

# The Healing Question

An examination of the claims of Faith-Healing  
and Divine Healing systems in the  
light of the Scriptures  
and History

By

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To my friend

**Howard A. Kelly, M.D., LL.D.**

one of the beloved physicians, with gratitude for his God given skill, which under His blessing has saved so many lives, and brought help and comfort to the suffering, and in deep appreciation of his loyalty to the Word of God and the Christ of God.

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## CHAPTER I

### The Healing Question

“Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away” (Psalm xc:5-10). “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle” (Job vii:6). “Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not” (Job xiv:1, 2). “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain, so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers” (Job xxxiii:19-22). “For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James iv:14).

These few passages from the Word of God deal with human existence, the shortness of human life, its uncertainty and the sorrows connected with it. The first utterance of a new born babe is a tearful cry of pain. Sickness and pain, sorrows and

tears follow, as the common lot of the human race. Millions die in infancy; other multitudes are swept away by disease and death before they reach middle age; but a few attain the fourscore years. Why is it thus if man, made a little lower than the angels, is the offspring of a benevolent God? The answer which the pagan evolutionary theory attempts to give, we pass by as unworthy of our consideration. There is a more satisfactory answer to this question. But who is going to tell us what happened in the remotest past? Who is going to lift the veil which covers the cradle-history of humanity? Primitive man has left no records. Research is unavailing. Knowledge through these channels on the enigma of human existence and human suffering is impossible. Man has received the needed knowledge through another source.

There is a God. Only a fool denies His existence. In His Being He is infinite. He is eternal. He is all-wise. Omnipotence, omniscience and absolute holiness are His attributes. Such a Being necessitates self-revelation. He created man and has given him the capacity to know Him as His Creator, and to be in fellowship with Him. If God had not revealed Himself to man He would not be God. He has revealed Himself and spoken to man. That revelation is the Bible, the Word of God. The Bible is the only book in the world which is supernatural, and has every possible mark of the divine revelation of God. In it God offers to His creature true knowledge of those things which man cannot discover by research.

In spite of all the boasting, modern infidelity in every nook and corner of the camp of Christendom, the solid foundation of God's truth still stands—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Upon this unshakable, eternal rock is built all that follows in His Word. Let them

keep on sneering at the three chapters in the beginning of the Bible, and class them with mythical folklore, these chapters will outlive all the sneers and infidelity of the future, as they have outlived all the attacks of the past. Here we find our question answered as to man's present condition. The answer which God gives has satisfied the greatest intellects of the human race in past ages; it still satisfies the heart of man.

Man is the creature of God, called into existence by a creative act of God, created in His own image. He is seen originally as a creature filled with wisdom and knowledge, understanding God's creation, whose lord he is called to be. He was in fellowship with God. Then came a catastrophe. He transgressed. We do not enter into the details of the birth of sin, through that being who is the author of sin. Man became a sinner, lost his fellowship with God and his inheritance. God spake then in His holiness. He announced the curse. Solemn are the last words He spake, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return" (Gen. iii:19). Death came into the world by sin. Human existence from the cradle is now a march towards an open grave, and on the way is sickness, sorrow, pain, tears, and all kinds of physical and mental affliction. God also spoke in His Love and announced Him, the seed of the woman, who would in time become the Saviour of a lost race.

There has been a "healing question" from the very start of history. The human race has wrestled from the beginning with sickness and disease, and tried in some way to rid itself of these bodily afflictions. The earliest intelligent records of the past we possess, going back several thousand years before Christ, are the cuneiform inscriptions. These

Accadian and Sumerian records have much to say about diseases. Disease was looked upon by these nations of the earliest times as being the work of evil spirits. Incantations and magic were the prescribed cure, as they are still among many nations of the world today.

Throughout this Christian age there has been a "healing question" which is more fully dealt with in a chapter of this volume.

The "healing question" in which we are concerned is from the religious view point. The Lord Jesus Christ healed all diseases while on earth, He cleansed the lepers and raised the dead. Miracles of healing took place under the preaching of the Apostles. Throughout the history of the Church claims were made of miraculous cures through certain men. Fanatical movements sprang up laying claim to a restoration of the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy and the gift of healing. Relics and shrines were also sought by the sick and afflicted, as they are still superstitiously used in Roman and Greek Catholicism. The Camisards, ~~called~~ the French prophets, the Shakers, the Mormons, the Spiritists, the Irvingites and similar sects all claim to heal the sick. Christian Science and other metaphysical cults claim to have relief for the physical sufferings of man.

What interests us mostly in this volume is faith-healing, or as it is also called, "Divine healing." During the last few years a veritable craze in healing of diseases by faith seems to have taken hold of thousands of professing Christians. Men and women go through the land promising healing of any disease on the simple condition of faith. Even diseases which still baffle intelligent and painstaking research and treatment, like cancer, are claimed to vanish completely before faith. As one faith-healer by name of Bosworth declares, "It is just as easy to be healed of cancer



as to have your sins forgiven." These faith-healers use the Scriptures to back up their claims. They tell us that inasmuch as "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever" and inasmuch as He has commanded to heal the sick, the same miracles He did may also be done today. The most unscripturable assertions are made by these Divine healers. The reported "miracles" of healing have often been exposed as falsehoods. The works and results which follow their campaigns have frequently been disastrous. Hypnotism and deceptions of various degrees are practiced by some of these advocates of faith healing. We feel it is about time to examine the whole question of faith-healing, or, "Divine healing," and to show its unscripturalness, as well as to expose the false claims as to miraculous healings. This is the reason why we wrote this volume. We want to help the household of faith and guard them against one of the most subtle delusions of our times.

We feel assured the truth as set forth in this volume is greatly needed, and we believe the Lord will graciously use this testimony for His Word, and the witness against this present-day healing delusion.

## CHAPTER II

### The Miracles of Healing by the Lord Jesus Christ

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah xxxv:5, 6). These words are a prophecy predicting the blessings and the glory of the promised kingdom. He through whom these great blessings, described in this entire chapter, as well as elsewhere, will ultimately be accomplished appeared on earth as man, in the form of a servant. That blessed One is Himself the greatest miracle. His whole life from the moment of conception by the Holy Spirit, when He came upon the Virgin of Nazareth, to His ascension in His glorified human body, is beyond our powers of conception or explanation. Here is where the modernistic-rationalist makes his fatal mistake. Instead of believing in the supernaturalness of the Lord Jesus Christ and worshipping Him, the modernist tries to explain His Person. He cannot be explained. In order to bring the Lord Jesus Christ down to the level of common humanity the modernist denies His miraculous birth, His miraculous life, His miraculous resurrection and ascension, as well as the miracles He performed. To accomplish this the rationalism which is being taught in many institutions of learning impeaches the Gospel records. They are not trustworthy. The miraculous element is legendary. It was added by others to the original story of Christ, to surround Him with the halo of Deity. It is astonishing that men, who claim ripe scholarship, can make such absurd and false claims.

If they are scholars they must know that the Gospel records as we possess them belong to the most reliable historical documents in the possession of the race. The claim that the miraculous is spurious in the four Gospels is a falsehood. If there is no miraculous Christ, who performed miracles of various kinds, then the Old Testament with its miracles and prophecy must also be branded a falsehood (as is done by modernists). This is the road which leads into the night of atheism.

We are concerned exclusively with the miracles of healing, which our Lord performed during His ministry on earth. We shall first of all briefly record them as given in the Synoptics and the Gospel of John.

*Matthew iv:23-24.* "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, with those which were possessed with demons, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them." This is the first time we find His miracles of healing mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew. We note that the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, announcing the nearness of the promised kingdom, is closely connected with the healing of diseases.

*Matthew viii:1-4; Mark i:40; Luke v:12-14.* Here a leper is healed by Him. "Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." He speaks as the sovereign Lord, with a majestic, omnipotent, "I will." When Miriam, Moses' sister, was stricken with leprosy, Moses cried to the Lord, Heal her now! She had to be excluded for seven days, then she was permitted to return to the camp. A greater

than Moses is here! He healed by the finger of God, the sign that the Kingdom was come upon them (Luke xi:20).

*Matthew viii:5-13; Luke vii:1-10.* The healing of the centurion's servant who was sick and ready to die is the next miracle. He was sick of the palsy and was grievously tormented. While the Lord had healed the leper by touch, He did not come near the sick servant; He healed him by His word. The significance of this will be pointed out elsewhere.

*Matthew viii:14-15; Mark i:30-31; Luke iv:38, 39.* He healed Peter's mother-in-law, who was sick with a fever. "And He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose, and ministered unto them." Like the healing of the leper, the cure was instantaneous. The fever dropped down to normal in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Nor was she weak after the fever had gone. She arose at once and began to minister to the company, the evidence that a perfect cure had been made.

*Matthew viii:16, 17; Mark i:32-34; Luke iv:40, 41.* That evening brought a great demonstration of His power to heal. Many demon-possessed people were brought to Him. He cast them out by His word, and healed all that were sick. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is quoted. The perversion of this text by the divine healing systems will be fully dealt with in another chapter, as well as the great prophetic meaning of that famous prophecy in Isaiah.

*Matthew viii:28-35, Mark v:1-21; Luke viii:26-40.* Matthew gives an account of two men possessed with demons; Mark and Luke speak only of one. There were two but one of them must have been the more prominent and the most afflicted. The Lord singled him out as His special witness. Another solution of the difficulty may be found in the dispensational Jewish character of the Gospel of

Matthew. He also speaks of two blind men healed; Mark and Luke of only one, that is Bartimaeus. The two demon-possessed and the two blind men picture the spiritual condition of all Israel, the house of Judah and the house of Israel.

*Matthew ix:1-8; Mark ii:3-12; Luke v:18-26.* Another paralytic is healed, after the Lord pronounced the forgiveness of his sins. It was again an instantaneous cure, with the return of perfect strength, for he was able to carry his bed.

*Matthew ix:20-23; Mark v:25-34; Luke viii:43-48.* The Lord is on the way to raise the ruler's daughter from the dead. A woman who was diseased with an issue of blood for twelve years, touched in faith the hem of His garment, believing that she would be made whole. She was healed immediately as the Lord felt that virtue had gone out from Him.

*Matthew ix:23-25; Mark v:35-43; Luke viii:49-56.* These passages contain the first evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ has the power to raise the dead. Jairus's daughter had died. She was not in a cataleptic state. There were eye-witnesses who knew she was dead. When He said, "Weep not; she is not dead but sleepeth" they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. There were also eye-witnesses that when he took her by the hand and said "Talitha cumi"! the twelve year old girl arose and walked.

*Matthew ix: 27-31.* Two blind men appealed to Him for healing. "Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it."

*Matthew ix:31-33.* The healing of a dumb man possessed with a demon followed immediately upon the healing of

the two blind men. The dumb spake in such a manner that the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never so in Israel."

*Matthew ix:35; Mark vi:5.* He continued in His Galilean ministry of preaching the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people. In Nazareth, His own city, He laid hands on a few sick folk and healed them. He marveled because of their unbelief.

*Matthew x:1-10; Mark vi:7-13; Luke ix:1-6.* As the whole land, every town and every village had to hear the message of the kingdom, not by any means the Gospel of Grace, as it is proclaimed after His finished work on the Cross, but the message of the literal kingdom promised to Israel, He sent forth His twelve disciples. He gave them power, His own power, over unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of diseases and sicknesses. He gave them but one text to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," with the command, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons; freely ye have received, freely give." Miracles of healing were then performed by the twelve, just as the Lord Jesus had performed them, for it was His power through them, which operated. How this commission is misused by divine healers with their unscriptural claims is elsewhere dealt with in this volume.

*Matthew xi:5.* This passage shows the many miracles performed by Him in the presence of witnesses, attesting His Messiahship.

*Matthew xii:10-14; Mark iii:1-6; Luke vi:6-11.* A withered hand is restored by Him, not in a gradual process, but instantaneously.

*Matthew xii:22-24; Luke xi:14.* Another afflicted one with dumbness and blindness, produced by demon-possession, was healed by Him. All careful students of the Gospel

of Matthew know that the twelfth chapter is the great divide in this Gospel. The message of the kingdom had been rejected. Indications showed that the King Himself would be rejected. After the twelfth chapter the message of the kingdom being at hand is no longer heard. The King begins to speak of the mysteries of the kingdom and also of His coming passion. It is therefore very significant that in chapters xiii to the end of this Gospel fewer miracles are recorded, while in the beginning of Matthew miracles upon miracles of healing are found.

*Matthew xiii:58.* He did not many mighty miracles there because of their unbelief. They did not believe in Him as the promised King-Messiah and there was no demonstration of His power.

*Matthew xiv:34-36.* He had spent the night on the mountain top. His disciples were on the sea and the ship was tossed with waves. In the fourth watch He came. In the morning another great healing scene took place. The dispensational aspect is pointed out later.

*Matthew xv:21-28; Mark vii:24-30.* This is the first definite miracle of healing after the kingdom message had been rejected. It is a heathen woman of Syro-Phenicia who appeals to Him for her daughter. He answered her not, because she used His title as "Son of David," to which she had no right. But He healed her daughter as soon as the mother appealed to Him as Lord and manifested her faith in Him.

*Matthew xv:29-31; Mark vii:31:37.* A great multitude was healed immediately after the healing of the Syro-Phenician daughter.

*Matthew xvii:14-21; Mark ix:14-29; Luke ix:37-43.* A demon-possessed son is delivered right after the transfiguration.

*Matthew xx:29-34; Mark x:46-52; Luke xviii:35-43.* The healing of these two blind men, one of whom was Bartimaeus, is the last miracle of healing recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.

In the Gospels of Mark and Luke we find a few miracles of healing which are not mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew.

*Mark i:21-28; Luke iv:31-37.* This incident happened in the synagogue of Capernaum. We notice especially that the unclean spirit confessed the Lord Jesus Christ as the Holy One of God. There was perfect deliverance.

*Mark vii:32-37.* Mark records this miracle exclusively. The deaf man with an impediment in his speech is completely healed after the Lord had put His fingers into his ears and touched his tongue and uttered the word "Ephphatha."

*Mark viii:22-26.* This miracle is also peculiar to Mark. He spit on his eyes, put His hands on him, and after He put His hands on him another time, the man saw perfectly.

*Luke vii:11-16.* This miracle is reported only by Luke. It is the second time, when our Lord manifested His divine power in raising the dead.

*Luke viii:2.* Mary Magdalene, one of our Lord's most devoted followers, was healed by Him of evil spirits and infirmities. We do not know at what time it occurred. The fact of the miracle is mentioned in this verse.

*Luke x:1-12.* As He sent forth the twelve so He sent forth seventy disciples into the harvest. In connection with the preaching of the kingdom they were to heal the sick.

*Luke xiii:10-17.* This miracle is not recorded elsewhere in the Synoptics. The woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years, bound by Satan, was instantaneously and perfectly loosed.



*Luke xiv:1-6.* The man healed of dropsy in the house of a Pharisee is also recorded by Luke only.

*Luke xvii:11-19.* The cleansing of the ten lepers is likewise peculiar to the Gospel of Luke. They obeyed His command and "as they went they were cleansed."

*Luke xxii:50-51.* All the Gospels record the action of Peter in smiting the servant of the High Priest and cutting off his right ear, but only Luke states that the Lord restored the cut off ear by a miracle. Nothing was needed to stop the hemorrhage, nor a bandage to keep the ear in place, to give the severed ear a chance to knit itself in place. It was an instantaneous cure.

And now we turn to the fourth Gospel, *the Gospel of John*. None of the miracles of healing recorded in the Synoptic Gospels appears anywhere in the fourth Gospel. The omission is explained by the purpose of this Gospel. But while the many miracles of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are omitted, the Holy Spirit through the pen of the beloved disciple gives the account of four miracles which do not appear in the other Gospels.

The first miracle in the Gospel of John is the turning of water into wine at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, and the second, marked out as such, is the healing of the nobleman's son.

*John iv:46-54.* The nature of the disease is not stated, but the fact is given that when the Lord spoke the word, at the same hour the fever left him.

*John v:1-15.* The healing of the impotent man, who had been in that condition for thirty-eight years. When the Lord Jesus said, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," he was immediately whole. As a result of this miracle the Lord gave that magnificent self-witness, in which He reveals His Deity.

*John ix.* The healing of the man born blind. He made a paste of clay, anointed his eyes, and after the man had washed in the pool of Siloam he had perfect sight.

*John xi:1-44.* The raising of Lazarus from the dead, after he had been dead for four days, so that the sister of Lazarus declared, "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he has been dead four days." This is the greatest of all the miracles our Lord performed. It is also the minutest in description, and so well authenticated that only the most out-spoken infidels, to whom some of the religious modernists of our times belong, can deny it.

The passages we have quoted from the four Gospels contain the record of the different miracles of healing our Lord performed in His three years' ministry. We do not know how many He healed. Several times we read of multitudes who came to Him, and that He healed them all. There may have been hundreds of sick folks who crowded around Him. Not one of those who sought His help was ever turned away. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit did not report all His miracles of healing (*John xxi:25*). Certain Apocryphal New Testament writings, notably the *Evangelium Infantae*, contain also supposed miracles of healing, but they are entirely untrustworthy.

The four Gospels tell us that He raised three persons from the state of physical death, the young daughter of Jairus, the widow's son at Nain, and His friend Lazarus. He healed and cleansed completely those afflicted with that dreadful disease known as leprosy. He healed those who were constitutionally blind, deaf and dumb. Paralysis of long standing, dropsy, epilepsy, different forms of insanity and fevers were healed by His divine power. A withered arm, dried up so that it hung lifeless, was completely restored, and a member of the body, an ear which had been

severed by the stroke of a sword, was miraculously put back into its place. We do not think that even a scar was left. We doubt not but every disease and every infirmity known in those days was healed by Him.

It is also noteworthy that of the individual cases no two were exactly alike. Some suffered more than others; some came personally to Him; others had their needs presented by relatives and friends; some appealed to Him in faith and others made no appeal. Most of those healed were Israelites; several were Gentiles. The greatest praise was given by a Samaritan, the greatest faith displayed by a Roman officer, and by the Syro-Phenician mother who appealed for her daughter. He often healed by touch; sometimes He healed without touching the sick one; at other times the sick touched the hem of His garment. Most were healed in His immediate presence, others were healed being miles away from where the Lord ministered. He never used the well known oriental remedy, oil. His disciples evidently did (Mark vi:13). One man born blind He sent to wash in the pool of Siloam, after He had covered his eyes with a paste of clay; He spit on another man's blind eyes and put His fingers into the ears of a deaf man. Why He did it in this way we do not know, unless it was for the reason of showing us that He was not bound to any form; He could do as it pleased Him. Then in the place where His rejection was the most pronounced, in His own country where He was brought up, He could not do mighty works, and He marveled on account of their unbelief. But there was no faith manifested in connection with the three resurrections from the dead. Though He said to the ruler, "Be not afraid; only believe" there is nothing to show that he believed that the Lord would bring the dead child to life.\*

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\*According to Matthew the ruler said, "My daughter is even now dead." According to Mark and Luke she was dying. He knew she was as good as dead though she had not yet actually died.

He halted the funeral procession at the gate of Nain, and, moved with compassion, He raised to life the widow's son. But there was no faith displayed by anyone, nor a single prayer offered for the resurrection of the young man. Mary and Martha, while they believed on Him as the Christ, the Son of God, did not manifest strong faith that Lazarus would be raised from the dead.

We also note the many occasions where the Lord Jesus Christ forbade the wider publication of His miracles of healing. Most of them were done in an unostentatious manner. And what He preached He also practiced. When He sent out His disciples, delegating to them His own divine power to heal, He commissioned them in these words, "Freely ye have received, freely give." He made no charges, nor received money from those whom He healed.

We also call attention to the fact that many diseases, afflictions and infirmities the Lord healed were the result of demoniac possession. It would be a very serious error to say, as is being taught by divine healing fanatics, that every bodily pain or sickness today is the result of the direct work of demons.

Demon possession was a terrible curse in the days our Lord was on earth. The whole nation was aware of this terrible affliction, and maintained a special class of exorcists whose business it was to deal with these cases. The unseen world of evil spirits must have anticipated the coming and the ministry of the Son of God in the Holy Land, and in taking possession of a multitude of victims, tried to oppose and hinder the Lord. They knew Him, for they confessed Him as the Son of God. Some had more than one demon; Mary Magdalene had been delivered of seven; some had legions. The poor victims suffered untold agonies. Some wandered around naked, had their abodes among graves,

cut themselves with stones, had supernatural strength. They had fits, fell into the water and into the fire, foamed at the mouth, gnashed with their teeth, had paralysis agitans, trembling from head to foot, and were otherwise afflicted. That demon possession today is not only possible but an actual and most solemn fact, we shall more fully demonstrate when we deal in this volume with the Pentecostal-Healing delusion.

The Lord Jesus Christ manifested His power in casting out these unlawful tenants of the human soul, and delivering all their victims.

### *The Meaning of our Lord's Miracles of Healing*

The miracles of our Lord are, in the *first* place, the evidence of His Deity. By these miracles of healing He revealed the attributes of His Godhead. Each one of them manifests His omnipotent power. He never prayed that a certain miracle might be granted unto Him. He commanded—"I will; be thou clean!" "I say unto thee, Arise!" "Talitha cumi," "Ephphatha," "Receive thy sight." When He uttered words of praise before the tomb of Lazarus it was not for the sake of asking His Father to raise Lazarus, but an audible expression of His intimate fellowship with the Father. He had witnessed to His Sonship, that He is one with the Father, equal in all things with the Father. He spoke of doing the same works which the Father doeth. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (John v:21). In connection with one of these miracles He also manifested His Deity in forgiving sins (Matthew ix:11,12).

