LESSON 10 HEALING

There is little consistency in most teaching in the Church on the subject of healing. If salvation was presented with the same inconsistency there would be very few people saved. Christians are not sure God heals; they are not sure He always heals, and they are not sure He will heal them. They have been told that sickness is God's chastening of them; that it is a blessing in disguise, or that God is glorified in sickness. What do the scriptures say? On all questions of doctrine they are the final authority. As we shall learn from this study, scriptures clearly teach that it has always been, and it still is in God's eternal purpose to heal us. Health and healing for our bodies are just as implicit in God's plan of salvation as is the saving of our souls. Salvation is all-inclusive. Its Greek root **Soteria** means health, healing, welfare, prosperity and victory as well as deliverance from sin and its spiritual consequences. Right throughout scripture God promises to heal His children as well as forgive their sins (CP Ex 15:26; 23:25-26; De 7:11-15; 28:1-14; Psa 91:1-10; 103:1-5; 107:20). In the Old Testament God Himself was the healer - Jehovah Raphah - the Lord that heals, and in the New Testament God has provided for our healing through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (CP Isa 53:4-6; Mt 8:16-17; 9:1-8; Mk 16:17-18; Lu 4:16-21; Ro 5:17; Ga 3:13-14, 26-29; Jas 5:14-16; 1Pe 2:24; 3Jn 2).

In every one of those scriptures God's will for His children's good health, healing, welfare, prosperity and victory in this life is revealed, as well as His will for the redemption of their souls from death and destruction in the next life. But the scriptures also teach how imperative it is to comply with the conditions attached to the promises to ensure their fulfilment. We will examine the scriptures in detail later. God has made a covenant with His children and He will not break that covenant. We might break the covenant, but He will not (CP Nu 23:19; 1Ki 8:56; Isa 55:10-11; Mal 3:6; Ro 3:3-4; 2Cor 1:19-20; 2Ti 2:13; He 13:8). 2Cor 1:19-20 teaches us that all of God's promises, right throughout scripture, are still valid for believers today because as we learn from Ga 3:26-29, those that are Christ's are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Every promise of God is yes to believers in Jesus. There is not one promise that is no to the believer who will believe God for the promises and meet the conditions. To teach that God chastens His children with sickness is ludicrous. In the first place, nowhere in scripture does chastening refer to sickness. It refers to the activity directed toward the moral and spiritual nurture and training of a child to influence conscious will and action. It means to instruct, to educate, to correct. It has no bearing whatsoever on sickness or disease (CP 2Ti 3:16; 1Cor 11:31-32). That is how we are chastened by God. His word judges us. It convicts us of any sin in our lives and causes us to confess the sin before God. Furthermore, our body is the temple of God (CP 1Cor 3:16-17). It is absurd to even suggest that God would contaminate one part of His temple to perfect another part, yet that in effect is what those who advocate that sickness is God's chastening are teaching.

Next, to teach that God is glorified in sickness is equally as absurd. If God is glorified in sickness why did Jesus go around healing the sick. Twenty-three times in scripture we are told that He healed them all (CP Mt 4:23-24; 8:14-18; 9:35; 11:5; 12:15; 14:14, 35-36; 15:30; 19:2; 21:14; Mk 1:32-35, 39; 3:10; 6:5, 56; Lu 4:40; 5:15, 17; 6:17-19; 7:21-23; 9:11; 17:17; Ac 10:38). We learn from Ac 10:38 here that all sickness is of the devil, which begs the question: could God ever be glorified in any works of the devil? If those who teach that God is glorified in sickness are correct, then when Jesus went around healing the sick He was disobeying God, yet Jesus Himself said that He only did that which God told Him to do (CP Jn 5:19-20, 36). Christians should never sit under any teaching that could repress or undermine in any way their faith in God's willingness to heal them. These teachers generally use Job and Paul to make their point. They teach that because God would not heal Job and Paul then we cannot always expect healing either. That teaching is not correct, but it has been perpetuated by teachers in the Church for so long that many Christians believe it and it has caused them to abandon the very promises of God that are meant to give them faith to believe that it is God's will to heal them.

We are all familiar with the book of Job, but just to summarise it here for those who are not, Job did not know it was the devil afflicting him. He thought it was God, and because he did not have a complete revelation of God he made two statements at the onset of his afflictions that have been taught and accepted by many Christians as correct teaching, but they are not (CP Job 1:13-22; 2:7-10). Now compare these statements with what Jesus taught throughout the gospels, and the later revelation of God which James had (CP Jas 1:17). The book of Job is also used to teach that while God may not put sickness on us Himself He allows it to happen. This is not correct but it ties in with their teaching that God uses sickness to chasten us, which flies in the face of scripture also (CP Lu 10:19; Jas 4:7 with Jn 10:9-10). What the teaching in Job really highlights is the New Testament truth that believers undergoing persecution and fiery trials must remain steadfast in faith (CP Jas 1:2-4; 1Pe 5:8-10). Job's steadfastness and patience enabled God's purpose to prevail over Satan. That is the main teaching in the book of Job (CP Jas 5:10-11). Incidentally, Job never prayed to be healed, because from the outset he believed it was God afflicting him.

