far as Satan's ruin. Let us consider several arguments in support of this view.

## THE LOGIC OF DIVINE HEALING

If sin has ruined man and entailed sickness upon him (and who can deny that it has?), should we not expect the same remedy for sin to be appropriate for sickness too? Why shall we turn to God for the healing of the soul, but to man for the healing of the body? Why turn to the Lord to remove the cause of sickness, but to sinful man for the removal of sickness itself? This is very unreasonable. It is truly surprising that God's people turn to ungodly physicians for the healing of their bodies. We would logically expect them to call upon Him who saved them from sin. But, God be praised! We have something stronger than logic.

## PROMISES OF DIVINE HEALING

Here are several of these promises: Moses said to Israel: "He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" - Exodus 23:25. This is a splendid word for those who are suffering from indigestion, heart trouble, and lung diseases. Just before this, God had announced Himself saying: "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (I am the Lord thy Physician) - Exodus 15:26. He did not want them to go back to Egypt for help, "for vain is the help of man" - Psalm 60:11. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is" - Jeremiah 17:5, 7. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor (the weak): Jehovah will deliver him in the day of evil (trouble). Jehovah will support him upon the couch of languishing: Thou makest (turnest, changest) all his bed in his sickness" - Psalm 41:1, 3 Revised Version. "Thou wilt help him from his sickness" - German Translation.

There are also many general promises to encourage faith in God for healing. For example: "Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" - John 15:7. "If ye shall ask any thing in My Name, I will do it" - John 14:14. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me" - Psalm 50:15. "No good thing will He withhold from

them that walk uprightly" - Psalm 84:11. Surely, healing of our bodies is included in these gracious words.

## HISTORY OF DIVINE HEALING

Did God make any of these promises good? Most assuredly! The first recorded example of healing was before any such promise was given. "God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants" - Genesis 20:17. These were not believers either - a hint at God's purposes for the nations. God healed the bitter waters of Marah, as an earnest of the healing which He immediately covenanted to give them - Exodus 15:23-25. He healed them of the deadly serpent bite in the wilderness - Numbers 21. Under the ministry of the prophets, there were frequent healings. It was the most common thing for the sick to turn to the Lord and recover.

There are recorded two remarkable exceptions which ought to be a standing warning to all, against turning from God to men for deliverance from disease:

The first is King Ahaziah. "Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this sickness. But the angel of Jehovah said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith Jehovah, Thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed." Elijah said to King Ahaziah: "Thus saith Jehovah, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His Word? Therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. So he died according to the Word of Jehovah which Elijah had spoken" - II Kings 1:2-4, 16, 17 Revised Version.

The second is King Asa, who "was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers, and died" - II Chronicles 16:12, 13.

These two men died prematurely, because they went to men for help. "Our fathers trusted in Thee: they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. They cried unto Thee, and were not confounded" - Psalm 22:4, 5. Only those who do not believe, suffer defeat. Shall we not profit, both by the faith and the failures of our ancestors?

The New Testament abounds in healings by the Lord and by the hands of the apostles and disciples. At the close of His ministry, Jesus gave this sweeping announcement: "These signs shall follow them that believe; in My Name shall they cast out devils ... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" - Mark 16:17, 18. That was to all believers, not simply to apostles. We have not the slightest hint that it has yet been revoked. Hence, all down this present Church Age, God has been saving His people from sickness and disease. Unbelief exclaims: "The day of miracles is past." But the good Lord constantly disproves that statement by multitudes of testimonies everywhere.

## THE FOUNDATION FOR DIVINE HEALING

This is of most vital importance. On what ground may we believe for the healing of our bodies? Rather, on what ground could God promise healing to us? There is one answer: Christ hath fully atoned for sickness, as well as for sin. His redemption covers both sin and its results. It reaches as far as Satan' s ruin. Hallelujah!

This is typified in Numbers 21:9 - "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

The people had murmured. God' s wrath sent serpents among them, whose bite resulted in death. But, when they confessed their sins, God was merciful. However, He can never show mercy, save by means of atonement - even the atonement of the One whom He accepts. This "fiery serpent" pointed to Christ, who was "made ... sin for us" - Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14; II Corinthians 5:21. Israel was full of the deadly poison of sin; but, to save them, God saw His Son the embodiment of that fiery thing. He saw Him, instead of them. Hence, their look of faith brought to them forgiveness of their murmurings and healing of their bodies. Here, as everywhere in the Word, sin and sickness are never divorced.

Job was delivered from his dire distress and loathsome disease when he exclaimed, "I have found a ransom," or "an atonement" - Job 33:24. Still more emphatic is the plain announcement: "Yet surely our sicknesses He carried; and as for our pains, He bare the burden of them" - Isaiah 53:4 Rotherham. "By whose stripes ye were healed" - I Peter 2:24. The unanswerable proof, that these words refer to the healing of our bodies, is found in Matthew 8:16, 17. There, Matthew is declaring that Jesus "cast out the spirits with His Word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." In view of the death which He should afterward die - a substitutionary death for others, for their sins and diseases - Jesus could heal all who came to Him, and forgive their sins. He still does the same for all who come to Him in faith.

In making Christ sin for us, God "condemned sin in the flesh," and put the flesh to death - "our old man was crucified with Him" - Romans 8:3; 6:6 Revised Version. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" - Romans 8:10. But, if you agree with God and count your bodies dead (hence, not curable by medicine) and look alone to Him, He "shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" - Rom. 8:11. This is an earnest, or pledge, of a resurrection into incorruptibility.