In the *second* place His miracles are the evidences and credentials of His Messiahship. When John the Baptist was troubled with doubt in prison, and sent forth his disciples

to the Lord Jesus with the question "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" the Lord said "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them" (Matthew xi:1-6). The kingdom promised to Israel should bring, according to the prophetic testimony in the Old Testament, the healing of the blind, the lame and the deaf (Isaiah xxxv). The inhabitant of the kingdom would no longer have to say "I am sick" (Isaiah xxxiii;24). The King had therefore to evidence His Messianic claims by these powers of the kingdom. The Jews ask for a sign (1 Corinthians i:22). They want to see before they believe. The message of the Messiah concerning the kingdom had to be accompanied by miracles of healing. This is the reason why the Lord sent forth His disciples and conferred upon them His own divine power, to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, to drive out demons and even to raise the dead. But this commission was for that time exclusively. It is an important fact, pointed out before, that in the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of the King and His Kingdom, is divinely arranged in such a way so as to show how the Lord Jesus, as the promised Messiah, the Son of David, offered the kingdom first of all. It had to be thus, for He had to be rejected as the King by the people. The great majority of miracles of healing are recorded in the first twelve chapters of that Gospel and are connected with the message, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

In the *third* place in these miracles of healing the Son of God, the Messiah and King of Israel, besides manifesting His divine power and evidencing His Messiahship, also foreshadowed what the blessings of the kingdom will be

when the prayer is answered, "Thy kingdom come," by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to receive that kingdom from the Father's hands. As we have seen, sickness, pain and death are in the world on account of sin. It is part of the curse which rests upon man; all creation groans likewise under that curse and has shared in man's ruin. But Christ in His blessed sacrificial death bore that curse. The crown of thorns is symbolical of it. In order that His redemption might be shown to be a perfect redemption, the curse of sin, disease and death, the curse as it rests upon all creation, must some day be removed. When He comes again and all things are put under His feet, that time of blessing and glory will be reached. If in the days of His humiliation diseases, infirmities, demon powers and the power of death were completely overthrown by His Word and power, how much greater will be the victory in the day of His glorious manifestation!

The dispensational aspect of some of the miracles of our Lord is indicated, especially in the Gospel of Matthew, in the peculiar arrangement. We just hint at it.\* Matthew did not write his Gospel in a chronological way. Therefore he massed miracles together under the guiding hand of the Spirit of God, as if they had followed one the other. But it was done for a specific purpose. We take the eighth chapter. The leper is cleansed first. He touched him and healed him instantaneously. He represents typically the nation Israel. He came to heal them of spiritual leprosy. In the silence of the priest to whom the cleansed leper showed himself, we see the fact that Israel did not respond to the purpose of the King. Then a centurion, a Roman, approached Him. He believes and his suffering servant is

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\*Our "Gospel of Matthew," a complete exposition in two volumes of over 600 pages, gives the details of this interesting arrangement.

healed without the Lord going to him in person and touching him. Then the Lord said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Upon this He announced the casting out of the children of the kingdom (Israel) and the coming in of the Gentiles from the east and the west, receiving the covenant blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Who fails to see in this the present age in which Israel is set aside and the Gospel goes forth to the Gentiles? Then He entered a house next; Peter's mother-in-law is sick with a fever. He touched her. She arose and began to minister unto them. Here is a picture of what will happen some day, when the Lord will heal Israel of her sin-sickness and restlessness. Israel is represented by the Prophets as a sick woman. When He comes again He will touch Israel with His healing touch and Israel will be raised up to minister. Then follows immediately the healing of all. Not one was sent away disappointed, nor is there a word said about conditions of healing. "He healed all that were sick." This will be the case after Israel is converted and restored.

Equally striking is the dispensational aspect of Matthew ix:18-26. A ruler, a Jew, requests the Lord to come and to raise up his daughter, who was at the point of death, in the eyes of her father as good as dead. On the way to raise her, she passed away. But while He continues in the road to raise her up another miracle happens. The woman with the issue of blood touched Him and is healed. Then He proceeds and raises the dead daughter of the ruler to life. The ruler's daughter, about to die, is another prophetic type of Israel, the daughter of Zion. She dies nationally and spiritually, but the Lord is on His way to raise her up. The woman who touched Him and was healed represents typically the Gentiles who believe on Him, who touch Him in faith.



Then again in Chapter xiv, in the closing verses, we see in the ship filled with disciples, battling with the waves, the wind contrary, a picture of His own during this age. It was night, as it is also night now. But in the fourth watch of the night, when the day was about to dawn, He came walking across the stormy sea. Peter went forth to meet Him. Beginning to sink, the Lord saved him, and when they came to the ship the wind ceased. He is worshipped as the Son of God. After this there was another great demonstration of His healing power. Here too we see foreshadowed the present age and what will follow when He comes. In the fifteenth chapter, after He had healed the daughter of the Syro-Phenician mother, a Gentile, great multitudes came to be healed. The great multitudes healed after the Gentile had been delivered, foreshadow once more the blessings of the coming kingdom.

In the *fourth* place the miracles of our Lord, besides bringing untold physical blessings to those who were healed, illustrate the ruin of sin, the condition of Jew and Gentile by nature, and His power to deliver from these spiritual diseases. Leprosy shows typically the loathsomeness of sin and its terrible defilement, excluding from the presence of God. Blindness illustrates the blind condition in which the natural man is, blind to every spiritual truth; and paralysis illustrates the helplessness of the sinner to do anything for himself, he can neither stand nor walk. Deafness shows spiritual inability to hear, and dumbness inability to praise his God; the withered arm is the type of the natural man's inability to work and serve. Fever is typical of the restlessness of sin and the burning thirst of the soul. The woman bowed down with a spirit of infirmity, always forced to look downward and not heavenward, illustrates the fact that sin crushes and bows down the crea-

ture destined to be in fellowship with God. And death is the picture of the spiritual death in which man is by nature, and the eternal death, separation for ever and ever from God. Our Lord meeting all these physical conditions showed that He has the power to meet also the spiritual needs of His lost creature.

Before we leave this subject we point out a few other facts. Nowhere did our Lord make healing the leading feature of His ministry. He did not use His power to heal to gain fame, but He discouraged in every way the publicity of what He had done. There was not a certain class of the sick which he singled out and healed, and others who were sick that He did not heal, but sent them away still suffering and disappointed. No! He healed them all. He did not appoint certain healing meetings, nor certain times of the day, nor did He ask for certain preparations, but He healed at any time and wherever the sick appealed to Him. There were no outward phenomena connected with His miracles of healing, such as falling down and becoming unconscious, or "the gift of tongues," which the Lord *never* mentioned nor promised to His disciples; nor were there convulsions or fits. The convulsions, falling down to the ground, foaming at the mouth, were the evidences of demon power. When He healed there was instantaneous delivery; no need of waiting days and weeks, nor was there a gradual cessation of the fever and the symptoms. We mention these facts to show later the great contrast which exists between the miracles of our Lord and those of the present day men and women who make the claims of continuing His ministry.

## CHAPTER III

### Miracles of Healing in the Book of Acts

The Book of Acts records the beginning of the Church on earth, which took place on the Day of Pentecost when the promised Holy Spirit was poured upon the assembled believers. The first part of this great historical record is filled with the miraculous. With the coming of the Holy Spirit there were miraculous outward signs, a miraculous gift of praise in different tongues, miraculous deliverances by the visible ministry of angels, miraculous judgments, like the instantaneous death of Ananias and his wife, as well as the smiting of blasphemous Herod by an angel. There were visions of glory, mysterious transportation, as in the case of Philip, who was snatched away. There were also true prophets who had the spirit of prophecy and predicted the future, like Agabus. There were miracles of healing; the sick were healed and the dead were raised, as in the days our Lord was on earth. We confine ourselves to the records of these miracles of healing, and as we did in the previous chapter we shall quote them first.

*Acts iii:1-11.* This is the first miracle of healing in the Book of Acts. The Church had been formed. By the one Spirit given on the great Day of Pentecost, they had been baptized into the one body. On that day no miracles of healing were performed, nor is there any mention made that the gathered company had such supernatural manifestations in their midst. It was some time after Pentecost that the first miracle of healing took place. We leave it to the reader to peruse the text. The helpless beggar, lame from his mother's womb, expected nothing but alms from

Peter and John as they entered the temple gate. Nothing could be further from his thoughts than the expectation that these two unassuming Jews, fishermen of Galilee, would give him perfect health. Peter did not tell him that if he would believe that the Jesus who had been crucified, is the Christ, that if he believed that He is "the same yesterday, today and forever" and yielded himself to Him, he would be cured by believing. Peter did not give the lame man any kind of a message. For all we know the lame man was entirely ignorant of the fact that these two men were followers and disciples of Christ. The lame man was daily at the gate. Through that gate our Lord must have passed frequently. Perhaps he heard from others, this is the great Prophet and worker of miracles who heals the people. May he not have heard that an afflicted one like himself had been healed at the pool of Bethesda? We do not know. But this fact remains, no message that Christ could heal him was given, nor was there an appeal made to him that he should believe. Peter said, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Then Peter "took him by the right hand, and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."

This miracle is almost a duplicate of the miracle of the lame man healed by our Lord, and recorded in the fifth chapter of the Gospel of John. Here let us call attention to a fact which has been frequently, if not altogether, overlooked. *The risen Christ did not perform a single miracle of healing.* He could have done so. He might have stepped in His glorified human body, showing still the nail prints and the pierced side, into some public place and called to the sick and afflicted to come to Him,

so that He might prove that He is "the same yesterday, today and forever." He did not. Neither did He appear to any unbeliever. The healing of the lame man by Peter using the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth gives us an important lesson which will be pointed out in this chapter after the examination of the other miracles of healing.

The miracles could not be denied. Even their enemies had to say "that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." (Acts iv:16).

After the supernatural judgment of lying Ananias and Sapphira there followed another demonstration of miraculous healing.

*Acts v:15-16.* "They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one."

We must not read more into this passage than what it probably means. It does not say that the shadow of Peter falling upon the sick healed them of diseases. Probably it did. God can heal even through a shadow as an instrument, or through no instrument at all. The people were so very eager to be healed, and looked upon Peter as a great man of God, that they expressed their desire by believing that Peter's shadow would be beneficial. As far as we know the so-called "miracle men" and "miracle women" who claim divine healing powers have not yet tried their shadows, nor have their dupes taken refuge under their shadow. But a multitude was healed who gathered in Jerusalem from the surrounding towns. Their sick and those vexed with

unclean spirits were all healed. There was not a single failure.

*Acts vi:8.* Miracles and wonders are mentioned here. But we do not know if Stephen did miracles of healing.

*Acts viii:1-7.* Philip was not an Apostle, but one of the deacons of the Church in Jerusalem (Acts vi:5). The Church having been broken up, Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them. The Holy Spirit manifested His power through this message and through Philip. The Samaritans saw the miracles which he did. Here we are told what miracles they were. "For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed, and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed."

*Acts ix:32-43.* Peter performed two miracles in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. A victim of the palsy for eight years. There is not a word said that Aeneas had appealed to Peter to heal him. Nor was there any preaching done. Peter led by the Spirit, addressed the sufferer and said, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Arise and make thy bed!" The cure was instantaneous. Dorcas had died. Peter spoke the word, "Tabitha - Arise!" Then we read, "she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints (the believers) and widows, presented her alive."

*Acts xiv:3.* Signs and wonders were done by the hands of the Apostles in Iconium. Though it is not stated, miracles of healing were probably among these signs.

*Acts xv: 8-10.* At Lystra a cripple, who had never walked in his life, was noticed by Paul, and in some way Paul noticed that he had faith to be healed. This faith came by hearing, for Paul preached the Gospel. Paul then

commanded him to stand upright, and he leaped and walked.

*Acts xvi:16-18.* A demon-possessed damsel is healed by the Apostle Paul. He said, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." The demon left the girl the same hour. The case is an illustration of the fact that there are demons which speak the truth, and are not, like others, lying spirits.

*Acts xix:11-12.* "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul. So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." The meaning of these special miracles mentioned here, and the foolish attempt to reproduce them in the Church today, follows later in this chapter.

*Acts xx:9-12.* Eutychus was killed by a fall from a window. Paul went down and embraced him. "And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."

*Acts xxviii:8-9.* Paul healed by the laying on of hands the father of a Roman, by the name of Publius, from fever and a bloody flux. Then other inhabitants of the island Melita who had diseases came and were healed. Here ends the story of the miracles of healing in the Book of Acts.

#### *The Meaning of the Miracles of Healing in the Acts*

The Book of Acts begins with Jerusalem and ends with the greatest Apostle as a prisoner in Rome. The Book begins with many supernatural manifestations, including the miracles of healing, but gradually these manifestations become less and less, and the end of the Book sees them entirely gone.

In the *first* place miracles of healing are so prominent in the beginning of this book because the Gospel was preached

in Jerusalem, and only Jews were addressed. Strictly speaking the message was to the Jews to repent; it was a repeated message, the same the Lord had preached (Acts iii:19-21). The Lord was still waiting for their repentance. To convict the Jews and leave them without excuse, the preaching was backed "both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, *according to His own will*" (Hebrews ii:4). God willed it to be so.

In the *second* place these miracles of healing are prominent in the beginning of Acts to witness to the fact that the Christ, who was crucified, is living at the right hand of God, as taught and preached by His witnesses, the Apostles. The healing of the lame man at the temple gate, healed in the name of Jesus Christ, showed that He who had healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda is the living Christ and has the same power to heal. All these miracles done by the Apostles in Jerusalem were renewed evidences to the Jews that He is the Son of God, the Messiah, the King, the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer who died, who was buried, who rose from among the dead on the third day and who is gone to heaven and sits at the right hand of God.

In the *third* place the miracles in the first part of the Book of Acts happened in fulfillment of His own words addressed, not to the Church, but to His disciples. We read in Mark xvi:17,18: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." In John xvi:12 He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." What the greater works are is explained in an-



other chapter. When He spoke of the works He had done, which the disciples should do also, He meant the works of healing. The fulfillment came after His return to the Father. The sick and diseased were healed; demons were driven out and the dead were raised. Though Paul did not hear Him speak the words in the closing verses of Mark's Gospel, yet he experienced the truth of His promise when a serpent bit him and did him no harm (Acts xxviii). Mark xvi:17-18 is taken up in detail in another chapter. The promise given there does not extend beyond the Apostles.

In the *fourth* place the miracles of healing, as well as others, were essential in the beginning of a new dispensation, and equally essential for the introduction of Christianity among the Gentiles. The Apostles proclaimed a supernatural message, concerning a supernatural person. The supernatural can only be proved by the supernatural. If the supernatural is ruled out of Christianity, if it is stripped of its supernatural origin and the supernatural evidences of its beginning, then it ceases to be Christianity. Without miracles Christianity is absolutely worthless. For this reason these miracles took place not only in Jerusalem in the beginning, but also in different parts of the Gentile world. The message of Christianity, as preached by the Apostles, was demonstrated to be a message from God by the miracles and signs which took place. But after the message manifested its supernatural power in the conversion and transformation of thousands of lives, and after the full revelation of the Truth of God had been communicated in what we call the New Testament, outward signs, miracles of healing, as well as others were no longer needed and therefore ceased. We must remember that when the recorded miracles happened in Jerusalem not a single book of our New Testament was in existence, and the greatest revela-

tions which God gave to man were penned by the prisoner of the Lord in Rome, the Apostle Paul, after the Gospel had been introduced by him in a good part of the known world of his times.

It is highly significant that the beginning of the Book of Acts is filled with the miraculous, but after we leave Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria behind, the miracles of healing decrease. To this we might add that in many places the Apostle Paul and his companions visited no miracles of healing, nor any other miracles are recorded.

As is well known, Roman Catholicism believes that the power of working miracles was given by Christ to His Church, and that it never has and never will be withdrawn. Much of the superstition of Rome, as to miraculous healing and other miracles, in connection with relics, garments of saints and similar objects, is founded upon miracles recorded in the Book of Acts. Romanists point to Acts xix:12 as sanctioning of wearing articles "blessed" for healing and protection. But what shall we say when we find the same invention today among a certain class of Christians? There is a certain Baptist Church in which weekly meetings are held, handkerchiefs are blessed and sent to the sick. The pastor has no sympathy with it, yet he does not want to interfere. Christians who think that the Lord will continue to heal divers diseases through handkerchiefs (though nothing is said about "blessing") overlook the fact that these miracles were *special* miracles, at a special time (Verse 11).

Paul was in the midst of a very wicked city, filled with superstitions, with sorcerers and others who manifested Satan's power. A signal manifestation of the power of God was needed to counteract these wicked demonstrations. God granted such a manifestation in the manner

recorded in the above text. To make use of handkerchiefs, today, as "divine healers" do, is a foolish invention, akin to Romish superstitions and practices.

## CHAPTER IV

### What the Epistles Teach as to Physical Healing

The Epistles of the New Testament were written by the inspired pens of the Apostles Paul, Peter, John, James and the servant of Jesus Christ, Jude, who was not an Apostle. The Pauline Epistles contain the fullest revelation of the Truth of God. The highest of all revelation is found in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. Paul also is the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Epistles of Peter, John, James and Jude are known as the General Epistles. We shall take up each Epistle separately and examine each to learn what they teach as to the healing of diseases.

Before we do this we call attention to a very significant fact. *Not one of the writers of these documents has anything to say about the miracles our Lord Jesus Christ performed while on earth.* Not once are we reminded by the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus Christ healed all manner of diseases, that He healed miraculously and instantaneously those who were born blind, the deaf, the dumb, the lame, and all manner of diseases. Nor is there to be found a single promise which holds out the hope that, if the believer trusts the Lord, he will be exempt from diseases and infirmities; or that the Lord will continue to exercise His divine power in the same manner and degree as He did while on earth. Only once did the Apostle Peter refer to the healing of Christ while on earth (Acts x:38). Then only once is mention made in an Epistle of the miracles which happened in the beginning in Jerusalem. The significance of this fact will be pointed out later in this chapter.

We begin with the Epistle to the *Romans*. This Epistle unfolds the salvation of God. This salvation is threefold (1) salvation from the guilt of sin; (2) salvation from the power of sin, and (3) salvation from the presence of sin. The latter will come when the believer is with the Lord. This salvation is the result of the work of redemption which the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, procured when He died for our sins on the cross. This redemption includes the body of the believer, but that redemption does not come till the Lord comes and then changes "our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. iii:21). Now if it were true, as is claimed by "divine healers," that Christ died for our bodily ills, just as He died for our spiritual ills, our sins, the Epistle to the Romans would be the Epistle in which this physical salvation should be revealed. In vain do we look for it. There is not a single verse upon which that invented theory that Christ died "for our sicknesses" and that "He bore our diseases as He bore our sins" could be built. The Epistle to the Romans makes it perfectly clear what the salvation of God is, and that it does not include "the healing of our diseases." There is a passage in the eighth chapter which is misunderstood and misapplied to support the "divine healing" theory. A later chapter will show the fallacy of such an interpretation (Romans viii:11).

*The First Epistle to the Corinthians.* The Church, constituting the fellowship of the saints on earth, its place and testimony in the world; its order, membership, spiritual gifts and manifestations, discipline, and other instructions, are the truths mostly dealt with in this Epistle. The Epistle reveals the deplorable condition of the Corinthian Church. Sec-tarianism had its origin in Corinth. Gross immorality was being tolerated in their midst; law-suits were being submitted

by them to courts over which pagans presided. They had degraded the blessed memorial feast, the Lord's supper, on account of which some had been judged by the Lord with illness, while others had died. There were other abuses besides.

The chapter which interests us the most in connection with our study is the twelfth chapter, in which the gifts of the Spirit of God are enumerated. Among these gifts we find the *gifts of healing* and of working miracles. Nine gifts of the Spirit are given. They are the following: "The Word of Wisdom; the Word of Knowledge; Faith; the Gifts of Healing; the Working of Miracles; Prophecy; Discerning of Spirits; Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues." Foremost are the gifts needed for the edification of the Body, the Church of Jesus Christ, gifts which supply the spiritual need of the members of that Body. In the secondary place we have the gifts which are called "sign gifts," and they are given not for those who believe, but to them that believe not (I Corinthians xiv:22). These sign gifts possess an evidential character. They are "the gifts of healing, or working miracles, discerning the spirits, tongues and interpretation of tongues" They were the prominent gifts in connection with the preaching of the Gospel to the unbelieving Jews, "for the Jews require a sign." They were the signs in the beginning of Christianity, bearing witness to the supernatural character of the message proclaimed, and that at a time when the written Word of God, as we possess it now in the New Testament, was in process of production.

We read in this chapter that "God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers." These are evidently the permanent gifts, as we shall find them mentioned again in the Epistle to the Ephesians. Then we read what comes after that, "miracles, then gifts of

healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (Verse 28). But are these gifts bestowed upon all? "Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I show you a more excellent way" (Verses 29-31). From this we learn that the Lord does not bestow all these gifts upon one individual; they are distributed as it pleases Him. Evidently the Corinthians in their puffed up condition had a selfish ambition to have all these gifts, especially those for outward manifestation. Therefore when persons claim, and especially if these persons are women, that they have the gift of wisdom and knowledge, the gift of faith, the gifts of healing, the gift of speaking in tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues, we have a perfect right to look upon their claims as spurious. They are contrary to the Word of God. The Spirit of God has commanded, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak." If therefore women claim, as they do today in Pentecostalism, to possess the gift of teaching, the gift of speaking in tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues, we can rest assured that it is a counterfeit manifestation.

Nor is there any intimation whatever here, or elsewhere in the New Testament, that these sign gifts, the gifts of healing, of miracles, of tongues and their interpretation, were to be permanently present in the Body of Christ. There are evidences that show they were limited. The exercise of these gifts was never discretionary. They were manifested only in their fitting season, and could only work effectually by the immediate will of God. Power belongs to Him and is always in His hands. In the next chapter we have the intimation that these special sign gifts

would cease (Chapter xiii:8). In two other passages (Romans xii and Ephesians iv) we read of the gifts of the Spirit; in both passages the gifts of healings, of miracles and tongues, are omitted.