Now, concerning Paul: Paul had a thorn in the flesh which it has been taught was some form of sickness which God would not heal him of, yet the Bible quite clearly teaches us that it was not sickness at all (CP 2Cor 12:1-10). Paul's thorn in the flesh was a messenger of Satan - a demon - sent to buffet him; to cause extreme hardships to befall him so that he would not be overtaken by pride because of what he

had seen and heard in heaven. Paul was not sick, and nowhere in the Bible does it teach that he was ever sick. Paul knew the power of God in him - no sickness could touch him. We only have to read what happened in Acts 28 to learn that (CP Ac 28:1-10). Paul did not pray to God to heal him of sickness, he prayed that the demon would be removed from him, but God would not remove it because He instigated its presence in the first place, which is what 2Cor 12:7-8 clearly teaches. How could Paul labour more abundantly than the false teachers he had to contend with at Corinth if he was always sick, as we have been led to believe (CP 2Cor 11:22-23). Paul's thorn did not hinder the faith of Publius and the others who got healed in Acts 28, so why should we let it hinder our faith for healing today. Paul's infirmities in 2Cor 12:10 originated from the stripes, the stonings, the persecutions and the distresses he suffered for Christ's sake (CP 2Cor 11:23-30). To say Paul's thorn in the flesh was a sickness that God refused to heal destroys the very foundation upon which faith for healing must rest. This means that faith does not come by the word of God alone as scriptures teach but that it comes by praying until a special revelation comes to us that it is God's will to heal us. That is false teaching (CP Ro 10:17). God does not promise us protection from buffetings by Satan through ungodly men, such as Paul suffered. God actually promises that we will be persecuted and undergo fiery trials (CP Mt 10:38; Mk 10:29-30; Ac 14:22; Ro 8:17; Php 1:29; 2Ti 2:11-12; 3:12; 1Pe 4:1, 12-19). But God does promise us protection from sickness and disease and that is what we should expect. We must never allow our faith to believe that to be undermined by false teaching.

God does not chasten His children with sickness; sickness is not a blessing in disguise, and neither is God glorified in sickness. God is glorified in health and healing and our deliverance from sin. This was the reason Jesus came (CP 1Jn 3:8). That God is not glorified in sickness is even made clearer for us by Jesus in Jn 9, (CP Jn 9:1-7). Jesus made the point here that God was going to be glorified in restoring the man's sight. He was not glorified in the man's blindness. The disciples erroneously thought, as a lot of people still do, that his blindness came from God because of sin. In the broad sense sin was the cause, but it was not the man's personal sin or the sin of his parents. It was a consequence of the curse of sin and death that came upon the human race because of Adam's fall (CP Ro 5:12). But Jesus has delivered us from this curse. He bought our freedom from the curse with His blood on the Cross of Calvary (CP Isa 53:4-6). *Griefs* and *sorrows* in Verse 4 mean sicknesses and pains. Jesus bore our sicknesses and our pains on the cross so that we could be healed of them, the same as He became our sin offering that we could be forgiven our sins. What we learn here is that there is healing for our bodies in Christ's atonement for our sins, and this teaching is reinforced as we study the scriptures in detail (CP Mt 8:16-17). In Mt 8:17 the griefs and the sorrows of Isa 53:4 are correctly translated as infirmities and sicknesses. Matthew asserts here that Isaiah's prophesy was being fulfilled in the healings Jesus rendered to the sick, "...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." That is not teaching that Jesus completely fulfilled Isaiah's prophesy before the cross and therefore there is no bodily healing in the atonement, as many believe. It teaches that by contemporaneously healing the sick and forgiving their sins during His earthly ministry Jesus was demonstrating that bodily healing is an integral part of the atonement (CP Mk 2:1-12).

These people were amazed to learn that as sin and sickness go hand in hand at one end of the spectrum, so too do healing and forgiveness at the opposite end of the spectrum. There are a great many Christians today who still do not know this truth and cannot obtain their healing as a result (CP Jn 5:1-14). All these scriptures are irrefutable proof that God's redemptive plan is all-inclusive. It provides for our physical healing as well as our spiritual healing. Jesus' healings in His earthly ministry simply foreshadowed the healing in His atonement on the cross (CP 1Pe 2:24-25). Peter affirms here that Jesus bore the punishment for our sins on the cross so that our bodies are healed as our souls are saved from hell. Peter is attesting to this as being an established fact, accomplished by Jesus' stripes. All we have to do is believe what the scriptures teach and claim our healing by faith. Christ bore our sins and our sicknesses on the cross so we do not have to bear them ourselves. He did not bear our sicknesses to merely enter into the fellowship of our sufferings as some teach, but to deliver us from them altogether (CP Jn 19:28-30). When Jesus said "it is finished", just before He died here, that signified that the complete redemptive plan of God was fulfilled in Christ on the cross (CP Ga 3:13-14, 28-29).