It is interesting to note that while we have no record that a single miracle of healing ever took place in the Corinthian assembly, though we read that the signs of an Apostle were wrought among them by Paul. They had the gift of tongues and evidently misused it, so that the pen of the Apostle Paul had to caution against it.

Nor is there a promise in the Word of God that these extraordinary gifts are to be restored to the Church before this age ends. The only signs and miracles mentioned in the end of the age are the lying signs and miracles of the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians ii). In the light of all this, anything which claims today the restoration of these sign gifts, a return to apostolic days, must be looked upon with grave suspicion.

In the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* we find no mention made of the gifts of healing. The second Epistle is more personal and less doctrinal than the first Epistle. There is much in this Epistle relating to the personal character of Paul. He defends his Apostolic authority, his motives and his ministry. But there is something in this Epistle which has a definite bearing upon the healing question. In this Epistle Paul speaks of the thorn in the flesh. We quote the text. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly



will I therefore rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians xii:7-9). The Apostle had great supernatural revelations with which the danger of self-exaltation was connected. To keep him humble and in the place of dependence, the Lord had permitted Satan to afflict him with the thorn in the flesh, just as He had permitted Satan to afflict Job.

Many opinions have been expressed as to what the thorn in Paul's flesh was. Some teach that it consisted in evil suggestions, thoughts of unbelief and blasphemy. Luther held this view. Others suggest remorse over his past life as the persecutor of the Church, or a form of melancholy. Destructive critics have invented a cunningly devised fable. They say the thorn in the flesh consisted in a form of epilepsy, called by the Greeks "the holy disease." These fits put him into a trance, and it was such a spell that he had on the road to Damascus, when he imagined to have seen Christ. How utterly absurd! Roman interpreters find in the thorn a precedent for the stories of the monkish temptations - incitements to lust.

The thorn in the flesh was unquestionably a physical and very painful affliction. The malady was not only extremely painful but it also humiliated him in the presence of those to whom he ministered (2 Corinthians x:10). We are not left in doubt about the nature of this bodily affliction. He suffered from a serious and very painful eye-disease. That he had weak eyes may be learned from the fact that he did not write the Epistles with his own hand but employed an amanuensis. Only one Epistle he wrote himself, and he did so writing to the Galatians in large letters (Galatians vi:11). Acts xxiii:1-4 shows that he was nearsighted. The Galatians had pity for him in his affliction and were ready to pluck out their own eyes, and give them to him (Gala-

tians iv:15). An ancient description of Paul, dating back to the second century, mentions the fact that his eyes were inflamed; the genuineness of the tradition cannot reasonably be doubted. He suffered from that painful disease ophthalmia, which is still prevalent in the Orient. The word "infirmity" means sickness. Then he prayed thrice to be delivered from this disease. He prayed for healing; but as far as healing is concerned there was no answer. But the Lord told him, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This means, in other words, "It is better for you, Paul, to suffer this affliction than to be delivered from it." It was the will of the Lord that this physical ill should remain upon him.

This case of Paul's affliction disposes completely of that vicious teaching that the reason why true Christians who are sick suffer and are not healed, is because they have not sufficient faith to be healed. Or as one, Bosworth, puts it, the lack of "discerning the Lord's body." Of this, more later.

We find nothing in the Epistle to the *Galatians* which is related to the question before us. Only once in this Apostolic defense of the Gospel is the word "miracles" used, and then only incidentally, without any explanation what miracles they were (Galatians iii:5).

The Epistle to the *Ephesians* is the culmination of God's revelation to man. It is the high-watermark of all revelation. In this great Epistle the glory of the Body of Christ and the Bride of Christ is wonderfully unfolded. The Church is the fullness of Him, who filleth all in all. It is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple of the Lord (ii:21). Here we are told that Christ

loved the Church and gave Himself for it. Here is the precious revelation that we are members of His Body, His flesh and His bones. But where in this Epistle of the most glorious Old and New Testament revelation do we find a single statement, like those constantly used among the advocates of "divine healing," that Christ died for our sicknesses; that the Church must heal the physically sick? Where in this Epistle or any other Epistle is even the faintest suggestion of healing meetings, in which the sick present themselves for a demonstration in public that Christ can heal the sick? Where? There is not even a hint.

We call attention to chapter iv:11-14. The Apostle speaks of the gifts which the Lord has given to His Body, the Church. These are of course the same as the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians xii. Here we read of the gifts necessary for the "perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ (the Church)." Here we have the gifts which are permanent, till the state of perfection is reached (Verse 13). Paul speaks of the Apostles (their doctrine), of Prophets, those who tell forth the Truth of God, of Evangelists who go forth to preach the Gospel to the unsaved; the Pastor and Teacher, who follows the Evangelist to shepherd the flock and teach them the Word. These ministers possess the gifts of wisdom and knowledge of 1 Corinthians xii. But there is no mention made here of the sign gifts. Not a word of the gifts of healing, of miracles, not a single word about speaking in tongues. Why not? Because these sign gifts were for the beginning of the Church, but are not needed for the completion of the Church, nor for the edification of that Body. When God revealed all He means to reveal, sight and signs end and "we walk by faith and not by sight."

In the sister Epistle to Ephesians, that is *Colossians*, noth-

ing is found which has any bearing whatever on the healing of the body of the believer. But we call attention to the following. Here we have the glory of the Head of the Body. He is revealed in the glory of His Deity and the glory of His work is beautifully unfolded. Here we read of the peace which was made in the blood of the Cross; of the reconciliation which has been effected; of the blotting out of the handwriting of ordinances, which was against us; of His triumph over principalities and powers. We read of what the believer has in Christ, that he is perfect and complete in Him. But why do we not read in this magnificent testimony to the Person and work of Christ, that He also died for our diseases, that He bore our diseases in His body on the cross in the same manner as He bore our sins? Why is there nothing said about healing in this next greatest Epistle of the New Testament? The answer is simple. The teaching that Christ died for our diseases as He died for our sins is a human invention, and not a Bible doctrine. Nor is there a word said in this Epistle, nor in any other Epistle about "divine healing," a term which is nowhere used by the Holy Spirit. Why not? Because "divine healers" are self-appointed and not God-appointed.

We turn to *Philippians*. This is the Epistle of true Christian experience. Surely here we are going to find faith-healing and the assertion that a Christian when sick will be speedily healed and fully restored, and if he is not, it is an evidence that he is not right with God and lacks true Christian experience, as "divine healers" teach up and down the land. Again we are disappointed in our expectation. Not a word of all this is found anywhere in this Epistle of true Christian experience. But there is something in the Philippian Epistle which deals the whole system of "faith healing" an almost fatal blow. The Philippians sent a messenger to

Paul, the prisoner of the Lord, in Rome. He did not only bring their greetings but brought financial fellowship to the beloved Apostle. He came to Rome a very sick man; yea, he was sick nigh unto death. From this we conclude that it was a very serious illness which ran its course. The Apostle states that God had mercy on him. He recovered and got well. There is not a word said about a miracle of healing being performed. Epaphroditus exemplifies self-forgetfulness. In his zeal for God he did not regard his life, and for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death (Phil. ii:25-30). It shows how a true believer, an earnest self-sacrificing servant of the Lord, can be sick unto death, and then be restored to health, not by some "divine healer" anointing him with oil, but by the mercy of God, in whose hands all His servants are. According to the teaching of these modern healers the story of Epaphroditus should read this way, "He was sick nigh unto death; but Paul produced a bottle of oil, anointed him, the power came upon him, and he arose perfectly well."

In the two Epistles to the *Thessalonians* nothing is said about physical healing. The Thessalonian Church was a model Church. But they had no healing manifestations whatever in their midst. Paul spent three weeks in that city, preached the Gospel and instructed them in prophecy concerning the future (2 Thessalonians ii:5). Yet not a word about "divine healing." In the second Epistle there is a warning that when the end of the age is reached signs and lying wonders are to be manifested by the counterfeiting power of Satan.

In the first Epistle to *Timothy* we discover two passages which demand attention in connection with our question. In chapter ii:15 we have the promise, "Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing; if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

Divine healers assume, on account of this passage of Scripture, that every Christian woman, if she and her husband meet the conditions of the text, will always be brought safely through the perils of child-bearing. If this be true will some one explain the following: Hundreds of thousands of women, who make either an empty Christian profession, or are worldly, indifferent, and ungodly in every way, pass through the travail of childbirth in perfect safety. On the other hand there are many godly women, living saintly lives, and their husbands are equally devoted, continuing in faith and charity and holiness, just as the text demands, and these women are taken away by death. If the text means, as faith-healers teach, deliverance from physical death in child-bearing, then the thousands of worldly, pleasure-loving women who pass safely through the ordeal have God's mark of approval on their ungodly walk, while the godly women, wives of godly husbands, whose life and walk is above reproach, perfectly pleasing to God, are condemned in their life and walk of godliness. The fact is that the text does not promise any such deliverance from physical death in child bearing.

In the first place the Greek is not "*En*," in childbearing, but it is "*Dia*," through childbearing. The question is what do we understand by the word "saved"? Every believer knows that this word has different meanings in Scripture. In chapter iv:16 of the same Epistle we read, "Give heed to thyself and to the teaching, continue in them, for doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and those that hear thee." That the word saved here *cannot* mean salvation from sin and eternal judgment is clear enough. Nor could it mean salvation in the temporary sense of the word, from physical dangers, from sickness or death. What then does it mean? Timothy had received a gift. The

exercise of this gift was the path of salvation in which he was to walk. In order to have the Lord's continual approval and favor, he must continue in teaching, not shirking the responsibility connected with it, but bear it—in season and out of season, preaching the Word. In this way he would save himself from disapproval and not pleasing in His sight.

And so it is with the Christian woman's salvation. Her calling is not of a public nature, as Timothy's public ministry, but in domestic duties. She is called to bear children and rear them in the fear of the Lord. This is the path of her salvation, marked out for her, and as she continues in it with love and faith and holiness with sobriety, she has God's approval in it. It has nothing whatever to do with exemption from death in childbearing. If it meant that it would be a horrible nightmare for every Christian woman, filling with anticipative fears the hearts of believing women who approach motherhood, and if death occurs, as it so frequently does, it would send the husband into despair, for he might be the guilty party on account of whom judgment by physical death came upon the beloved wife. And the woman who died in childbearing would then have passed away as under the cloud of divine judgment. Such teaching as based upon this text by "healers" is not of God.

The second passage is chapter v:23. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Timothy, the beloved spiritual son of Paul, the aged, had often infirmities. Will any one charge him with not having had faith for healing? Will any one say that he had sinned and lived not in the right way? Paul did not exhort him, as he should have done, according to the present teaching on healing—let some one anoint you with oil, lay hands on you, and the Lord will heal you from your often infirmities. Nor did he even tell him to pray to

the Lord for deliverance from the spells of sickness. He sent him a prescription. It was given by inspiration of God just as much as the eighth chapter in Romans. He told him to stop drinking water and to use a little wine. We have heard fanatics say that Paul made a mistake in writing such a sentence. In this passage we have the divine sanction of means in case of infirmities.

In the second Epistle there is the record of Trophimus. "Trophimus have I left sick at Miletum" (2 Timothy iv: 20). His name appears in Acts xx:4 and xxi:29. For some reason he fell sick, and Paul had to leave him behind in Miletum. Why did not Paul call the elders and have a healing service at that time? Paul, who at Corinth and elsewhere wrought the signs of an Apostle, did not perform a miracle of healing on Trophimus. He left him sick.

As Paul has nothing to say about healing of diseases in his Epistles to Titus and Philemon, we pass on to the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Paul is the author of this Epistle also. In this Epistle alone do we find a reference to the signs and miracles which were done in Jerusalem, after Pentecost, and while the Gospel was preached to the Jew first. This is found in chapter ii:4. The signs and wonders, the divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which God bore witness to the supernatural message of salvation preached by the Apostles, are the miracles recorded in the first part of the Book of Acts. But we do not find a promise made to the Hebrews to have faith, and experience, as a result of faith, a continuation of miracles and signs. All this bears out what we have stated before, that the miracles of healing and other miracles were, according to God's plan, demonstrations in the beginning in Jerusalem.

In the Epistle of *James* we find a passage of great importance, one of the most misunderstood passages in the New



Testament, which is the star text for all "divine healers." In another chapter a number of pages are devoted to an analysis and interpretation of this passage, (James v:14).

Neither the Epistles of *Peter*, *John*, nor *Jude* have anything to say about healing of diseases, faith healing or gifts of healing.

We do well to restate what we have found in our exegetical investigation of the Epistles as to the healing question:

1. Not one of the writers ever mentions the Lord Jesus Christ as having done miracles of healing, none even hints at the possibility that these miracles of healing should be in order during this dispensation, as they were when the Son of God was upon earth.

2. Only one Epistle, the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of the signs and miracles which were wrought by the Lord through His Apostles in the beginning of the Church in Jerusalem.

3. There is nowhere in these documents of our Christian faith a statement to be found that the Son of God died for our diseases as He died for our sins. There is no such thing taught in the New Testament as the "fourfold Gospel," one of the phases being "Christ our Healer." Wherever the death of Christ is mentioned it is always and only in connection with our sins, and never are bodily ills and infirmities spoken of.

4. The much used term "divine healer" is never used by an inspired writer of the New Testament.

5. There are no indications that the Apostolic Churches, those among which the Apostles labored, ever held "healing meetings" or urged the people to bring the sick.

6. Clear evidence is given that the gifts of healing, or working miracles, of speaking in tongues and the interpretation of tongues, were not to remain permanently in the

Church. The fact that in the great Church Epistles, apart from First Corinthians, there is nothing said about the gifts of healing, and the further fact that in Romans and especially in Ephesians, the sign gifts are omitted, is our evidence for the cessation of these gifts. That these sign gifts still exist no one denies. But it has not pleased the Holy Spirit to continue the exercise of them.

7. While there is a very prominent lack of teaching on the healing question in the leading Epistles, such as Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, the Petrine and Johanne Epistles, there is on the other hand much evidence that the gift of healing was not used by Paul toward the end of his ministry, nor was there any anointing with oil, nor laying on of hands practiced. The Apostle Paul himself was a sick man. He suffered bodily infirmity, and when the Lord had spoken and told him that it was His will that he should continue to have the thorn in the flesh, he gloried in his infirmity. Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death. No miracle was wrought in his behalf, in a speedy, instantaneous cure. Timothy had often infirmities. The Lord permitted these infirmities to continue. There was no anointing service for Timothy, but a divinely given prescription of a remedy. Trophimus was left behind sick by the Apostle Paul.

8. The only place in the New Testament where we read of "anointing with oil" is in the Epistle of James, addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, and not to the Church.

## CHAPTER V

### Miracles of Healing in History

The scope of our work forbids a closer examination of the beliefs current in the ancient world as to diseases and their cure. From the very beginning, as witnessed to by the most ancient records of the human race, humanity struggled with the question of bodily ills and how to overcome them. Lenormant, and other students of ancient Babylonian history, tell us that in the earliest cuneiform writings all diseases are looked upon as having been produced by evil spirits. They had certain incantations and appeals to their gods for deliverance. The Acadian priests taught that by using certain magical words they could banish the hurtful evil spirits, and thus cure sickness.

The Egyptians exalted magic against diseases into an art and used their great temples as hospitals. Patients were brought to the temples of Isis, after a prolonged preparation, consisting of baths, anointing with oil and massage; they were put into a hypnotic sleep by the use of soft music and the perfumes of incense. While in that condition either a cure was effected, as they claimed, or the proper remedy suggested.

The ancient Aryan races had the same belief. In the Vedas and other Sanskrit works, many prayers for the sick are recorded. Buddhists and the Brahmins also had their magic spells. The Greek priests performed medical functions in the temples of Jupiter, Apollo and Juno. Many patients went to Pergamos, where a great temple stood with a famous medicinal spring near by. After certain preparations, and sacrifices being offered, various means were used to induce a hypnotic sleep, during which assurance of healing was

given and a remedy suggested. Similar methods were used at the oracles at Delphi, whose entranced Pythoness devoted much attention to the cures of the ills of the human body.

The ancient Druids had the reputation of curing diseases by supernatural powers. So famous were their cures that the Roman Emperor Aurelius consulted them in his own case. Many miraculous cures by these magical spells, through the use of oracles and other means, are recorded in the annals of all these ancient nations.

The same belief we find among the ancient Jews. The Talmud witnesses to this. They believed in demons of various kinds, who inhabited the air, the water, the food.\* Some of these demons (*Shedim*) produced asthma, others were responsible for blindness, deafness, insanity; almost every disease had for its source a demon. Various methods were used, and when successful it was said "he or she had a demon cast out." The ancient Rabbis believed in the use of magic spells and practiced the exorcism of evil spirits (See Matthew xii:27). Josephus the Jewish historian records that Solomon used certain sacred words in conquering demon influences. Many Jews used incantations for the expulsion of evil spirits and the healing of diseases. Connected with these magical words was the use of oil, the body being anointed and massaged.

With these brief remarks we must turn to the history of the Church and trace the healing question during the past centuries. We have seen that as the full revelation was given by the Holy Spirit and the work of the Apostles was finished, miracles gradually disappeared. Dr. Hodge in his *Systematic Theology* says rightly, "when the Apostles

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\*The washing of hands as demanded by the Pharisees, before eating, originated with the superstition that these demons can find their way into the human body through unwashed hands (See Matthew xv:1-13).

had finished their work, the necessity of miracles, so far as the great end they were intended to accomplish was concerned, ceased." This is the almost universal attitude of all outstanding Protestant teachers. One who has given much attention to research in patristic literature\* assures us that during the first hundred years after the death of the Apostles we hear little or nothing of the working of miracles by the early Christians. He declares, "If we except the testimonies of Papias and Irenaeus, who speak of the raising of the dead, I can find no instance of miracles mentioned by the Fathers before the fourth century." The testimony of Irenaeus in his treatise against heresies is as follows; "Yea, moreover, as I have said, the dead even have been raised up, and remained among us for many years." But it is very doubtful as to what time he refers. He was personally acquainted with the friend of the Apostle John, Polycarp, and he may have meant the miracles our Lord performed. Augustine and Chrysostom speak of the cures of diseases, particularly the cures of demoniacs, by exorcising them, which seems to have been the standing miracle in the fourth and fifth centuries. Even then the superstitious belief in relics was present. Augustine states in the beginning of the fifth century, of a certain relic, believed by him to have belonged to martyred Stephen: "It is not two years since this relic has been at Hippo Regius, and accounts of many of the miracles performed by it have not been written, as it is most certainly known to us, yet the number of those which have been given, up to now amounts to seventy." He also reports a most remarkable case of healing of a Carthaginian by name of Innocentius.

A few years afterwards in 430 Theodore of Mopsuete wrote: "Many heathen among us are being healed by

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\*Bishop Douglas in "Criterion."

Christians from whatever sickness they may have, so abundant are miracles<sup>F</sup> in our midst."

Towards the second half of the second century a movement was set on foot which must be looked upon as the parent movement of similar ones throughout the history of the Church down to our own times. Montanus, a native of Mysia, about the year 157 gave himself out to be a prophet, maintaining that the office of a prophet had not come to an end in the New Testament. He spoke in a frenzied speech, which his enemies interpreted to mean demoniac possession, but which he and his friends declared to be the inspiration of God and the revival of the gift of tongues. He himself maintained that he was but a passive instrument repeating the words which were put into his mouth. Two women, Prisca in 175, and Maximilla in 179, left their husbands to join him, and contributed not a little to the later extravagances of the movement, urging that it was now the era of the Spirit and that the Second Advent was at hand. One of the leading teachings was that Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was now in reality fulfilled in Montanism. Along with it was the claim to heal the sick by the laying on of hands. The true Church of the second century looked upon the whole movement as being the work of demons. Two Church leaders tried to stop it by exorcising the demons in the two women leaders. It degenerated into a heretical movement; and its after history showed that it was the work of evil spirits. All the extravagant movements throughout the history of the Church in every century are anticipated in Montanism. In each movement there is a leader making the claim of being some great one, with prophetic gifts and a new revelation. Women are always prominent in these movements, taking a place in leadership which is denied them by the command of the

Holy Spirit. They claim direct inspiration, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a restoration of Apostolic gifts, especially the gift of tongues and the healing of the sick.

The Pentecostal movement of our times belongs to this category. Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson, of Los Angeles, California, is in direct line with this movement. Like Montanus she claims that "This is that" (Acts ii:16; Joel ii:28) is fulfilled in her movement; that another Pentecost has come. Like Montanus she claims direct inspiration of God. Perhaps Montanus did not go as far as she does, when she declares that at a certain time "my mouth was opened, the Lord took control of my tongue, my lips and vocal organs, and began to speak through me, not in tongues, but in English. The Spirit spoke in prophecy, and as He spoke through me I did not know what the next word was to be; certainly the water did flow, not from my head, but from the innermost depths of my being, without my having aught to do with it."\* This is but a sample of similar claims. She and other "healers" claim to have the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues, and "healing services" are a leading feature in their movements. Like the prophetesses of Montanus these modern women leaders have visions and dreams.

Beginning with the middle of the fourth century the Church started on her long process of corruption in doctrine and practice. With this corruption the superstitiously-miraculous kept full step. From the fifth to the thirteenth century church history is filled with the records of startling miracles, miraculous manifestations and miraculous healings. Roman Catholicism as it is today was then born. Roman Catholics relying with entire confidence on the promises of Christ, the same which Pentecostal healers,

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\*"Lost and Restored." By Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson. Page 5.

faith healers, Christian Scientists and others also quote (John xiv:12; Mark xvi: 17,18), believe that the power of working miracles, including miracles of healing, was given by Christ to His Church, and that it has never been and never will be withdrawn from her. Hence Rome backs up the superstitions of the middle ages. Yet Cardinal Newman, a convert from the Church of England, made the following remarks on the difference between the miracles of the New Testament and the miracles of ecclesiastical history: "The miracles of Scripture are, as a whole, grave, simple, majestic; those of ecclesiastical history often partake of what may not unfitly be called a romantic character, and of that wildness and inequality which enters into the notion of romance." Dr. Philip Schaff points out that the monkish miracles of healing and other miracles are not so much supernatural and above reason, as they are unnatural and against reason. They serve not to confirm the Christian faith, but for the most part support the ascetic life, the magical virtue of the sacrament, the veneration of saints and relics. "In most cases they were the work of deliberate imposture. Every church and monastery had its tutelary saint and every saint his legend, fabricated in order to enrich the churches under his protection, by exaggerating his virtues, his miracles, and consequently his power of serving those who paid liberally for patronage."\* Hundreds of people made a good living by pretending to have some incurable disease, or claiming blindness, deafness and other ills; went to the grave of some "saint," or to a church where relics were exposed. Then suddenly they professed the "healing power" and then received liberal contributions for the pretended miracle of healing which had been performed. Much of the miraculous

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\*Hallam's Middle Ages. Page 362, Vol. II.



healing during the dark ages was a *fraus pia*, a pious fraud. The religious fraud is the worst fraud which can be perpetrated upon the human race. The top-notch of the religious fraud is when the suffering, the afflicted, the incurable, are encouraged to expect a divine miracle on their behalf through the mediation of some miracle man or miracle woman. The *fraus pia* of the healing cults of today is appalling.

In the sixth and seventh centuries we read of the use of consecrated oil on the sick. It was introduced to counteract the use of amulets and incantations in case of illness. In a sermon preached by Caesarius of Arles we read: "How much better, that mothers should hasten to the church, should receive the body and the blood of Christ, and anointing herself and hers in faith with the consecrated oil, obtain, according to the words of the Apostle James, not merely health of the body, but also forgiveness of sins."\* This unction was applied, in the first place in all cases of sickness, and was not yet, at that time, the Romish extreme unction of today.

In the eighth century Bede advocated strongly the use of consecrated oil for the anointing of the sick. A provincial council met in the ninth century in Chalons, and here we find the statement made as to oil blessed by the Bishop: "This is the kind of medicine which should not be despised, which heals the infirmities of soul and body."

Hundreds of pages could be filled with the records of miracles, and fanatics which claimed the special powers of the Holy Spirit and the working of miracles. In the twelfth century the pious Bernard of Clairvaux had a widespread reputation of being a worker of miracles. In a letter to Pope Eugene II, and in another letter to the citizens of Toulouse,

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\*Neander's Church History.

he expressed his firm belief that God performed miracles through his hands. A monk by name of Gottfried claims to have been an eyewitness of the healing of a ten year old boy, who had lost the use of his limbs. Bernard touched him, made the sign of the cross, and told him to get up and walk. He did so at once.

It would take a good sized volume to record the names of popes, priests, bishops and monks who are credited with having done miracles of healing throughout the dark ages. Bede reports that the monk St. Austin healed many of blindness. Lepers, paralytics, the deaf, the dumb, the blind and those who suffered from fevers and the plague were healed, according to the records of those days. Some were healed by touch, others by relics and other means. Martin of Tours is said to have cured a paralyzed girl, and a leper at the gates of Paris, the latter by kissing his lips. A letter written by St. Martin, the record says, was laid upon the chest of a fever stricken girl, and she was at once restored to health. In 1059 there lived in Upsala, Sweden, a heathen priest, who had become blind. This man had heard much about the power of the Christian's God. As he had appealed in vain for help to his idols he decided to turn to Christ for relief. He said that he had a vision of the Virgin Mary, who promised him his sight should be restored if he would worship her Son. The priest was healed of his affliction and went about everywhere proclaiming the power of the God of the Christian, and the vanity of idols.

There were also the Camisards in the XVII Century, a fanatical sect which originated in a village called *Dieu-le-fit* in *Dauphine*. The delusion spread to Great Britain, where they were known as the French Prophets. They claimed inspiration, just as Montanus, and all other delusionists down to our own times, claim direct inspiration. They had

the gifts of prophecy, the gift of speaking in tongues and above all the gift of healing. What "faith-healers" do today was done by these Camisards. The whole movement was charged with the grossest immoralities; incests, adultery and fornication were widespread among them. "On the ethical side we are face to face with the vagaries in the *vita sexualis* which we will learn to look upon as an invariable associate of the tongues movement."\* This is very true. The same immoralities are found today among certain extreme holiness and gift of tongues sects. We would not dare give in these pages what has been brought to our attention in various parts of our land.

Every century had hundreds of miracles of various descriptions, including miracles of healing. We give a sample of one of the more modern miracles of healing, which happened in 1656. A collector of relics possessed a thorn, which he claimed was one of the original thorns of the crown of Christ. It was exhibited in the Port Royal Convent. A young lady, a niece of the famous Pascal, had been suffering for several years from a malignant growth, which had affected the bones of her nose and palate. As she with others examined the thorn, one of the instructors said to her, "Recommend yourself to God, my child, and touch your diseased face with the holy thorn." She did so and that night was completely healed. The healing took place when the controversy between the Jansenists and the Jesuits was raging, and as the girl was related to the leading Jansenist, Pascal, the Jesuits did everything to discredit the miracle. The Archbishop and the doctors of the Sorbonne investigated and were forced to admit that the cure was supernatural. Later thousands visited the grave of the Abbe Paris, a zealous Jansenist leader during the XVIII century, and claimed to be healed of

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\*"The Gift of Tongues," by A. Mackie, page 80.

cancer, blindness, paralysis, dropsy and other diseases. Many of these cases were investigated by physicians of note and pronounced genuine.

Then there is the famous miracle grotto of Lourdes, where, according to a poor girl, the Virgin Mary had appeared to her in 1858. Between twenty-five and thirty-five thousand sufferers and more visit the shrine every year, and many miraculous cures, it is claimed, have taken place. There are many similar shrines throughout Europe, besides one on our continent, Ste. Anne de Beau-Pre in Quebec, where also, it is said, miraculous cures are worked.

When the writer visited Russia a good many years ago, a Greek monk took him through the catacombs of the Lawra Monastery in Kieff. He showed us the different graves and relics, and later in the yard of the monastery pointed out a small hill of crutches, surgical bandages and other appliances, that were thrown away by the pilgrims who came from near and wide with their diseases and were healed by the relics and the bones of the saints.

Another curious healing in the XVII century was by the King's touch, the belief that a sovereign could heal scrofula by touching the diseased. The efficacy of the touch of the king to cure this particular disease is historically fully authenticated. On Easter Sunday, 1686, Louis XIV touched 1600 persons, saying, "The king touches you; God cures you." Charles II touched almost 100,000 persons; James in one of his journeys touched 800 persons. The historian Macaulay states that when William III refused to exercise this power it brought upon him "an avalanche of the tears and cries of parents of children who were suffering from scrofula. Bigots lifted up their hands and eyes in horror at his impiety." Generally the surgeons of the royal household were present and Mark xvi:17, 18 was read. Sir Thomas Browne

of Norwich, the author of "Religio Medici," a good Christian physician, had a hopeless case of scrofula and suggested the king's touch. The monarch touched the child and there was a complete cure.

During the Reformation period fanatics appeared who rejected the Scriptures and claimed that the Spirit was sufficient to guide them. All kinds of extravagances were practiced by them, and supernatural illumination and powers claimed. Luther said then, "To them the Holy Scriptures are but a dead letter and they all cry, The Spirit! The Spirit! But most assuredly I will not follow where their spirit leads them." Some Pentecostalites have stated also that they do not need the Bible any longer, inasmuch as the Baptism of the Spirit teaches them all things. A sad case is reported in D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, when one of these fanatics "under divine guidance" killed his own brother. This has lately been paralleled in Canada. A certain man in British Columbia attended the Vancouver meetings of a hypnotist, who claims to be a "divine healer." This person became unbalanced through the religious excitement, and then imagined that his little grandchild was possessed by a demon. He murdered the child and expected a miracle in the resurrection of the child after he had killed it. The Canadian Government tried him for murder, but mercifully sent him to an asylum.

In the different centuries there are witnesses to the fact that God answers prayer in behalf of those who are sick, and many cases of healing through believing prayer took place. In the chapter on "The Believer in Sickness" we mention some of them. Coming to more recent times we find Prince Hohenlohe, a Roman Catholic Bishop. In his youth he met a peasant, who had cured a number of people by the laying on of hands. From him the Prince caught his

enthusiasm, and became famous as a healer. Some of his cures were indisputably authentic. Another priest, Joseph Gassner, effected many cures in Swabia. Father Mathew, when engaged in his campaign against intemperance, was successful in curing the sick. After his death hundreds upon hundreds visited his tomb and many crutches were left there.

In 1808, a Mr. Austin, in the town of Colchester, Vermont, gave out that he had the gift of healing, and that whosoever would describe the symptoms would receive from him a "healing word." Thousands turned to him. Mail carriers groaned under the ever increasing burden of thousands of letters. Soon the deaf heard, the blind saw, consumption disappeared, as soon as the magic word was uttered. But it did not last very long.\*

In the first part of the XIX century the Irvingite movement developed so-called supernatural manifestations. These consisted in the gift of tongues, prophecies, and the laying on of hands, and healing of the sick. The latter was not the prominent feature. If we were writing on "the gift of tongues," tracing it historically, we could show that this counterfeit of the apostolic days appeared many times, frequently associated with deeds of fanaticism and vileness, and always traced to the influences of evil spirits. The Pentecostal Movement of today, which claims to be a restoration of the gift of tongues, with its unscriptural teaching as to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, its pretensions of miracles of healing, has the same spurious character.

We come next to one of the vilest religious frauds, Mormonism. It was born through the lying pretensions of a man whose character was most vicious. We cannot enter into the details of this pit-begotten movement, and if we

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\*Turner, "Mormonism in All Ages." New York, 1842.

had the space, we would hesitate to fill our pages with the miserable deceptions and immoralities. But this movement claims the gift of tongues, prophecies and supernatural healing of diseases. In working miraculous cures, the Mormons are fully equal to Catholics and non-Catholics. They record many miraculous healings. In their widespread European propaganda, praying with the sick and anointing them, plays an important part. Brigham Young was a miracle worker and a prophet. Once a man came from Europe to Salt Lake. The man had lost a leg, and had such implicit faith in the deceiver Young that he thought he could obtain another through prayer. The fox-like prophet explained to him that while it would be easy for him to pray him into a new leg, he thought he had better not do it, for in his resurrection he would have then three legs instead of two.\*

We mention "*Shakerism*" next. This movement of the XVIII and XIX centuries was also an immoral movement. The vilest sexual perversions are recorded in the annals of Shakerism. We do not care to repeat them. Ann Lee, its founder, was immoral, and often got beastly drunk. Dancing in a nude state was practiced at many occasions. But the Shakers had the gift of tongues and mumbled a gibberish, as the Pentecostalites do in our day. Ann Lee was finally declared to be "the second coming of Christ." They practiced the laying on of hands for sickness, had the gift of "laughing," sang in unknown tongues, spoke of "the power" coming upon them, which gave them violent shakings, or put them into a state of unconsciousness. The same

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\*See "Faith Healing," by Dr. Buckley, pages 35-37. For full information on the Mormon cures, gift of tongues and other delusions consult: Stenhouse, "Rocky Mountain Saints," New York, 1873; H. Williams, "The Abominations of Mormonism Exposed," Cincinnati, 1852; J. C. Bennet, "An Expose of J. Smith," Boston, 1842; and similar works.

“power” is displayed in Pentecostalism, McPhersonism, Priceism and other gift of tongues and healing cults, and is easily explained through the laws of hypnotism and auto-hypnotism.

Another vile, anti-christian movement is *Spiritism*, commonly known as Spiritualism. It is a Satanic movement in which unquestionably unseen evil forces are at work, though the greater part of its manifestations consist in downright fraud. Spiritism claims communication with the dead, spirit manifestations, and often the mediums speak in a strange tongue. Spirit healings are frequently practiced, and thousands of dupes have been fleeced out of fortunes.

From the middle of the XIX century to our times in which we write there has been a most astonishing increase of faith-healers, divine healers, and scores of healing cults, and the end is not yet. Foremost among these is that pernicious movement, which has come to stay, “*Christian Science*,” falsely so called. It was invented by a woman, whose moral character has been so much exposed that we need not call attention to it again. Christian Science is an anti-christian movement. It denies all the leading articles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, denies His essential Deity, His atoning work on the cross, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the fact of sin and the reality of disease and death. It is the metaphysical rambling of the mad-house. Their church stamp has on it the words of our blessed Lord, “Heal the sick.” They claim to do the same works which our Lord did, which they certainly do not. They work, under a religious profession, the law of “the power of mind over matter” to perfection, claiming to heal all manner of diseases, till those cured end, like the rest of humanity, in the cemetery.

In almost every decade during the past seventy-five years some special healer appeared, claiming the power to heal



and attracting wide attention. There was one Schlatter who, a generation ago, had a tremendous following. Alexander Dowie came from Australia and started a movement, the backbone of which was "divine healing." He finally claimed to be Elijah, the restorer; established a city on the shores of Lake Michigan, Zion City, in which no bacon, no ham sandwiches, no drugs are permitted. He combined the spiritual with the commercial in selling lots, establishing certain industries, and after spending money lavishly, bringing hundreds of people on extra trains from Chicago to New York, to convert New Yorkers and empty their pocket books, failed miserably. Zion City continues more or less on the same principles.

We mention Dorothea Trudel and Pastors Blumhardt and Rein of Switzerland and Germany. In their work at least nothing of the fanatical of later movements, such as speaking in tongues, is seen. There were undoubtedly answers to prayer in numerous cases. A. B. Simpson started the "four fold Gospel" movement known as the "Christian and Missionary Alliance." Faith-healing, called "divine healing," is practiced by them. Mr. Simpson, after having built up his theory of a four-fold Gospel, rejecting the use of means, was forced to turn towards the end of his life to medical counsel and treatment, and in doing this contradicted his divine healing system.

There was another about the end of the XIX century by name of Sandford, who started the "Holy Ghost and Us" movement, in Maine. He was one of the worst fanatics on the healing lines, and finally the government stepped in and charges of manslaughter and cruelty to children were brought against him. He had a "divine revelation" that days of fasting were to be appointed, and mothers, domineered by this fanatic, had to deny their milk to sucklings.

One child died. Later he went from bad to worse and landed in the Federal prison of Atlanta. He endorsed the healing system of Mr. Simpson, with whom, we believe, he was associated for a time. Among others who followed the lines of healing we mention Dr. Cullis of Boston, W. E. Boardman, George O. Barnes, Mrs. Baxter, Pastor Schrenk, and many more.

About twenty years ago in a small meeting in Azusa Street of Los Angeles, California, where colored people gathered, it was claimed that "another Pentecost" had fallen. The excited colored people began to talk in strange tones, which was at once declared to be a restoration of the original gift of tongues. This movement spread like wild-fire and appeared almost simultaneously in every part of the United States and Canada, in fact it appeared in less than no time in Europe, in England, Sweden, Germany, and in a few weeks in other continents.\* Those who held to faith healing, like A. B. Simpson and his associates, pronounced the movement as a genuine one, inaugurated by a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit and predicted great success. The name "Pentecostal" was adopted. They called it also "the latter rain" and looked upon it as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (Chapter ii:28), another Pentecost, while others termed it "the Apostolic Faith Movement." Its doctrinal declaration is that another Day of Pentecost has come and that now, as it was in Acts, when the Holy Spirit was given, each Christian must have his individual Pentecost. This Pentecost, or baptism with the Holy Spirit, must be sought by self-surrender, by letting go of self; there must be a waiting, as it was before the Holy Spirit came from heaven to earth. When finally the seeker receives his Pentecost he will receive

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\*This is a sinister aspect. Spiritism with its rappings and table moving was propagated in the same manner.

the evidence of it in speaking in a strange tongue. Only those who can speak in tongues are really baptized with the Spirit. This looks like a very scriptural teaching, but it is practically the most unscriptural harangue, which outstrips the delusions of some of the other fanatical movements. There can never be another Pentecost, for the simple reason that no other Pentecost is promised in Scripture, and no other Pentecost is needed. The Holy Spirit was given on the original Day of Pentecost and since that day He has remained here, and no second, or individual Pentecost can take place. All true believers share in that gift and need not to seek it.

The so-called "tarrying meetings" which were inaugurated and are still in progress all over Christendom, are veritable scenes of confusion and often of indecency. Men and women scream and moan; others are convulsed, shaking from head to foot; still others fall down unconscious and remain in that condition for hours. When the waiting is over they begin to utter sounds, which they cannot help themselves from uttering. They are forced by some power, which has taken control, to speak words which neither they nor others understand. This is called the "gift of tongues." In all our research and investigation we have not found a single case of a genuine language being spoken. Women and girls and a few men thought they had the gift of speaking Chinese, Hindustani, etc., and declared "the Lord told them to go to China and India." They went and started to "gibber" in the foreign countries to which they went, only to be laughed at. Some made a shameful shipwreck of their faith, and several girls, after they were delivered from the awful deception, turned to a life of shame. Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson, who started out with the Pentecostal delusion, claims to have the gift of tongues and the gift of interpreta-

tion. She has often interpreted her own gibberish and that of others. Who is going to verify that it is genuine?

*In more than one respect the whole modern gift of tongues movement has been uncovered as emanating from evil spirits, through whom Satan works as an angel of light. It does not differ from similar movements in past centuries.\* Demon possession has often been brought to light in this cult. It has landed many victims in insane asylums and led to other disastrous results. The spuriousness of the movement is likewise demonstrated by the fact that it has divided into different sects. The Holy Spirit in His work never divides but always unites. Healing of diseases is associated with the Pentecostal cults. In fact through Pentecostalism the healing propaganda, with its unscriptural claims, unscriptural foundation and interpretations, is now covering nearly all the civilized countries.*

We cannot mention all the "divine healers" who go about today, and speak of only two, because they have worked the healing program in a prominent way and have found many imitators, both men and women, and occasionally young girls. We have reference to Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson and her successful disciple "Dr. Price." Mrs. McPherson, whose checkered past we cannot follow here, before she settled down in Los Angeles, held healing campaigns, waiting meetings, gift of tongues meetings, etc., in numerous cities. Such reports of miracles were sent out that she became known as "the miracle woman." The spurious claims and the evil results of these campaigns will be brought to light in the next chapters. She amassed a considerable fortune through her healing campaigns, and all kinds of schemes were resorted to to obtain funds for a tabernacle, such as selling chairs at twenty-five dollars

\*See Sir Robert Anderson on "Spirit Manifestations."

apiece. The many hundreds of unfortunates who come to be healed are always closely scrutinized by her mother; only those who appear to be a good risk are permitted to present themselves for healing. Only a few receive the coveted cards of admission, while hundreds are denied the privilege of "anointing" with oil. When the act has been done, in many cases the pronouncement of healing follows.

Her disciple Mr. Price goes practically on the same lines. He has a woman along, who seems to claim the gift of discernment. Only those who pass her "discerning eye" are permitted to be anointed with oil. When the healer Price touches the person, the person falls over and lies for some time on the platform in an unconscious state. This is called "the power," and claimed to be the power of God. His pretended healings have been investigated and have been shown to be mostly deceptions or the results of hypnotism, not differing from the results achieved by professional hypnotists, minus a religious profession.

There is also a Mr. Bosworth, who has invented an additional "strange teaching" as to faith healing. He started with Pentecostalism. Inasmuch as these healers with their healing campaigns preach a good deal of the Truth of God, the Gospel, prophetic truths and others, they are a special menace to the untaught and unsuspecting in the household of faith. And now after these investigations of Scripture as to healing, and the historical tracing, we are prepared for a closer examination of the healing question as it confronts us today.

## CHAPTER VI

### Examination of Scripture Passages Used For Divine Healing.

Divine healers use certain passages of Scripture upon which they base their systems and their claims. An examination of these passages is now in order. We do not refer to the few passages in the Old Testament Scriptures which are frequently quoted, like Exodus xv:26 and Deuteronomy vii:15. These passages have nothing whatever to do with the Church, for they were addressed to Israel under the law dispensation. We confine ourselves exclusively to the New Testament.

*Matthew viii:17.* "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." This is the passage upon which the leading divine healers formulate their doctrine that when our Lord died on the cross, besides bearing our sins, He also bore our infirmities and our sicknesses. He made atonement for the ills of our bodies as He made atonement for the ills of our souls. The phrase "healing is in the atonement" is used constantly by all these healing systems. The "Christian and Missionary Alliance" puts alongside "Christ our Justifier and Sanctifier" the third expression of the fourfold Gospel, "Christ our Healer," which supports the contention that Christ died for our sicknesses. But there is no such fourfold Gospel taught in the Scriptures. The greatest Gospel preacher, the Apostle Paul, never preached it, nor does the Holy Spirit ever speak of a fourfold Gospel. There is but one Gospel.

All other divine healers follow this teaching and tell those who are sick to believe that Christ by His work on the cross

has wrought healing for diseases and all bodily infirmities. Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson in a sermon on "A double Cure for a double Curse" declares that Christ provided a double cure, Salvation and Healing, that Christ has atoned for sins and sicknesses. Then she states that the bearing of our sicknesses was accomplished in a special way. Here are her words: "Was He whipped that my many sins might be washed away? No, child, the blood of the Cross was sufficient for that. Then why did they pluck the beard from His face and beat Him with cruel staves? Was that for cleansing for sin? No, child, the blood was sufficient for that . . . Then why did they whip Him so? Why, child, do you not know the meaning of that lash, the cruel blows of the smiter's scourge? 'Twas thus He bore our suffering, and by His stripes ye are healed. . . . At the whipping post He purchased our healing." This is a new and contradictory invention. She practically teaches, if this can be called teaching, that our sicknesses were not atoned for in the same manner as our sins. She teaches two separate and distinct atonements, a thing which is altogether unknown in Scripture. This invention is akin to some of Mrs. Eddy's perversions.

The Bosworth Brothers with their dogmatic assertions outstrip even Mrs. McPherson's unscriptural statements. F. F. Bosworth is a strong believer in the theory that Christ atoned for our diseases. Here are his words: "I want to establish this in your minds, that Jesus included healing for your body as one of the benefits provided for you by His death on the cross." Then he makes the astounding claim that while the wine in the Lord's Supper represents the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, the bread represents His body broken for the healing of every man's body. We quote him again: "You can be healed when you put the

bread in your mouth, if not before, by discerning the Lord's body."—"It is just as easy to be healed of cancer as to be forgiven of sins."—"Thousands are in the cemeteries before their time because they have not discerned the Lord's body broken for their healing. Thousands of others are sick, who can be healed if they will discern it." Then he cites different cases where persons (nearly all women) were healed when they ate a piece of bread and discerned the Lord's body. Tumors, goiters, rheumatism and indigestion disappeared miraculously when that piece of bread was eaten in the correct and scriptural way. Such teaching is unknown in the entire history of Christianity, and is practically on the same level with the Romish perversions of the great Memorial feast. If the eating of a piece of bread at the Lord's table results in the healing of diseases, then the drinking of *the wine must effect in the same manner the forgiveness of sins*. It is right next to the bloodless sacrifice of the mass. The invention of Mr. Bosworth is more than unscriptural, it is wicked. And the poor, struggling sick believe this perversion and delusion. We quote from an article published in "Our Hope" dealing with this error:

"When our Lord, that night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and gave it to His disciples, was it that their *bodies* might be healed? Was it that they, and all who should come after them, were to remember that He bore their *sicknesses* on the cross, as the cup was to bring to their remembrance that He bore their *sins* there? Was this to remind them that the awful judgment of God rolled over His blessed Head—not only because of their sins, but because of their sicknesses that were to be upon Him, too? If that were the case, would it not follow that if they had, or we have, no sickness, we must omit this part of the Supper, for it can have no interest for us, since the body of the Lord was given for the healing of every man's body! I can but believe that my readers will find it as difficult to read calmly as I to write of this flippant travesty of the most solemn truth, so dogmatically, even exultantly pressed as a wonderful discovery by Mr. Bosworth, and as the very basis of his teaching.

But is there, then, no difference in the teaching of the two emblems? Indeed there is; but it is as far as the poles from Mr. B's deduc-



tions. The bread speaks, as a divinely selected emblem, of that judgment that passed upon Him as our substitute during the last three hours on the cross, from noon to three. As the waving grain had to be cut off by the sickle, so we remember Him as being thus "cut off" for our sins (Daniel ix:26). As the bread had been under the millstones, so we remember Him as being thus "bruised for our iniquities." As it had gone into the oven, and been subject to its heat, so we remember Him, as suffering for us the awful heat of God's judgment upon our sins which He was bearing in His own holy Body, and with adoring hearts and the deepest self-abasement we take that bread—for it was *our* sins—not our frailties or sicknesses or premature death, that He was bearing in that dark hour! Here we see how inflexibly righteous is our God, for even when His holy, precious, beloved Son is bearing our sins—yes, being made sin—His eye doth not pity, His hand doth not spare, and it is *thus* that we "discern" that it is not the mere bread that might give us "physical benefits only," but, to faith, the Lord's Body."\*

But what does Matthew viii:17 mean? Does it not say that Esaias' prophecy "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" is fulfilled by Him? And therefore did He not take the sicknesses and the pains of our bodies upon Himself, as He took our sins, and bore them all away as the Lamb of God? And if so, then what is the reason to deny that healing is in the atonement? Such are the reasonings of divine healers. We only need to give this star text another glance to find the answer which annihilates the whole argument. The Lord Jesus Christ had healed many, and in connection with these miracles of healing we find the text "That it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken by Esaias the prophet." Then the prophecy of Isaiah *was* fulfilled in the day when our Lord Jesus Christ healed the great multitude. It was fulfilled about three years before the Lord died on the cross. The prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in His divine ministry of healing, and not when He hung on the cross. Some, to overcome this fact, state that the three years of His life were years in which He made atonement, till the work was capped on the cross. But this is only another error. Our Lord did

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\*F. C. Jennings, "Our Hope," November, 1921.

not bear sins during His holy life on earth, nor was He made sin for us, till He hung on the cross, when *God* made Him sin for us. The teaching that Christ carried our diseases up to the cross and that He had actual disease Himself is another unscriptural invention. But they go to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and say that the bruises and stripes predicted there were laid upon our substitute, because He made atonement for our sicknesses. But where is this written?

The chapter in Isaiah assures us that He was bruised for our *iniquities*. Nor is there anywhere in prophecy a passage in which the Spirit of God associates bodily healings with the atoning work of our Lord. In vain do we look through the Epistles for such a doctrine. What then does it mean, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses"? It can mean but one thing. The Lord Jesus entered in divine sympathy into the depth of the need He so graciously relieved. He suffered with those who suffered. The burden of infirmities and sicknesses He shared sympathetically with the afflicted ones. "In their afflictions He was afflicted."

At another occasion he expressed this sympathy by sighing, before He healed the deaf and dumb, and He wept at the tomb of Lazarus. In this sense and in no other, He took our infirmities and bore our diseases. If it meant the future bearing on the cross the Holy Spirit would have made a mistake in writing "that it might be fulfilled." If He had atoned for our physical condition then death should also have been abolished. Diseases are but the stepping stones towards that goal of human life. We must add, that if it were true that Christ died for our sicknesses, then His atoning work in this respect is a failure. His people ever since these words were written have borne all manner of diseases and have died. Some of the greatest saints of God, the most mighty instruments of God the Holy Spirit, men of faith

and whole-souled devotion, were weak in body and afflicted with infirmities. The choicest saints on earth today are the thousands of shut-ins, who suffer in patience and sing their sweet songs in the night.

*Matthew x:8.* "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely ye have received, freely give." Some of these faith healers fall back on this command. They say, "Jesus said, 'Heal the sick.' We only follow His instructions, and besides preaching we also heal the sick as He commanded." This command has nothing whatever to do with the Church. It was given to accompany a special message at a special time. When that message had been given at that special time the commission was no longer in force. The special message was the message of the kingdom promised to Israel, and the time was when His Jewish disciples were to evidence the genuineness of the message by the working of miracles. Nowhere in the New Testament is it repeated, or stated that the Church should "heal the sick." But what about cleansing lepers and raising the dead? Is this not also included in this commission? Why not fall back on this also and say "we raise the dead" because Christ told us to do so. And what about the other instructions given in *Matthew x:1-10*? Let these divine healers then be obedient to the command, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Let them stop their collections, their "love-tokens," and stop getting rich through the misfortunes of others. We know that some of these divine healers who possessed hardly a dollar are worth fortunes now, one is worth at least over a half of a million of dollars. It came through "healing campaigns" which netted weekly thousands of dollars. Any man or woman who claims to fulfill Christ's command in *Matthew* is either ignorant or a fraud, perhaps both.

*Mark xvi:17-18.* "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This is another star text with the gift of tongues believers and the faith-healing cults. Many times well meaning people have written us and asked us if we did not believe that it is written: "And these signs shall follow them that believe . . . .they shall speak in new tongues. . . .they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This is a fair sample of how delusionists and fanatics quote Scripture. Five things are mentioned in regard to signs. 1. Casting out demons. 2. Speaking in new tongues. 3. Taking up serpents. 4. Drinking a deadly thing. 5. Laying hands on the sick. Very cunningly only two of these five things are selected—the speaking in tongues and laying hands on the sick. But if these two signs are now with us, and a believer can talk in new tongues and lay hands on the sick for their recovery, what about the other three? They are never quoted by divine healers. Only a fool would take up a rattlesnake and rely upon the promise given here and play with the reptile. Several years ago a Pentecostal preacher in Alabama tried to make a demonstration that the Lord will keep His promise. Someone brought a rattler in a box. After calling upon the name of the Lord to make good His word, he loosed the string and was promptly bitten in the hand. Only expert medical attention and treatment saved his life. This is not faith but presumption. Only a fool would take a cup filled with a deadly poison and expect the Lord to save him from the consequences.

What does the passage mean? It refers exclusively to the beginning of this present age. The Lord did not say,

“and these signs shall follow them that believe *always*.” These signs were not to continue throughout this dispensation, but were present only in the beginning of it. In fulfillment of this promise, they spoke with new tongues; they cast out demons; they laid hands on the sick, and they recovered; a serpent bit Paul and he escaped harm, and probably some one may have drunk a deadly thing, though we have no record of this.

*John xiv:12.* “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to My Father.*” This text is also used as an authority for faith-healing. Let us note that the Lord Jesus Christ does not speak here of the works of a special class of believers, but He says: “He that believeth on Me.” It includes every believer who reads these lines. But who can claim to do now the same works, which He had done in instantaneous healings, opening the eyes of those born blind, and raising the dead. Is there a record anywhere in the history of the Church since the days of the Apostles, that believers did the same miracles which Christ did, including the raising of the dead? Divine healers may claim to heal like Christ healed. They do not. We know that the girl Dorcas had died, and Peter presented her alive. The Apostle Paul brought Eutychus to life after he had expired. But here we read that he who believes on Him is to do greater works. These greater works are certainly not of a physical nature. No greater work could ever be done than the raising up of a man who was four days in the grave. The greater works are spiritual works.

The raising of a soul out of the grave of sin is a greater work than the raising of one physically dead. The dead who were raised by our Lord, Jairus’s daughter, the young man at the gates of Nain, and Lazarus, had to die again. Dorcas and

Eutychus also had to die, but when the soul dead in trespasses and sin is quickened and raised from the dead, eternal life is given which can never more be shadowed by death. These are the greater works.

*Romans viii:11.* "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." This text is used by divine healers, as if the body of the believer, because indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is quickened into health in the case of sickness; that the indwelling Spirit will impart the resurrection life of Christ. But why do believers die? The indwelling Spirit is omnipotent; He can quicken so that death has no chance. The whole divine healing application is erroneous. The preceding verses make it clear that the spirit of the believer has been made alive by the Holy Spirit, as being due to the righteousness effected by the cross of Christ. But the physical body of the believer is dead on account of sin. The quickening of the believer's body is not a present fact but awaits future realization. The word "quicken" means to make alive that which is dead. The quickening takes place in resurrection, when the believer's body will be made like unto His own glorious body. As the Holy Spirit had a part in the resurrection of Christ, so He will quicken the believer's body when the Lord comes, because He dwelt in that body as the seal of redemption. Many of the divine healers who preached this text, taught that the Holy Spirit quickens now, heals and is also an agent of prevention of illness, finally caught a disease, and nephritis, tuberculosis or some heart trouble carried them off, and their bodies died like the bodies of unbelievers die.

*James v:14.* "Is any sick among you. Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him

*with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*" This is the most used text, or rather misused text, by healers and their systems, and demands our closest scrutiny. In the first place it is false teaching and a perversion of this text when it is said "this is the one divinely given direction in cases of all sickness." Hence in the healing meetings held by these men and women James v:14 is given as the one and universal way for anybody in the case of sickness, and the hope is held out, if a person has faith, and is anointed with oil, that healing will follow. Every year many thousands of people are deceived by these statements and suffer the most awful disappointment. The wrecks which some "divine healers" leave behind are truly appalling. James v:14 was never intended to be a remedy for human ills in all cases, to be applied at all times, in all places and under all conditions. The definite assurance is given, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord will raise him up." But can this be the reasonable outcome of every sickness? Let us think of the multitudes of true believers who died as the result of some sickness. Thousands who know Christ, young and old, pass away every year through some illness. Now if these "divine healers" are right in saying that this is the way all cases of sickness must be dealt with, God's appointed way in every sickness, then these believers died because they did not call the elders of the Church. They died because they were not anointed with oil, and though earnest prayer was made by loved ones, they died because those many prayers were not offered in faith. Such must be the logical conclusion.

The case of the sick one mentioned in James is a special case. James's Epistle was the first Epistle written. It is addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. We are

still upon Jewish ground here, though James and those to whom he writes were believers. The old covenant promised to the Israelite freedom from disease if he obeyed the covenant of the law. In case sickness came it was looked upon as the result of some sin committed. This is the case here. Sickness is viewed as a chastening of the Lord for some specific sins, and as this is confessed and put away, the chastening ends and the sick one is raised up. Some healers have seen that this is in question here and applied it in their practice. A short time ago the writer was requested to call on a woman who despaired of her soul's salvation. She told us a pitiful story. She suffered from some heart affection. Someone induced her to go to a "healing meeting" in the Southland. She was anointed and thought she had received some benefit, but the ailment came back stronger than before. When she visited the healer again and presented her case, he told her that she had better find out the sin she had committed; that there was an unconfessed sin in her life, and unless she confessed that sin she would never be raised up. The poor soul could not locate that special sin and when we visited her she was on the verge of despair, thinking she was lost forever. How pitiful!

But in the next place, what about the *elders*? We do not enter into an examination of the question—do we still have elders today in the Apostolic sense? Let us suppose such elders as are described in the First Epistle to Timothy (chapter iii) are available. They are to be called. In the "divine healing meetings" there seems to be only *one* person who does the work of anointing and praying. That person is the whole thing. He is the outstanding figure. The sick and afflicted look to him. He has secured a reputation that his anointing, his touch and his prayers help the sick. He knows how to advertise in a sensational way. All the divine



healers, Mrs. McPherson, Mrs. Crawford, younger women, whose names need not be given, Bosworth, Price and all the rest are big advertisers. Instead of the sick sending for the elders, the elders run after the sick. The trumpet of advertising is blown as loud as the trumpet of a circus. All is centered upon that one leader and the command "call the elders" is completely set aside.

But there is a more flagrant disobedience involved. The most successful healers are women. *Who has authorized a woman to anoint the sick?* Certainly not the Holy Spirit, who declares emphatically what a woman's place is to be in the Church (I Timothy ii:12-14). An elder, we read in Scripture, is to be "the husband of one wife." Where do we read that an elder is to be "the wife of one husband"? Where? Will some one answer this question? No woman, no matter what her gifts, her ability and her pretensions might be, can ever be an elder. She is disqualified by the Word of God from carrying out the instruction given in James v:14. Yet women today are in the anointing business more than men. They are not subject to the Word of God. They disobey its instructions. They take a place in leadership which is the very opposite from what the Scriptures say her place is to be.

In the next place we come to the *anointing*. What is this anointing in our text? In "divine healing" meetings a drop of oil is used and put on the forehead. Some do it in the form of a cross. Most of these healers at the same time touch and stroke the forehead and other parts of the body. If there is eye trouble, or ear trouble, these organs are massaged. If it is a limb which is affected, it is massaged. A gentleman in San Diego told us that his wife persuaded him to submit to an anointing by the hands of Mrs. McPherson for deafness in one ear. She anointed him and at the same time massaged the affected ear in a vigorous way. She then asked him, "Can you hear?" He said, "Yes." Then there

was handclapping over another miracle. Thirty minutes later he was as deaf as ever. Not the oil had done anything but the massage, but it did not last.

Let us look first at the word "anointing." Even in our English language the word means more than using a drop of oil. In our English translation the word "anoint" stands for two wholly different Greek words. The first is "*Aleiphein*"; it is the common and mundane. "*Chriein*" is the sacred and heavenly word.\* *Aleiphein* is used indiscriminately of all actual anointings, whether with oil or ointments; while "*Chriein*," in its connection with "*Christos*" (Christ) is absolutely restricted to the anointing of the incarnate Son of God by the Father and the Holy Spirit. The word "*Aleiphein*" used here and translated "anointing" is more correctly translated by "massaging"; the correct rendering would then be "massaging him with oil." Sir Robert Anderson, a scholar and able exegete, gives the following helpful comment on this matter: "Most expositors represent this anointing as a sacramental rite to be performed by the elders. And the inaccurate rendering reading 'anointing him with oil' lends itself to this error. But as it is certain that among Orientals the elders would not themselves massage a *female* invalid, it must not be assumed that they did so in other cases. The Revised Version marginal reading 'having anointed him' is grammatically correct; but 'after he has been anointed,' better suits our English idiom. The added words 'in the name of the Lord' are commonly taken as proof that the anointing was sacramental. But this betokens ignorance of the true character of the Christian life; for it is to common and mundane acts that the exhortation refers, 'Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do it

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\*Trench: Synonyms.

all in the name of the Lord Jesus' (Colossians iii:17). The passage is clear and simple. Its teaching may be summed up in two words, namely, the use of means and believing prayer."

With this we are in full accord. We are fully persuaded that the anointing with oil has no sacramental meaning, but was used for the physical benefit of the sick. What we have further to say on this matter will convince any sane and unprejudiced mind.

In the parable of the good Samaritan we find that he applied two remedies to the bruised and mangled body of the victim of the highway robbers, wine and oil. In using oil the Samaritan used the most popular remedy of the ancient world. Olive oil was regarded throughout the Orient as one of the most potent agents for the relief and cure of disease. Celsus, Josephus, Pliny, Arctaeus, Galen and other ancient writers refer to the medicinal use of oil. The ancient physicians recommended that patients who had passed through the first stage of fevers should be massaged with oil. They also recommended the liberal use of oil as a preventative. It is still so today. Niebuhr assures us that the first remedy used by Jews in Arabia is an oil massage. But there is stronger evidence than this. Frequent references are made in talmudical literature that the Jews, in the first part of the Christian era, made use of oil in the treatment of nearly all diseases. We have given special attention in research to confirm this.\* According to these sources incantations, magical and enchanting murmurings were used, a custom which the Jews had adopted during the Babylonian captivity. Babylonian research has established the fact that

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\*Those who have access to the Talmud may turn to Bab. Yoma 77b; Yer. Shab. xiv:14c. See also "Jewish Encyclopedia," Vol. I, page 613.

special magical incantations were used for every known disease. Hundreds of these magic words and incantations are found on the cuneiform tablets and bricks.\* The famous Hebraist Lightfoot is right when he says: "It was customary for the unbelieving Jews to make use of anointing for the sick joined with a magical and enchanting muttering; but how infinitely better is it to join to the use of oil the pious prayers of the elders of the Church."

We have shown the true and only satisfactory meaning of James v:14, 15. Exactly what is said today by healing systems and "divine healers" as to what this passage means, is that which it does *not* mean. They forbid the use of means, when the passage endorses the use of means. They are on the same level with Romish practices by giving the anointing with oil a sacramental meaning.

Our historical research has shown that nothing was heard of a sacramental use of oil for the sick till the fifth century, the time when the Church was about plunging into the Romish apostasy. The first four centuries of church history know nothing whatever of the superstitious use of oil in case of sickness. Apart from the passage in James and in the Gospel of Mark (where oil also stands for a remedial agent) the rest of the New Testament knows nothing of a sacramental anointing of the sick. The Apostle Paul never mentioned it. As far as the record goes, he never used it. He left Trophimus sick, and the Holy Spirit instead of telling Timothy to call for the elders, sent him a prescription. Nor is there any other teaching to be found in the great Church Epistles. With this we have shown that there is absolutely no Scriptural basis for the teachings and claims of "Divine Healing." It lacks Scriptural support from start to finish. It is therefore Anti-Scriptural. But let us examine

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\*F. Lenormant: The Magic of the Chaldeans. 571 pages.

next the pretended works and results of "Divine Healing" cults and their leaders, and we shall know them by their fruits.

## CHAPTER VII

### An Examination of the Works and Results of Divine Healers

As stated before, the advertising propaganda of divine healers in their campaigns is done on an enormous scale. Whenever a circus comes to town, the town and the surrounding country is placarded by advance agents advertising the show. Press notices of "the greatest on earth" are freely used. We believe one Barnum found out that it pays to advertise. Divine healing campaigns are carried on in the same way and truthfulness is a secondary matter. To give an illustration of this sensational advertising, which must grieve the Holy Spirit, as it offends the truly spiritual of God's people, we call attention to a sheet called "*The National Labor Tribune*," used for some time by the Bosworth brothers as their advertising medium. In one issue are six big photographs of the healers and their audiences. In reading the contents of this issue one would think that the days of the Apostles are not only brought back, but that these healers are far ahead in their works of what happened in the beginning of the age. We quote different headings:

*Wholly Deaf, healed.—Nervous twitching cured.—Specialist said incurable—healed.—Sick 20 years; operated on 14 times; prayed for and healed.—Was deaf but now hears.—Had nervous prostration; had 28 doctors in 21 months; instantly healed.—Ear drum gone; 17 doctors failed; now instantly healed.—Had paralysis: healed by reading the "Labor Tribune."—Miracles and Wonders at the Bosworth meetings.—Ear drum restored after being removed(!)—Had many diseases; prayed for; cured.—Had eczema 14 years; cured.—Indian fighter and*

*rough rider known as ossified man wins in terrific fight against death.—Foul, revolting cancer healed through prayer.—Tried 20 doctors; instantly healed.—Born paralyzed, now well (!)—Right leg one and a half inch shorter than left leg; anointed and leg made as long as the other (!).—Living without kidneys; world's most miraculous case healed (!)—Lost voice restored.—Tumor and asthma; completely healed.—Toes turned up 15 years; pain ended by reading "Labor Tribune" (!)—Serious case of neuritis healed.—Double hernia healed.—Instantly healed of stigmatism (!)—Healed from spinal meningitis.—Curvature of spine disappears instantly (!)—Abscess of hip 13 years; now like a newborn babe.—Etc.*

We single out one very much advertised case of a woman in Pittsburg, Pa.: "*Living without kidneys; world's most miraculous case healed.*" This miraculous case is being used far and wide for advertising purposes. Living without kidneys! This woman had both of her kidneys removed by surgeons, and in spite of having no kidneys left she lives! One does not need to be a medical man to know that such a report is not true. It is the same as if some one would advertise "Man living without a heart."

Other healers, Mrs. McPherson, Mr. Charles Price and their imitators, send forth similar advertising matter and reports of miracles of healing. They tell the Christian public that hundreds are being healed in the Name of Christ, and that the very same miracles are being wrought today, which Christ and His Apostles wrought. *Now this is a very serious matter.* If these claims are true, if these divine healers do the same miracles which Christ and His Apostles did in the beginning of this age, then God has surely visited His people and every Christian who rejects this "New Pentecost," who does not accept the ministries of these miracle-workers sins dreadfully; he is guilty of opposing God and the gracious

work of the Holy Spirit. But if these claims are spurious, if no such miracles as Christ and His Apostles did take place in these healing campaigns, then the whole system cannot be too strongly condemned, for it is a *deception*. Now it is evident, claims like those advanced by these leaders of healing campaigns, must have first of all a Scriptural basis. If that is lacking no Christian can conscientiously endorse it. We have shown in our previous examination that every Scripture divine healers use for their system of divine healing falls to the ground under a sane and spiritual exegetical investigation.

*In the first place we want to show divine healing cults are not performing the same miracles which Christ did, nor the miracles which are recorded in the Book of Acts.* In this respect the claim is altogether false. Our Lord healed *all* manner of disease and *all* manner of sickness. They brought to Him *all* that were sick and He healed them *all*. "He healed *all* that needed healing" (Luke ix:11). Is this being done by modern healers? Several of them scrutinize the hundreds of applicants very closely and only permit certain ones to present themselves for anointing and prayer. To illustrate this we quote from the communication of a citizen of Fresno, Calif.:

"Physicians have pronounced my wife to be heavily afflicted with hysterical epileptics, her spine being involved. I began about the middle of the McPherson meetings trying to get a card for my wife so that she might be healed. The card was denied her repeatedly. While I was waiting in the back prayer room, Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. McPherson's mother (who has the say about who is to get a card for healing) attracted my special attention. She said to a man on a couch, 'Bend your knee. Now try again. Now can't you raise your arm above your head? You cannot. Poor thing!' Then to another, and it was the same, only this one could raise the hand or bend the knee. I was forced to the conclusion that they were practised out in this room before they were permitted to go out before the audience. The helpless ones were kept off the stage."

A reliable physician who watched closely another cam-



paign states: "The sick applying for healing are carefully sorted over by the evangelist's mother, and if they appear to be good risks, they are given cards which entitle them to the evangelist's healing prayer." Mr. Price imitates this method and has a woman along, who does the sorting. Think of the Lord Jesus Christ, or the Apostles doing such a thing! He never asked if a disease was considered incurable or not, nor what the symptoms were, but He healed them *all of all* manner of diseases. The most careful investigations by unprejudiced persons have shown that in these healing meetings no cure of an organic disease has ever taken place. Nor do they bring to these healing meetings persons suffering from acute sicknesses. We mean typhoid, pneumonia, diphtheria, or similar diseases. Divine healers attempted frequently to heal some of these diseases with disastrous results. We know of several children who had diphtheria. Medical attention was refused. Prayer and anointing with oil was the only thing done for them. The children died. We have heard people testify that the Lord healed them of pneumonia and typhoid fever. But in each case a *gradual and normal recovery* was put down as healing. Each disease ran its appointed course. But that is not how the Lord Jesus healed.

These modern healers do not heal the maimed. The Lord Jesus Christ did. In Matthew xv:30 we read a great multitude came and brought with them the maimed; *the maimed were made whole*. Some had no hands, others had lost feet and there was the miracle of making these maimed persons whole. Then we remind the reader of the last healing our Lord did when He picked up the ear of the high priest's servant, which had been completely severed by Peter's hasty sword, and at once the servant had his ear back, and was perfectly whole. Come on, ye Divine Healers, with

your claim to do what Christ did in healing the sick and give us such a demonstration! *And what about raising the dead?* There have been claims made that some great miracle took place. A man testified that he had a diseased eye. It was removed by a surgeon. Then the man said that in answer to prayer the Lord gave him a brand new eye. That man lied. A few years ago in California, after preaching in a certain church, a man came to the front and said to the writer that he is wrong in not believing in the present day miracles wrought by Mrs. McPherson and others. He had seen one. A boy had fallen out of a tree and sustained a bad fracture of the forearm. He said, we prayed for him and anointed him and while we were praying the arm was made perfectly whole. We asked him if he was sure that the arm was fractured. He replied in the affirmative, assuring us that the splintered bones were sticking through the skin and the bones came together while they prayed. We asked him, "And you tell me that you saw this with your own eyes?" He assured us that he saw it. We told him that he is one of the biggest frauds in California. God can do this, no one doubts that. But this is not how God works now.

The late Dr. A. J. Gordon in his book "The Ministry of Healing" cites a similar case of a boy who was miraculously healed of a very bad double fracture of the arm. A healer who flourished over fifty years ago, W. E. Boardman declared that the child's arm was miraculously healed the next day and was perfectly whole. This case was thoroughly investigated by Dr. James Henry Lloyd, of the University of Pennsylvania, and in the "Medical Record" for March 27, 1886, Dr. Lloyd published a letter from the *very child*, who had become a physician:

Dear Sir: The case you cite, when robbed of all its sensational surroundings is as follows: The child was a spoiled youngster who would have his own way; and when he had a *green stick fracture* of the forearm, and after having had it bandaged, for several days, concluded he would much prefer going without a splint, to please the spoiled child the splint was removed, and the arm carefully adjusted in a sling. As a matter of course, the bone soon united, as is customary in children, and being only partially broken, of course all the sooner. This is the miracle! Some nurse or crank or religious enthusiast, ignorant of matters physiological and histological, evidently started the story, and unfortunately my name—for I am the party—is being circulated in circles of faith-curites, and is given the sort of notoriety I do not crave.

Very respectfully yours,

Carl H. Reed.

We feel sorry that this untrue account is still being circulated in Dr. A. J. Gordon's book. Edition after edition has been printed in which this *fake miracle* is made prominent (see page 184 of the 13th Edition). And there are other incorrect statements in the same volume.

*In the second place instantaneous healings as constantly performed by our Lord and also by the Apostles are not done by Divine Healers.* The Lord said "Receive thy sight" and immediately the eyes of the blind were opened. "Stretch forth thy hand," and it did not take several months to restore the withered arm. "Arise and take up thy couch and walk," and the lame man walked. "Ephphatha" and the deaf heard not a little better, but his deafness was entirely gone. He touched the fever stricken brow and the fever did not drop a little, and get a little less the next day, but the fever left and the temperature was normal. He touched the leper and there was not a gradual improvement, but the moment His hand touched the leper he was clean.

Divine healers also claim to heal the blind, the dumb, the deaf and the paralyzed, as well as others. But instantaneous healings from blindness, fever and other afflictions do not take place in their services. There is a great deal of excite-

ment. There is fervent singing. Faith, faith, and still more faith is demanded and the poor sufferers make every possible effort to have faith and expect "the miraculous touch" which will make them well. Everything is keyed up to the highest pitch. Then the supreme moment comes. The anointing takes place. Under some hypnotic influences the sick fall to the ground, and while they go under the spell they hear the suggestion of the hypnotist, "Jesus heals thee," "Thou art healed." The patient comes out of the spell and professes to be healed, simply repeating what was suggested. We could fill scores of pages with cases of supposed healing, which are at best make-believe and self-deceptions. We give a few illustrations.

Finding testimonials in the reports of different healers, as to healing, and the name and address of the person given, we wrote these persons several weeks after the heralded miraculous cure had taken place. One lady in Pennsylvania professed to have been healed of tuberculosis in the second stage. We asked her a few questions as to symptoms; if she still had an afternoon fever and general debility, etc. She answered and said, "Yes, I have been healed, though my healing is not yet accomplished. I have taken it in faith and claim it in faith. I still have a regular fever and a frightful cough. But 'Hallelujah' in spite of the symptoms I am healed. I will soon be getting better and will be entirely well. I was anointed and the power is upon me."

A colored woman presented herself in the Angelus Temple to be anointed for blindness. After having been anointed with oil, Mrs. McPherson asked her if she could see, turning a very strong electric light in her face. The colored woman said "Yes, I see," and the whole audience became enthusiastic. The service over, a friend who attended the meeting out of curiosity and who gave us this information, was

near where the colored woman sat, and kept her eye on the woman. People were leaving and the healed woman also got up and walked cautiously towards the entrance to leave the building. There she halted. Finally our friend stepped up and asked her if she could do something for her. She requested to be helped to the street car. She was as blind as ever. Yet the next morning a glowing report appeared in a newspaper speaking of the miracle of a blind negress being made to see.

One of the saddest accounts we have read is the following. It happened in Fresno, Calif., in 1922, when Mrs. McPherson held a campaign in that city. The report is given by a minister of the Gospel, who is reliable and whose word cannot be doubted.

"An eye witness will make affidavit to the following: 'A little girl, who wore a pair of glasses one-half of which was entirely black.' I gathered that she was totally blind in one eye and almost blind in the other. I sat upon the stage very close to the whole procedure. While prayer was being made for her, the little girl, who appeared to be about 11 years of age, wept and sobbed and writhed in her eagerness to secure the help that she had been led to expect. She left the platform and public claim was made by one of the workers that she had been healed, and the little girl verified the claim by nod of head given in reply to the question of the workers. An hour later, when the meeting was out, I noticed a small cluster of women near the platform. I thought I saw the blind little girl in their midst, so I asked my wife to go over and investigate and talk to her if necessary. She found the erstwhile 'cured' girl flat on her face on the floor, sobbing, with shattered hopes and a breaking heart. Her disappointment was complete, and so was her disillusionment. The improved sight that she seemed to have had in the midst of the excitement on the platform had disappeared, and with it the hope of the little girl."

This is one of the awful results of these campaigns and the claims of these men and women. They raise the hopes of the unfortunates by their false reports of what happened to others. The sick do anything, give anything and profess anything as long as they also might be healed. They talk themselves into the assurance that they can be healed and

will be healed. When "the power" comes upon them they think there has been a decided improvement. The assurance "you are healed," a mere mental *dictum* of the healer, gives them a joyous hope. Then all at once the heart-breaking discovery, in spite of faith, in spite of the prayer, the oil and the laying on of hands, in spite of "the power" and the healer's suggestion, there has been no healing. The momentary improvement lasted as long as the spell lasted. The assurance that the healing would be gradual did not materialize. Then followed despair. Victims, as we shall state later, died on account of the nervous strain, many more are today in insane asylums. Each and all of them constitute a pathetic human document in which tragedy has been wrought out in human tears and pain. The spiritual and mental tragedy overshadows the physical, for no disappointment touches a more anguishing note than the disappointment of faith, a broken belief in the Divine promises. Those who have died, are only a few out of the great throng of suffering men and women, whose desire to become well and strong, and to know the joy of health, is taken advantage of by these men and women who claim Divine healing cures. To think that hundreds of the lame, the deaf, the blind and the dumb have been attracted by the false claims into hoping, when really there is no hope, is to draw a pitiful picture. Wickedness, in our estimation, is too mild a word for such tactics.

One more case we cite. One of these healers labored in Oregon two years ago. Two pastors of Eugene listened to Mr. Price relating the case of an Oregonian who suffered from cancer of the face. He declared that his face had been eaten away so that the teeth were exposed. The healer said he had prayed over this case and the man was healed. "There is now a little red spot left where the cancer was,

and that is fast disappearing. If you want to see for yourself, go and see." The two preachers drove out to the man's home. When the wife heard of their mission she said, "Yes, Hallelujah, my husband is healed." He appeared on the scene with a horrible, vile smelling cancer which covered part of his face, against which he held a towel. He also said "Yes, Hallelujah, I am healed! Price prayed for me."\*

To compare these works and results with the healing miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ is next to blasphemy.

*In the third place misleading reports, fraudulent cases of healing and sinful exaggerations characterize these modern healing campaigns.*

*More information as to the tragedies which follow.* Before us is a copy of a committee which investigated the supposed cures in the C. S. Price campaign in Vancouver, B. C. The committee consisted of eleven ministers of various denominations, eight well known physicians, all Christians, and nearly all of them specialists, three university professors and a widely known member of the legal profession. They took months for the most painstaking investigation. The committee found that this healer uses hypnotic suggestions. Briefly stated the committee investigated 350 cases of those who had been anointed and who professed healing as a result. Five cases of healing of certain nervous diseases were found; none of which had any kind of an organic disease. It must be emphasized that they were all functional cases, that is, in the absence of the structural changes, which always accompany organic disease, they were amenable to mental treatment. Many similar cures are also reported in the records of "shell shock," and other similar cases

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\*See W. P. White on "McPhersonism."

treated in recent years in various hospitals of Great Britain and Canada.

Thirty-nine of those anointed and pronounced cured have since *died*. It is obvious, the committee says, that if these persons had been cured of their diseases, one-tenth of them would not, in the natural course of events, have died in the ensuing six months. Five persons out of the 350 have become insane during the past six months. That is, of the 350 persons, who claimed healing, only five were cured of functional disorders, thirty-nine died, five became insane, and the remaining 301 remained sick, though they had been hypnotized into the belief that they were cured. We quote a few cases from the report:

Case B. Blind soldier was a faithful attendant at the Arena meetings. He was anointed and assured that he would receive his sight. So strong was his belief that, although at the time of the meetings all arrangements had been made for giving him vocational training course under the department of the S. C. R., he withdrew from this on the ground that it would be unnecessary, because he was about to regain his sight.

It is hardly necessary to say that his blindness remains unchanged. In addition, he is suffering from severe depression as a result of failure to receive any benefit. His obsession seems to be that his failure is due to his lack of faith. His condition has given rise to very grave anxiety among his friends.

At one of the institutions of the city, a large number of cases investigated revealed a large proportion of patients whose hopes of healing proving vain, passed into very marked depression.

A considerable number of cases of blind children also came to the committee's notice, whose hopes were built up to a very high pitch, only to prove vain. In some cases this led them to question their belief in the love of God and undid what religious faith had been previously built up in their lives.

Case U. This patient, suspecting tubercular condition of the lungs, a condition never really confirmed by a physician, attended the Arena meetings in search of healing. He seems to have had a mental obsession rather than a real physical ailment, though there were some grounds for his fears. He attended the meetings in the first week, was anointed, pronounced healed and testified publicly to this effect the next day. An unrestrainable state of mental excitement followed and he died a week later from the exhaustion of acute mania.



Case V. Girl, aged 13, crippled by automobile accident. Had not walked for five years. Taken to the Arena in steel braces from chin to toes, anointed, but not healed, it was said, on account of father's lack of faith. Father attended many meetings and professed conversion. Finally the child received a white card and was anointed again on the last day for children. No results. The father attended other services after at the Arena meetings, where the faith healing campaign was continued, frequently going under the power. The condition of the child remained unchanged. The father, the bread-winner of the family, became violently insane, and is now one of the hopeless inmates of an asylum.

Surely here we must say "*By their fruits ye shall know them.*" Such spurious claims and false reports are not of God, nor are these pretended cures. One of the saddest cases, illustrating the vicious powers at work in these campaigns of hypnotism, is the case of a minister, the late Rev. Reginald Edwards of Kelowna, who was one of those pronounced cured by Price during his healing meetings in Vancouver. The widow and the superintendent of a sanatorium, Dr. J. K. McKay issued a statement of the case, which should serve as a warning to others. We print it. He was a sufferer from incipient tuberculosis and thought he might be benefitted by the meetings.

"He came to Vancouver as a minister deeply interested in this evangelistic campaign, to witness and study the conversions and healings reported to be brought about under Mr. Price's ministry. He was profoundly impressed, and went before Mr. Price on the arena platform to be healed of the conditions which impaired his general good health.

"He was anointed by Mr. Price and he collapsed on the platform. He told me afterwards that he did not lose complete consciousness, but he did not know that he had fallen down. It was apparent to his friends who saw him that he came under some powerful psychic influence.

"In a few moments he came around and he stated that he was healed. He was absolutely sincere and was moved to

a high pitch of religious fervor by his experience. Under the impulse of this suggestion he attended all of the Price meetings and took an active part. He was most enthusiastic and was quite carried away.

"As a result he overtaxed his strength and a week ago last Tuesday suffered a complete nervous breakdown. He became daily worse and was taken to Dr. McKay's sanatorium, where he died on Wednesday morning.

"Dr. McKay stated that he had no personal experience with Mr. Edwards's previous medical history, but that the statement by Mr. Welsh was entirely consistent with his observation of the case.

"Violent over-excitement and over-strain of the nerves was the cause of his death,' said Dr. McKay.

"Reginald Edwards was 41 years old at his death and left a widow and four young children, the eldest ten years and the youngest less than a year old."

The campaigns held by Mrs. McPherson in Fresno, Calif. produced a rich harvest of evil results. The deputy in charge of the insane patients at the Fresno county jail is authority for the following:

"I have never noticed so many insane patients coming from one source." This is a matter of public record. The public can investigate for themselves. "Eight or ten persons afflicted with mental derangement on the subject of religion, and the subject of the McPherson meetings, have been cared for at the county jail. Many of these have been taken to Stockton, where I learn from the superintendent of the hospital for the insane that 'I had no idea how many had been taken to private sanitariums resultant from this same cause, or source.' Among those afflicted thus are Mrs. R. of Selma, committed to Stockton insane asylum. Mrs. A. R., of near Fresno, committed to the same institution, and died there February 9. Leaves a husband and three sons. E. E. P., now in the Stockton institution. Wife runs a grocery store here now. Mr. E. E., of Parlier, California, became a raving maniac. Now in a local sanitarium. In the case of Mrs. A. R., of near Fresno, who died February 9 in a Stockton institution, who was 43 years old, her physician makes the following statement: There had been no history of mental disorder with her before, and that prior to her affliction she had been in the best of health."

*"By their fruits ye shall know them."*

Mrs. McPherson held a monster campaign in Denver. A marvelous report was issued according to which hundreds were anointed and healed. We visited Denver a few months after the city was literally swept by an unbalanced religious enthusiasm. Some of the leading Christian workers assured us that not a single genuine healing had come to light and the thousands of converts claimed by the woman could not be located. A Denver physician issued a lengthy statement as to his observations from which we quote:

"I am fortunate in having personal knowledge of a number of 'cures' wrought by the evangelist. One young man suffering from tuberculosis left his bed at the county hospital on the evening of June 22d and attended the revival service. From the platform he publicly proclaimed himself cured of his disease. After the service he returned to the hospital and a few days later developed tubercular meningitis. He died July 5th, thirteen days after the miracle of healing.

"A young woman with tuberculosis of the hip joint got up from her bed, removed a loose-fitting body cast and proclaimed that she was cured. Ten minutes later I saw her in an ante-room, lying on a couch in complete collapse.

"A patient of mine with early locomotor ataxia went to the meeting to be cured. He surrendered his cane amid wild cheers from the audience. The next day he returned to my office with a new cane.

"A retired pastor proclaimed that he was cured of lameness. He is still drawing compensation for this disability. Thus it would seem that he must be lame, either physically or morally.

"An old gentleman with left-sided paralysis went on the platform to be healed. In his zeal he waved his right hand to the audience, which hailed the miracle with prolonged applause.

"Such are a few of the 'cures' which have come to my attention."

The same is true of the Bosworth Campaigns. A pastor in Toronto where they held a big healing campaign writes: "Over 7,000, it is said, went up to be healed. Some that were advertised in the bulletins as having been healed are dead, and at least three of those who were *miraculously* cured died before the campaign closed." A well known Christian worker in St. Paul, Minn., told us that one of the star cases of the Bosworths was a man healed of tuber-

culosis. A tract was written about his wonderful case, like the woman who lives without kidneys. He died a short time afterwards from the disease which had been miraculously healed. Yet the tract, telling of his supposed cure, we were told, was kept in circulation for over two years.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* contained a lengthy report of the miraculous healing of a child, a victim of infantile paralysis. The anointing, the prayer, the smiling child, the sweet words spoken by Mrs. McPherson were all given in detail. Says the report: "Now, set her down on the floor, I think she can stand. Hold her little hand for the child must begin to walk. See if she can't. All of the cloud of anxiety had passed from the father's face. He smiled confidently as he placed the child on the floor. The audience was silent and expectant. The child smiled as she stood up. The audience applauded. *She stood. She walked.* Tears coursed down the father's face. He led the child down the length of the platform, then down the incline, at the bottom of which the young mother waited, her face effused in indescribable gladness, her eyes shining through her tears. Taking hold of her child's other hand the parents walked down the long aisle. They kept right on as if they had been alone in their own peaceful home." Very touching! But they made a bad mistake in giving the name and address of the father in Oakland. We wrote him a letter and give his answer, "Our son (not daughter) was injured at birth and is not a victim of infantile paralysis. He is now two and one-half years old and cannot walk, but has made wonderful development and will be quite normal in all respects in a year or so. *He was treated twice by Mrs. McPherson, but we can notice no change or improvement as a result thereof.*" Further comment is not needed.

We could fill many more pages with other cases. In a

city where such a campaign had been held, brethren told us the reaction was well nigh a disaster for the spiritual conditions. We challenged the people to bring to our notice one authenticated case of healing of the many hundreds, which it was said, had taken place. No case was ever produced.

The purely hypnotic process in some of these healing campaigns is so self-evident that it is strange that so few recognize it. We give the words of a keen observer of the procedure by Mr. C. S. Price.

"As the anointed sufferer fell back into the waiting hands of the attendant minister *into a cataleptic or hypnotic trance* he or she went down with the name of Jesus and the authoritative pronouncement, 'You are healed!' 'She's got it!' in their ears—a tremendous climax to the *whole train of suggestion*, exalted fervor and ecstatic hope, powerfully calculated to bring about the well known results of hypnotic suggestion and psychotherapy. No wonder some of them afterwards spoke of the marvelous visions or great religious experience they had while they lay entranced on the floor. Moving about amongst their prostrate forms, studying the situation, one could see in the violent tremors, the rigidity of limbs, the fixed, glassy stare and monotonous repetition of sentence prayer, the *well defined results of hypnotic suggestion*.

And the same brother describes the tragedy of the whole unscriptural farce in a way which we fully endorse.

"Those who collapsed here and there in the audience during the singing or sermon he declared 'under the power,' and advised against any attempts to revive them, though some lay for hours in the dark after all were gone."

"I think of that father who came a long distance to receive his sight, so confident that he would see his little boy next day, for the first time in his life, that he could scarcely go to bed for talking of the joy that would be his. And I see him going home in the depths of despair as blind as ever, and darker than ever in soul. I think of that sweet young woman with the shortened, distorted limb, whose faith was so great, that she brought a new pair of slippers to wear back home when her foot was restored as whole as the other, who lay on that platform half an hour, and still has the deformity she had before. I think of that other girl who was positively told she was cured of her goitre, *whose mother is now desperately trying to save her faith in God* who did not remove it. I think of the long line of children I saw paraded across that platform for the healing of lame legs, and paralyzed arms and deaf ears and injured brains and other pitiful diseases,

and not one of them gaining the slightest benefit any one could see—and then, as I think of the shattered hopes and blighted faith of hundreds like them in the days to come, I say, ‘*God help us! for this is the greatest tragedy that has struck this city in all its history.*’ ”

They are also responsible for other tragedies. There have been cases of cancer which were curable in their incipient state, for cancer at a certain time is curable. Instead of going to a surgeon the sufferers went to a healing meeting, were anointed and pronounced cured of cancer, for let us remember again that Bosworth says that it is just as easy to be cured of cancer as to have your sins forgiven. The growth increased and finally friends and relatives prevailed to have the afflicted one submit to an examination by a surgeon, who declared that the case was now hopeless, whereas six months before, the life might have been saved.

*In the fourth place we mention briefly their fanatical rejection of physical means.*

The rejection of God-given means in case of sickness is *fanatical and irrational*. No one believes more in the omnipotence of God, and in the almighty power of the Man of the Cross, enthroned at the right hand of God, than the writer of this volume. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. To restore eyes over which a cataract has formed is just as easy to Him as to raise one from among the dead. But does God display the power He has in either case? The Lord can raise the dead as He raised them when on earth, for His power remains unchanged. Let all the faith healers pray over a corpse and believing demand the restoration of life. There will be no answer. Bring the man who is becoming blind through cataracts on both eyes, and let faith healers anoint him and pray over him; there will be no answer. Why not? Because God has given some of His creatures the skill to take a thin knife and then remove, by a

delicate operation, the film which covers the eyeball, and under the gracious blessing of God the diminishing sight is restored. Extreme faith healers will say that this is not of God, and all doctors, surgeons and medicines are of the devil. But the same men and women visit dentists, have teeth filled and wear false teeth. God certainly has the power to mend decaying teeth; He can replace decayed teeth by a set of new teeth. Like others, faith healers go to oculists, and wear glasses. When divine healers break limbs they use a surgeon to set and bandage the broken arm or leg. So they are forced to use means and yet they teach that the use of means is of the devil, that it is unbelief to consult a physician. A practitioner confided to us that a certain faith-healer had visited him when in pain and sought relief through his prescriptions at the same time requesting secrecy, and offering a double fee. *What hypocrisy!* Then before large audiences these men and women will stand up and denounce doctors and medicine, branding them as satanic inventions!

Let us go a little deeper. In nature, God has manifested not only His omnipotence, but also His wisdom. God is omniscient. He knew before the foundation of the world that His creature, man, would become a sinner. Before the foundation of the world God also provided the remedy for sin in the gift of His only Begotten Son. He knew what the physical results of sin would be. In His beneficence He made provision for these needs, and these provisions He deposited, in His infinite wisdom and kindness, in minerals, herbs, shrubs and various plants from the tiny moss to some stately tree. A wonderful lesson is written in nature of God's wisdom and kindness. But a faith-healer will say, if such is the case, why does not the Bible teach us the use of these herbs, minerals and plants? Why is there nothing

said about the use of these supposed God-given means? We bring a counter question. Why does not the Bible teach astronomy, geology, chemistry or other sciences? There is a very simple answer to this question. The Creator has given to man the capacity to search out His creation, to discover its hidden secrets by using his marvelous mental powers. What a disaster it would have been if the Creator had put into the hands of man complete and perfect textbooks dealing infallibly with astronomy, biology, botany, geology and chemistry! God expects man to search for himself. Science is to be truly the hand-maid of faith and lead through its discoveries and inventions to the praise and glory of His holy Name. As God has given us in the Bible no text book on astronomy or chemistry, so He has not given us a *Materia Medica*, but has left it to man to discover His kind provisions for the physical needs in sickness. The use of these means is fully indicated in the Word of God (Is. xxxviii:21; 1 Tim. v:23; the use of oil, etc.)

One of the greatest medical scientists was Dr. Hahneman, the discoverer of the law "*similis similibus curantur*," like cures like. This great principle has brought God's miracles to light. Minerals, plants, herbs and shrubs which contain deadly poisons which, when taken in their natural state, attack certain parts of the human body with disastrous results, are reduced by dilution or trituration to almost atomic quantities. These infinitesimal particles are taken up by the human system and carried to the seat of disease and often cure what the drug, in the natural state, produces. The homeopathic *Materia Medica* and its scientific demonstration is a wonderful evidence of God's wisdom and God's kindness in nature. To give but one simple illustration of a hundred others. It has been demonstrated that *Belladonna* produces, if taken internally, symptoms very much like



Scarlet Fever. Hence it has been proven that Belladonna taken in minute doses not only cures this dread children's disease, but is a prophylactic, by which hundreds of children have been spared in epidemics. It seems to us the principle "like cures like" is indicated in the healing of the Israelites by looking at the brazen serpent. Fiery, poisonous serpents were destroying the Israelites; a brazen serpent, which had no poison, looked at, led to the cure.

We cannot speak of other wonder-things in nature which ameliorate man's physical suffering in sickness. We cannot speak of the blessings of antitoxin, which has saved thousands of children from Diphtheria; nor can we enlarge upon the blessings of anasthetics, or the achievements of the surgeon's knife, by which many thousands of lives have been saved.

Extreme faith-healers charge that doctors, surgeons, any kind of remedies or means, are all of the devil. If the healing properties of minerals and plants are the work of the devil, then that being has introduced disease, and at the same time created remedies to relieve sickness and pain. *The rejection of means is fanatically sinful.* God's kindness in providing these means is ignored and maligned. The results are often disastrous. The courts of our land record numerous cases of "Christian Scientists" who, in practicing their mad-house theory, permitted sick children to go without any medical attention whatever. They died. Divine healers say that "Christian Scientists" do not believe right, that divine healing is on a higher plane. Practically the same principle which underlies "Christian Science" is the principle of faith-healing, and faith-healers pay the same price for not using God-appointed means.

A certain Missionary Society, which believes in "divine healing," sent out missionaries to fever stricken districts of Africa. They went, trusting the Lord, and refused to take

the chemical extraction of the Peruvian bark, known as quinine, the remedy which counteracts malaria infection. A number of them died sacrificing their lives for an unscriptural and insane principle. Other missionaries of regular church-societies, took quinine and lived. We understand that the Board of the divine-healing society has given permission to use quinine, not as a medicine, but as daily food. *What a farce!* That great missionary-evangelist, whom the writer knew intimately, Bishop William Taylor, had in his company of missionaries penetrating the interior of Africa, a young man who was an obstinate believer in faith-healing. He refused fanatically to take any medicine. We give the last entry in his diary. "I haven't the fever, but a weak feeling. But I take the promise, 'He giveth power to the faint,' and I do receive the fact." The testimony of the physician in the party as to the last conversation with this divine healing fanatic, is as follows: "Charlie, your temperature is 105, and pulse 130; normal is 98; the dividing line between life and death is 103. You are now dying. If you do not take something to break this fever, it will surely kill you." He answered, "Well then I die; for I won't take any medicine."\* And he died. We could add other cases, some of which came under our own personal observation, when persons died, refusing medical help, because they trusted the Lord. That is not faith but presumption. Divine healing suicides is the proper name for such.

*In concluding this examination we call attention to the demand of divine healers that faith is imperative for healing and give an explanation of certain cures which are effected.*

All divine healers make healing dependent on faith, declaring this as a Scriptural principle and demand. When

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\*Dr. Buckley on "Faith Healing," page 17.

there is failure, it is on account of a lack of faith. They teach that those sick, when our Lord was on earth, were healed only through faith in Him. The wife of a well-known American politician and religious lecturer, who is an invalid, said, "If I only had the right faith, I also would be healed." Faith in the possibility of healing, faith in the healer as medium through whom the cure is effected, and faith in a supernatural power to accomplish the healing, is declared to be eminently necessary to effect a cure. But no such faith is connected with many of the miracles of healing in the New Testament. Did the servant of the centurion have faith? His master believed, but we do not know that his servant had faith also. The father of the child which was possessed had faith; the son in the condition he was in had probably no faith. The man with the withered hand in the synagogue belonged to His enemies. The impotent man healed in the fifth chapter of the Gospel of John did not even know who Christ was; the blind man healed in the ninth chapter of John's Gospel did not know Christ at all, when he was healed, for he called Him "a man" and later "a prophet." Nothing is said of the faith of the vast multitudes who were repeatedly healed by Him. The case of His home-town is cited, that on account of their unbelief He did not *many* mighty works there, but He did *some* mighty works there in spite of their unbelief. And what about the servant of the high priest? When his ear had been severed, he certainly did not appeal to Christ to heal him; he had no faith whatever. Nor were the Apostles limited to the faith of those who were healed. The lame man healed by Peter (Acts iii) expected alms and not healing. He had no faith. Nothing is said about the faith of the multitudes which brought their sick out of the surrounding towns to be healed by the Apostles. No faith was manifested by the relatives of those who died and whom

Christ raised from the dead; yet divine healers have said, if we had the faith, the dead would still be raised.

*Now this self-confessed limitation of the faith-healers is an evidence that their power is not the power of God, for the power of God knows no such limitation.* On the other hand, this demand of faith, this strong, positive mental attitude of trust, that their healing is the will of God, that the anointing and the prayer of the man or woman, who has the reputation of being used in the accomplishment of the will of God in healing, explains some of the cures of functional disorders.

Do we believe that certain cures are taking place in these healing meetings? We certainly do. In our next chapter we show what resources the believer has in sickness and that God does heal if it pleases Him. Let us then look now at the cures which take place. In the first place there are hundreds of people in the world who imagine all kinds of sickness, and many actually worry themselves into a disease, producing different symptoms by their nervous agitation and fears. A little cough, which comes from a mere throat irritation, is put down as incipient tuberculosis; a stitch in the back or pain under the shoulder, is the beginning of pneumonia; palpitation of the heart, irregular or intermittent pulse, brought on by injudicious eating, is put down as a serious heart affection; a swelling, a common boil must be a cancer. Furthermore, there are many forms of disease which are purely hysterical. We quote a medical authority: "There are many cases of hysterical lameness, deafness, blindness, aphonia, supposed cancer of the stomach, tumors, goitres, etc., which yield to the stimulus of intense emotion. These various hysterical manifestations are often brought on by shock or emotional stress, and they disappear under like conditions." Women are especially subject to diseases, or supposed diseases, which originate in hysteria. That is

why seventy-five per cent. of the supposed cures are performed on women. Having read extensively on this subject, we are prepared to say that underneath all faith-healing, as carried on in divine healing systems, the healings of other cults, such as Christian Science, Spiritism, certain metaphysical cults, as well as underneath the healings reported by "the King's touch," the cures which take place at the shrines of Roman and Greek Catholicism, there are certain laws of nature, the most prominent of which is the power of mind over matter. The concentration of the mind with faith into "something" produces powerful effects. It has been proven that the law of concentration operates often efficiently in acute diseases. It operates frequently with instantaneous rapidity upon nervous diseases, or upon any condition capable of being modified by direct action, through the nervous or circulatory system. Physicians, who make use of this law of the mind, have wrought cures in diseases of accumulation, such as dropsy and tumors. Rheumatism, sciatica, gout, neuralgia, contractions of the joints, and other inflammatory conditions, have disappeared through the assertion of the mind over matter. Latent energy is developed through mental stimulus, which opens the way to a cure.

The late Dr. James M. Buckley, for many years editor of the *New York Christian Advocate*, wrote an excellent volume of research covering faith-healing, Christian Science and kindred phenomena. After citing different authorities and the cures of different systems, including faith-healing, he reaches the following conclusion: "*We find that in comparison with the Mormons, Spiritualists, Mind Curers, Roman Catholics, Mesmerizers, the Protestant Faith Healers can accomplish as much, but no more; that they have the same limitations as to diseases they cannot heal, and injuries they*

*cannot repair.*” Then he adds, what we have already expressed, that “the claims of Faith Healers, technically so called, are effectually discredited.” We quote him.

“In examining the healing works both of Christ and the Apostles, it appears there is not a uniform law that the sick should exercise faith, and that it was not necessary that their friends should exercise it, nor that either they or their friends should do so. Sometimes the sick alone believed; at others, their friends believed and they knew nothing about it; again both the sick and their friends believed, and on some occasions neither the sick nor their friends believed. No account of failure on the part of Christ or of the Apostles after His ascension to cure *any* disease can be found. Neither is there a syllable concerning any relapse or the danger of such a thing, nor any cautions to the cured, ‘*not to mind sensations,*’ or that ‘*sensations are a test of faith,*’ nor any other such quackery, in the New Testament. Claims of Christian faith healers to supernatural powers are discredited by three facts:

“(1) They exhibit no supremacy over pagans, spiritualists, mind curers, hypnotists, etc.

“(2) They cannot parallel the mighty works that Christ produced, nor the works of the Apostles.

“(3) All that they really accomplish can be paralleled without assuming any supernatural cause, and a formula can be constructed out of the elements of the human mind which will give as high average results as their prayers and anointings.

“That formula in its lowest form is ‘*concentrated action.*’ If to this be added reverence, whether for the true and ever-living God, false gods, spirits, the operator, witches, magnetism, electricity, or simple unnamed *mystery,* the effect is increased greatly. Passes, anointings with oil, are useful

only as they produce concentration of attention, reverence and confident expectancy. Those whose reputation or personal force of thought, manner, or speech can produce these mental states, may dispense with them all."

We are persuaded that most divine healing campaigns are a form of mass-hypnotism, and the power which is present is not the power of God. The simple fact that men and women who were touched became insane, is sufficient evidence that our heavenly Father, who is kindness towards the suffering, does not supply this power. The power of hypnotism was too strong for certain weak minds, and as a result they became unbalanced. We have information from an insane asylum in Oregon, where a number of victims of one of these campaigns are housed. The informant tells us that they sing and pray, and with the next breath they curse, and use the vilest language. Other matters we pass by, but call attention to the fact, that these "divine healers" obtain large sums of money through their *pretensions*. One, who but a few years ago was practically penniless, has accumulated wealth in real estate amounting to over a half of a million dollars. For a few weeks "healing" another received over twenty thousand dollars. "*By their fruits ye shall know them.*"

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Believer and Sickness

All faith-healers make much of a promise given to Israel. "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to the commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exod. xv:26). The use of this passage by New Testament believers, who are not under the law, but under grace, is incorrect. Grace makes no such conditions. Upon this misappropriated promise much of their teaching as to sickness in the believer's life is founded. In a nutshell it is this, "Obey the Lord, fulfill the conditions of the text and the Lord will keep His promise, none of the diseases of Egypt will come upon you. He will be the Lord thy Healer." The "Christian and Missionary Alliance," and all the other faith-healing systems, use this expression also. Obedience yielded, and there is no need for a child of God to be sick. Perfect health is the result of perfect obedience. But obedience to what? If we go back under the law then we also must obey that law. The terms used in Exod. xv:26 "commandments" and "statutes" mean *all* the laws which the Lord gave to His people Israel. The dietary laws are included, as well as the many ceremonial washings, the laws governing dress and also the Sabbath laws. In order to fulfill the condition a believer should keep Israel's Sabbath, the seventh day, and not the first day of the week, keep it down to the minute things commanded, as, for instance, not kindling a fire, or lighting a candle or a lamp. And if



one of these laws is broken the threatened curse must be taken. But even if a Christian believer would be so foolish as to attempt to keep literally the commandments and statutes given to Israel, he would find out that the promise does not hold good in the present dispensation.

The reasoning followed by Divine healers in connection with this passage is astonishing. They say "a believer may enjoy perfect health if he obeys the Lord. If a child falls sick it is the evidence that he has sinned and lives in sin." We quote from a volume which deals with "Divine healing."

"If we could now put the question directly to the Lord Himself, and He should say to us as He said to Moses, at the healed waters of Marah, 'I am the Lord thy Healer,' His answer would not be more conclusive than it is in His written Word. Indeed, He is as clearly revealed in His office as the healer of the body, as He is as the Saviour of the soul. Oh, how blessed! continued freedom from bodily maladies, second only to freedom from that most hateful thing, sin, for the cure of which it is promised as a help. One of the things in which the wisdom of God is seen in the law of health is this: . . . it simply binds Him not to put disease upon His children if they do hearken to His voice. In the law of health He has promised preservation in health, upon condition of hearkening diligently to His voice and obeying Him." Other "healers" are even more pronounced and put it down as one of the Gospel-truths, that if a believer trusts the Lord, he will be exempt from all sickness, and if he is ill and his prayer, or the anointing with oil, does not result in his healing, there must be some sin in his life. Now if these statements are scriptural, it follows that God is *forced* by His fidelity to His promises to heal the sick in answer to faith, and hence a believer may be assured that His power will be used in response to prayer in every case alike, in any

sickness and at any time. It also follows that if a believer is obedient, and so long as he is acting in obedience, he is safe and secure against any sickness and disease, and if there is physical disorder in a believer it is *prima facie* evidence of sin committed and unconfessed.

But some of the men who contended for this, believed it, taught it to thousands, published books on it, were taken sick and died. The late A. B. Simpson was affected mentally and physically for at least two years. Some of his followers actually asserted that he must have departed from the pathway of full consecration, otherwise he would have been healed. When another leader of "faith-healing" was carried off in the midst of his "healing" activities, the late Dr. James H. Brookes made some pertinent and sane remarks, which we quote: "He was assured that 'God's power will be used directly in every case of sickness alike, in little or great attacks'; and it is obvious that age cannot thwart the divine purpose, nor defeat divine promises. If the prayer of faith may baffle disease when the sick are forty years old, it ought to do the same when they are seventy, or eighty, or ninety, and so on indefinitely. According to the theory that faith may always count on the power of the Almighty to heal, and that 'it binds Him not to put diseases upon His children if they do hearken to His voice,' they ought to live on, unless their faith or their faithfulness utterly fails. It may be replied that this would be in direct conflict with the plain statement of the Scripture, 'It is appointed unto men once to die'; but it is appointed unto the young as well as unto the old to die, and the prayer of faith can no more set aside God's appointment concerning the former than in the case of the latter. When the time fixed by the eternal decree was reached, the brother fell asleep, as all faith healers do, notwithstanding their theory."

The deductions from the quoted text are unscriptural, unreasonable and cruel. Thousands upon thousands of God's well-beloved children, who are suffering in their bodies, suffering in sweet submission to His will, are branded by this erroneous use of the text, as willful sinners, who obstinately continue in sin, and therefore continue to be sick. Some of the mighty men of God, the chosen instruments of God the Holy Spirit, men before whom the present day "faith-healers" are mere pigmies, were afflicted, like the greatest of all instruments, the Apostle Paul, with a thorn in the flesh. They had infirmities and suffered from various diseases. They too cried to the Lord for deliverance and received the same answer Paul received. To charge them with outright disobedience, and unbelief as the source of their weak bodies, and their continued infirmities is unspeakably harsh and cruel. We think of the thousands of "shut-ins." They are living in the closest possible communion with the Lord, and by their gentleness, meekness, their whole-hearted and uncomplaining resignation to the will of God, manifest the all-sufficiency of His grace to sustain and keep; they glorify Him a thousand times more than all the pretending faith-healers with their sensational methods. Milton in the sonnet he wrote on his blindness says "they also serve who only stand and wait." The ministry of praise and the prayer of intercession which is daily practiced by men and women who are paralyzed, blind and otherwise afflicted, who have suffered thus for many years, fills heaven with its fragrance. In visiting these sufferers and beholding their patience and their spirit of thanksgiving and praise, one feels the presence of the Lord, as perhaps nowhere else on this side of heaven. No wonder that their chambers of patient suffering have been the birth-places of many souls. Nor do we forget the blessed songs which have come out of the night of their suffering

and deprivations. Besides John Milton, who like the nightingale, sang the sweetest, when night came, and his physical vision left him, we mention George Matheson and Fanny Crosby, both blind. Words fail us in denouncing this vicious dogmatic assertion, that Christ died for our diseases, that Christ is the healer of the body, as He is the healer of the soul, that a Christian does not need to be ill and if he is sick it is because he lives in sin and does not obey the Lord.

The New Testament teaches that salvation, at the present time, is confined to the spiritual part of man. The believer's body has the promise of future redemption. The believer's body is a mortal, a death-doomed body, on account of sin; it is called "the body of our humiliation" (Philippians iii:21, literal rendering). As stated before, when we read in Romans viii:11 of "the quickening of our mortal bodies" it does not mean a present quickening, but the future quickening in resurrection. The Apostle speaks in the same chapter of the earnest expectation of the creature waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God and "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans viii:19-22). The Spirit of God adds: "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The redemption of the body is future. That redemption means deliverance from its present conditions, the results of sin, from the present limitations, and it also means a glorified body, for corruption must put on incorruption (those who will be raised from the dead), and this mortal must put on immortality (those believers, who will be changed in a moment, when the Lord comes; 1 Thessalonians iv:17).

Practically speaking the body of the child of God does not differ now from the body of the unbeliever, though the Holy

Spirit dwells in the body of the believer. Believers contract violent diseases, suffer from blindness, deafness and other afflictions, just like the unbeliever does. There is no difference in the physical pain in the believer's body and the pain an unbeliever suffers. If our Lord does not come soon every living child of God will sooner or later fall victim to a disease, or suffer from old age as the unbeliever suffers, and will die as the unbeliever dies. His body will be buried like the unbeliever's body is buried. The same corruption which seizes upon the body of the unbeliever also seizes upon the body of the Saint of God. Only a knave or a fool can dispute these facts.

But we must not forget that the New Testament has much to say about the believer's body, though that body does not differ physically from the body of the unbeliever. The believer is to present his body as a living sacrifice unto God (Romans xii:1). He is to yield the members of his body as instruments of righteousness unto God, and make these members servants to righteousness unto holiness (Romans vi:13, 19). He is exhorted to remember that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, that he is bought with a price and "therefore to glorify God" in the body as well as in the spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians vi:19-20). The body is to be kept under subjection, that is to be kept as a captive (1 Corinthians ix:27). The true ambition of a child of God is that "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death" (Philippians i:20). That body is to be treated in honor; asceticism which neglects the body under the plea of humility is sinful (Colossians ii:23). The true believer heeds all these exhortations and instructions.

It is very significant that connected with all these exhortations there is *not one single promise* that, if the believer is obedient to these exhortations, he will be exempt from bodily

ills, or if he is suffering from infirmities of the flesh, instantaneous relief will be given him. According to the theories of faith-healers Romans xii:1 should read . . . "Present your bodies a living sacrifice and I will give you perfect health, you will never be sick." Not alone this but a number of the outstanding believers in New Testament history, who yielded their bodies, who were not conformed to this world, who lived in separation, were sick, and one of them even sick unto death. We mean Paul, Epaphroditus, Trophimus and Timothy. The Holy Spirit has given us the record of these four so that we might know that true believers are not exempt from sickness and that the "Divine healing theories" are not true.

Why have the children of God sickness? Why do they suffer? Why do they often battle with bodily weakness and are troubled with infirmities? Our first answer has already been given. The children of God have bodies subject to all kinds of infirmities and sickness. Their bodily weaknesses and infirmities may be either inherited or acquired. Apart from this fact, only too apparent, sickness is sometimes permitted to come to believers for certain reasons.

God permits sickness to come upon His children for His own glory. We know that divine healers repudiate the thought that God uses sickness at all. With them the devil does it all, and as previously stated, nearly every disease is looked upon as the work of demons. But this is not the teaching of the Bible, as it may be learned from numerous passages in the Word of God. When He permits sickness He also gives the strength to bear it in submission. "The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; Thou wilt make all his bed in sickness" (Psa. xli:3). It is then that the believer finds out that "His grace is sufficient" and "that His strength is made perfect in weakness." With

every sickness, every infirmity and bodily affliction there is given an opportunity to glorify Him. To take it all from a loving Father's hand, to trust Him through it all, to sing praises even in a night of suffering, that is what His grace can do and which glorifies Him. To learn through bodily affliction the tender and kind priestly ministrations of Him, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because He was tested in all things as we are, is still another blessing. If the children of God had no sickness, no pain, if they were exempt from all physical infirmities, as faith-healers claim they should be, they would be poorer and know but little of the comfort of the ever living High Priest.

Therefore our Lord permits frequently sickness and infirmities to come upon His children for their own good. Long ago one who was suffering from violent illness said, "The Lord puts us on our backs that He may teach us to look up." The lesson of utter dependence on the Lord needs to be learned again and again. How soon we forget it! Then He lays His kind, loving, chastening hand upon us to teach the lesson anew and draw us closer to Himself, weaning us from the things of this passing age. Willingly we kiss the rod knowing "that all things must work together for good to them that love God." Many thousands of Christians have testified that their most blessed communion with God was spent upon a bed of sickness, and of the deep and lasting blessings that have come in sickness through which they passed, either themselves or their dear ones. Thus many thousands testify as did the Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes" (Psalm cxix:71). Sickness may also have been sent on account of certain sins as it was with the Corinthians (1 Corinthians xi:30, 32).

*What then are the believer's resources in sickness? The*

answer is known to every child of God. *Prayer!* The gracious calls to His beloved people to pray, to draw near to Him, to seek His face, to call upon His name, and the promises that He will hear and answer the believing cry of His depending child, are found in every portion of His Holy Word. "And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me" (Psalm l:15). "In the day of my trouble I will call upon Thee, for Thou wilt answer me" (Psalm lxxxvi:7). "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honor him" (Psalm xli:15). "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him" (Psalm cxlv:18). Still more precious are the words of promise spoken by the Son of God, our Lord. "Ask and it shall be given unto you" (Luke xi:9). "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark xi:24). "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John xiv:13, 14). "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you" (John xvi:23). To these promises, uttered by His own lips we add but two from the Epistles: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians iv:6). "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John v:14, 15). The child of God makes constant use of these promises. Someone asked us years ago, Do you believe in prayer? We would not be a true Christian if we did not believe in prayer. The new life is born in prayer.



Prayer is the breath of the new nature. No Christian need to be told that it is his great privilege to pray when sickness comes and go at once with it to the Lord. The spiritual instinct of a true believer leads him to cry at once unto the heavenly Father for help and deliverance, if prostrated by disease, or if members of his family are ill.

If we were writing on prayer, and traced the use of prayer, the answers to prayer, throughout the history of the Church, we would find how very prominent prayer in case of sickness is, and what a cloud of witnesses there are, that God hears and answers prayer in sickness. We confine ourselves to a very few illustrations. Dr. Martin Luther, that great man of God, cannot be accused of fanaticism. Sects like the Anabaptists and other extremists he denounced unmercifully. He had great faith in prayer when sickness came. Once he found his bosom friend Melanchthon sick unto death in Weimar. Luther beheld him deprived of sight, hearing, and unconscious. Then he exclaimed "God forbid! How has the devil disfigured this instrument." Then he prayed a wonderful prayer in simple, child-like trust. He took Melanchthon by the hand and said: "Be of good cheer, Philip, thou wilt not die. Give no place to the spirit of grief, nor become the slayer of thyself, but trust in the Lord, who is able to kill and to make alive." He began to revive, and afterward said that "he would have been a dead man if he had not been recalled from death itself by the coming of Luther." When Myconius, the superintendent at Gotha was in the last stage of consumption, Dr. Luther wrote him "May God not let me hear so long as I live that you are dead, but cause you to survive me. I pray this earnestly, and will have it granted. Amen." Myconius began at once to regain strength.

The Swiss reformer Henry Bullinger, living at the same time,

testified to the efficacy of prayer in sickness. He wrote, "Through confidence in the name of Christ numbers greatly afflicted and shattered with disease are restored afresh to health." Richard Baxter, the author of so many excellent volumes, declared that many times he had known "the prayer of faith to save the sick, when all physicians had given them up as hopeless." George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, bears a similar testimony. Accounts of blessed answers to prayer in case of sicknesses are also recorded in the history of the Scottish Covenanters. Many pages could be filled with incidents upon incidents. The "Journal" of John Wesley, the illustrious founder of Methodism, relates many answers to prayer in case of sickness. Zinzendorf, the founder of the Herrnhuters, known now as the Moravians, had strong convictions as to healing in answer to prayer, and influenced Wesley in this matter. We quote an experience in Wesley's life as given in his Journal. "At our love-feast, besides the pain in my back and head, and the fever which still continued upon me just as I began to pray, I was seized with such a cough that I could hardly speak. I called on Jesus aloud to increase my faith and to confirm the Word of His grace. While I was speaking my pain vanished away, the fever left me, bodily strength returned, and for many weeks I felt neither weakness nor pain." Another interesting experience is related on another page of his "Journal," "My old disorder returned as violent as ever. A thought came into my mind, 'Why do I not apply to God in the beginning rather than in the end of my illness?' I did so and found immediate relief, so that I needed no further medicine." The following incident shows the child-like faith of this good man. "My horse was exceedingly lame, and my head ached more than it had done for some months. I then thought, 'Cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means or with-

out any?" Immediately my weariness and headache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant, nor did he halt any more either that day or next. (What I here aver is the naked fact, and let every man account for it as he sees good)." Then he relates many others for whom he and others prayed in sickness, and the Lord answered the prayer of faith. John Wesley was frail; he had many infirmities; he had a good knowledge of medicine which he constantly used for himself and others.

Thousands of God's children have had similar experiences in case of sickness, demonstrating the fact that God hears and answers prayer. All true ministers of the Gospel, and those who have the gift as pastor, pray with the sick and can tell of many answered prayers. The writer has been preaching and teaching the Word of God for forty-five years. During these years hundreds of requests to pray for the sick and afflicted have reached us. Hundreds of times we visited the sick and knelt at their bedsides in homes and in hospitals, and many times we have seen His gracious answers in the raising up of the sick. Often we were sick, or loved ones were taken down with serious illness, and the Lord answered the cry for deliverance. But recently we had a case in our immediate family, which seemed hopeless. One of the most famous surgeons declared the case was beyond his skill. Unceasing prayer was made and the Lord answered so mercifully that speedy recovery set in after the serious operation, so that the surgeon declared it next to a miracle.

We have given the one side and we must now look at the other side. Hundreds of Christians have cried to the Lord in sickness and there was a gracious answer, but a vastly greater number testify, that they also cried to the Lord when sickness invaded their home, that they prayed in faith, agonized in prayer, implored the Lord to send deliverance,

asked others to join in prayer for healing, and there was no recovery, the loved one was snatched from their side. All the conditions mentioned in the Word of God in connection with effectual prayer were met. There was simple faith. There was united prayer and perfect agreement. Humiliation, confession of sin and self-judgment were not overlooked, yet there was no response. Thousands of invalids, all earnest believers, are living today, suffering from various afflictions. The prayer of faith has gone up in their behalf, prayer in His name, and the only reply which came from the throne of God was the reply the afflicted Apostle received, "My Grace is sufficient for thee."

Both answered prayer in delivering from sickness, from the very jaws of death, and unanswered prayer, when sickness and afflictions remain unchanged and death comes, demonstrate what the creature of the dust is so prone to forget, the Sovereignty of God. God is sovereign in the control of the lives of His people. He controls their earthly lot and destiny, and we add His Sovereignty is the Sovereignty of infinite wisdom and infinite love. It was said of Him while on earth "He has done all things well." Blessed assurance! Whether He answers the prayer in sickness by raising up the sick, or does not answer the prayer for deliverance and restoration, it must all be well, it will all be well. It is true faith which submits to His good will. How that Shunammite woman puts us to shame! When her boy was dead and the prophet put the question to her "Is it well?" she readily answered "It is well" (2 Kings iv:26).

Faith is not blind confidence that demands to get whatever we want, for this in effect, as one has said, would dethrone God, and place the sceptre in our hands, making God merely an obedient and irresistible power to do our unwise bidding.

Dr. Brookes in quoting the prayer promises of our Lord

in John xiv:13, 14 and other passages remarked: "These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and there is no limitation upon the power they place within the hands of the believer. The only condition is faith and asking in the name of the Son of God, but it will be observed that the condition necessarily implies that the prayer is according to the written Word and the righteous will of God. Without this there might be fanaticism, but there could be no faith; there might be intense longing, but there could be no conscious oneness with Christ, no asking as if He were expressing His own desire through human lips, no breathing of the petition put by His Holy Spirit into the heart, all of which is implied in His direction to ask in His name. It is of the last moment to keep this in mind in our supplications."

"For example, it would not be in keeping with the condition of these blessed promises to pray that we, or all Christians on earth might be rich in this world's possessions, because there is no assurance in the written Word, that it is the will of our Father that all His children should be wealthy in gold and silver, in houses and lands, or that it would be best for them to own vast estates. Precisely so, there is no assurance in the written Word that our Father wills all of His children to be exempt from sickness during this dispensation of suffering, or that it would be best for them to be thus exempt. On the other hand, it is explicitly said, 'It is appointed unto men once to die'; and hence no amount of prayer or faith can set aside this decree, which must remain in force during the period of our Lord's personal absence from the earth. It is a serious error to insist upon dragging into this age of cross-bearing what will be true only in the bright day of His return. Nor is there a single promise, nor one line, from the first verse in Genesis to the last of Revelation, that pledges God to grant His power in

response to prayer in every case of sickness, in little or great attacks."

And here we clash with "Divine healing" once more. The men and women who go about the country holding "healing meetings" make statements which are more than unscriptural, they are presumptuous and audacious. Of course they believe in prayer and use prayer, but they make the bold declaration that when it comes to praying for the healing of the sick, one does not need to say "*if it is Thy will.*" To use this phrase, a leading Divine healing hypnotist said, is unbelief. One must be persuaded that it is His will and if it is His will the use of the words "if it is Thy will" only suggest doubt. Their reasoning is something like this: God is not the author of evil, pain and disease, bodily infirmities are not according to His will; all sickness is the work of the devil; the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil; on the cross He procured a double cure for a double curse, He died for our sins and for our diseases as well; therefore it is His will that those who believe on Him should be well, and if they are sick He will heal them, if they have faith, hence to pray "if it be Thy will" is unbelief. The whole argument as we have stated it, is positively wrong and has no scriptural basis whatever. The faith-healers of more than a generation ago did not use such extreme language. But there is a simple reason for this presumption. A hypnotist demands the complete yielding of the will of his subject. If this is not done he fails, and his power cannot work. That hypnotism underlies all these mass healing campaigns has been fully demonstrated. The passes which are made, the falling over of the treated subjects, the suggestions made, the temporary relief experienced, and the fact that after the campaign ends, and the personality of the healer is withdrawn, results are no longer present, is sufficient evidence for this charge.

Every true believer who is spiritual shudders at the very thought of coming into the presence of a holy, righteous, sovereign God with the demand "*Thou must!*" Such a demand coming from the lips of the creature of the dust is not faith, but presumption. It dishonors God. It insults Him and His authority. It exalts the creature above God in placing the finite wisdom of man above the infinite loving wisdom of God, who alone knows what is best for His children. It is written, "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul" (Psalm cvi:15). What a disaster it would be if every request brought into the presence of God should be answered according to our own will! Besides bringing leanness of soul it would result in every other evil.

About forty-five years ago Dr. Joel Parker, one of the New York City preachers, known as a faithful servant of Christ, stated in public print that soon after he had entered the ministry a lady sent to him to pray for the recovery of her little son, who was dangerously ill. He kneeled beside the distressed mother and the cradle of the child, and asked God to arrest the disease, and spare the loved one, if consistent with His will. The lady caught him by the arm, and exclaimed "I did not send for you to pray in that manner. I do not wish you to say, if it is God's will. No matter what His will may be, it is my will that my child recover. I will not give him up; *God must spare him to me.*" God did spare him, and that same mother lived to know that the same boy was swung by the neck from the gallows for murder.

The most essential element in believing prayer is to ask according to His will. It does not say "if we ask anything according to our will, He heareth us" but "if we ask anything according to *His will*, He heareth us." Without this prayer

is not real prayer, nor real faith, but dictation to God, which must be more obnoxious to Him than when a child comes to an earthly father and insists on having that which the father knows would only hurt his child. The highest prayer which lips of clay can pray is the prayer the Son of God prayed in dark Gethsemane—"Nevertheless not My will but Thy will be done." And thus the child of God prays still, and such a prayer is acceptable and well pleasing in His sight.

Let us not forget the perfect One, who cried from the verge of a frightful abyss yawning at His feet, "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John xii:27, 28). The Father did not save the Son from the dreadful hour, but He glorified His name, and He exalted that Son of His love to His own right hand in the heavenlies. Even so, let the weary, worn child of God on the bed of sickness and suffering cry with all earnestness, and full confidence in the power and willingness of our Father to help, "Save me from further pain" but above the cry, let the nobler cry ascend, "Father glorify Thy name." Three things are still left the tried and tired believer: the comforting word "My grace is sufficient for thee"; the cheering promise, "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; and the sweet assurance, though "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward (the long afterward of eternity) it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."\*

In conclusion a word about means. Should a believer who is suffering in his body employ a physician, should he use

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\*The Truth, Vol. XII, page 218;



means to counteract bodily ills? We have considered this question in the preceding chapter and found that the use of means and of a physician are perfectly scriptural and rational. The rejection of means is unscriptural and irrational. Extreme faith-healers brand physicians as instruments for evil, and the use of means as of the devil. Not all go so far. But in all healing campaigns the medical profession is belittled and ridiculed; means are put down as being worthless in any disease; surgery is branded as useless; these faith-healers only have a "cure-all!" They either are ignorant of the achievements of medicine and surgery, or they are willfully maligning these means.

We have read a good deal of faith-healing literature, Christian Science, Spirit healing, Mind curism, faith healing and Divine healing, but we have never found mention made of Luke, the beloved physician. Divine healers seem to ignore this man of God entirely. They do not consider that the Spirit of God calls him by this endearing term, and there is not the remotest hint given that it was wrong for him to be a physician. And what about the words of our Lord, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"? (Matthew ix:12). In these words the Lord speaks of the need of a physician in case of illness; he sanctions the employment of physicians, or at least, He carefully abstains from denouncing those who employ them. In the parable of the good Samaritan our Lord speaks of remedies used, without a word of disapproval. We have seen that the oil in James v:14 is not a sacramental matter, but the oil is used as a remedy. Once more we mention Timothy and the Spirit given prescription for the oft infirmities. Wine, not grape-juice, such as the Spirit of God commended to Timothy, is a stimulant, with toning effect upon the digestive organs. We also mention the case of the godly king Hezekiah in the Old Testament.

The prophet Isaiah was divinely instructed to tell the king to use a remedy. "Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover" (Isaiah xxxviii:21). The Lord has the power to heal a boil without using a poultice of figs to bring the boil to a head and effect a cure. Would the Lord have healed Hezekiah if he had despised the appointed means?

Years ago the writer, in connection with his work on the East Side of New York, employed a Christian woman to visit the neglected population in the tenement house districts. One cold November day she was taken down with a high fever. She sent for a member of the "Christian and Missionary Alliance" and was anointed for healing. The disease proved to be pneumonia. We called in a physician to verify the diagnosis. He said it was pneumonia and as she did not want any medical treatment, he recommended a good nurse. The good woman maintained throughout her illness that the Lord was healing her; but the disease ran its normal course. When the third stage was reached we asked the physician to come again. He said that the lungs were clearing except a certain part, and that poultices were now needed to loosen the phlegm. She refused and declared the Lord was healing her and He did not need flax-seed poultices. But she did not recover and after lingering for months she died.

There is one text which these healers use frequently in their unjust denunciation of physicians and means. King Asa was punished by the Lord because "in his disease he sought not the Lord, but to the physicians" (2 Chronicles xvi:12). The use of this text gives a good illustration of how these men handle the Word of God. They say "If Asa had not sought the physicians, if he had trusted the Lord, he would not have died. If you go to a physician you do not

trust the Lord, but trust the physician." But the case is entirely different. He died because he did not seek the Lord, humble himself before Him, confess his sins and abandon his evil ways; he did not die because he sought the physicians.

As we have shown, God in His kindness, anticipating man's ruin and his physical needs, has deposited in nature His wonderful provisions to ameliorate sickness and to assist in its cure. To reject God's provision is sinful.

The believer in sickness will first turn to the Lord and seek His face. He will also judge himself, confess his sins and failure. He will put himself into His gracious hands and ask Him for His blessing in a speedy and full recovery, if it pleases Him. He will not reject medical counsel, but use the means which are available, praying all the time that the Lord may bless these means for his restoration to health. This is the Scriptural and the sane way the believer follows in sickness, and we may be assured has the fullest approval of the Lord Jesus Christ. To know that we are in His hands as His children, that without His will not even a hair can fall from our heads, that all He sends and permits must work for good, to rest in His gracious will, without fear or anxiety, is the blessed portion of His beloved children.

We cannot close this volume without directing the attention of the reader to that better day which is in store for suffering humanity. That day will not come through new discoveries of the origin of certain diseases, nor through new schools of medicines, or forms of treatment, but the better day comes with our Lord's return. His kingdom has not yet come, nor will it come till the Father sends Him back to earth the second time to claim His blood bought inheritance. The throne of all the earth belongs to Him, and when He takes that throne, as He must and as He will in God's own time, all

things will be put under His feet. If disease could not stand in His presence when here in the garb of a servant, how much more will disease and death flee away, when He appears as King of kings and Lord of lords. When He sits upon the throne of His glory, and the nations have been brought into His kingdom, when every knee bows at His name and every tongue confesses Him, then the curse of sin, disease and pain, will be gone, and even groaning creation will be delivered of its groans and share in the blessings of the kingdom. Then the converted nations of the earth will join in with converted Israel in His praise: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; *who healeth all thy diseases*; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies" (Psalm ciii:1-4).

May that blessed day of glory come soon. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

*Finis*