There can be no confusion over what this scripture means. It confirms everything the other scriptures in this study teach. Jesus died on the cross so that all who believe on Him can be partakers of the salvation benefits He bought for us with His blood. What is the curse He died to redeem us from? (CP De 28:15-68). There are 54 verses relating to all the curses here and everything listed is what Christ died to save us from but for the purpose of this study we will only look at the different sicknesses that are listed. These include deafness, blindness, lameness, barrenness, mental illness, fear, consumption, fever, emaciation, cancer, ulcers, boils, haemorrhoids, rheumatism, arthritis, dermatitis, etc, etc, Verse 61 even takes into account sicknesses and plagues not listed. No doubt we could include herpes, aids, emphysema, heart disease and many others among them but praise God, Jesus has redeemed us from them all and healing is ours if we will but believe and comply with the conditions (CP Ro 5:17). This scripture clearly teaches that the abundant life Jesus promised believers applies to this life, not the next as many would have us believe, and sickness and

disease have no place in it.

In closing this part of our study we need to look at one more scripture (CP 3Jn 2). This is still further evidence that it is still in God's eternal purpose to heal us. The word *wish* here means pray. The verse should read, "beloved I pray above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." There are three blessings of God involved in John's prayer here: material prosperity, bodily healing and health, and the saving of Gaius' soul. If any one of those blessings was not the will of God, John would have known and he would not have prayed for them. If such blessings are the will of God for one man, they are for all men alike who will have faith for them, because in the gospel of Christ there is no respect of persons. It is plainly evident from scripture that God still heals, that He always heals and that it is His will to heal everyone who meets the conditions. God does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. In Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. It is also plain in scripture that sickness is not God's chastening of His children; it is not a blessing in disguise, and God is not glorified in sickness. Only good gifts and perfect gifts come down from God. Now we need to know what we must do to be healed, and what are some of the hindrances to healing (CP Mk 9:23).

First, we must dispel any doubt that God will heal us. We have the assurance of His word. His promises are right throughout scripture as we have found in this study, but for the promises to work we must meet the conditions (CP Psa 66:18). If there is any unconfessed or unrepented sin in our life the Lord will not hear any prayer we pray, whether it be for healing or anything else. We must bring the sin before God and confess it before our fellowship can be restored with Him (CP 1Jn 1:7-10). Any sin not confessed and repented of puts a wall up between us and God and because of this we can no longer experience God's favour, or His salvation. To remain in fellowship with God and be partakers of all the salvation benefits Christ purchased for us with His blood, we must walk in the light as He is in the light (CP Mk 11:25-26). Forgiveness is a matter of life or death for believers. If we do not forgive others neither will God forgive us (CP Mt 18:21-35). Jesus teaches us here that the forgiveness of God, though freely given to repentant sinners, nevertheless remains conditional according to their willingness to forgive others. The judgement the king pronounced on the unforgiving servant is the equivalent of eternal damnation upon unforgiving believers, because just as the servant could never repay His debt to the king, believers can never repay their debt to God (CP Pr 21:13). Believers must never shut their ears to the cry of the poor, otherwise God will shut His ears to our cries. We must always remember that the whole salvation plan of God revolves around the law of sowing and reaping. We can only reap from the kingdom what we sow into it (CP Ga 6:6-10). This impresses upon us the importance God places on our financial support of the ministry and Church leaders in particular. If we withhold our finances we will not be able to participate in any of the kingdom benefits, which includes our healing. Throughout scripture we are commanded to contribute to the upkeep of those who God has made responsible for the spiritual well-being of His children (CP 1Pe 3:1-7).

This passage deals with the domestic life of believers - the duty of husbands and wives toward each other. In God's divine order the husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the Church (CP Eph 5:22-33). Any attempt on either the husband or the wife's part to reverse their roles and change this order will result in them being out of God's will. Being submitted to her husband does not mean that a wife is subordinate to him or is inferior to him in any way. They are both equal before God, but for God's purpose to be accomplished in their lives the wife must willingly submit to her husband's headship and regard the obedience she renders to him as an obedience rendered to Christ as the head of the Church. Husbands are to deem their wives precious and are to honour them because they are joint-heirs together with their husbands in God's grace. Husbands are also to treat their wives with special deference, bearing in mind that a wife is not as physically strong as her husband. They are to honour each other and respect each other's function in God or neither of them will have their prayers answered (CP Php 4:6-7). We must dispel all fear and anxiety. Fear, anxiety and doubt are all facets of unbelief and God is not bound to respond to any expression of unbelief (CP Jas 1:5-8 with Ro 14:23 and He 3:7-12). There are many hindrances to healing, or for getting any prayers answered for that matter, and we need to be aware of them all. We cannot deal with them all here, but what we have dealt with are sufficient to impress upon us the need to be always in a right relationship with God and to have His word abiding in us at all times. We cannot plead ignorance of God's word - God has commanded us to feed on it day and night (CP Josh 1:8; Jn 15:7). The key word in Josh 1:8 is *thou shalt* and in Jn 15:7 is *if*. Obedience to God's word is the key to health and healing for Christians. God is not bound to answer prayers from anyone who has not obeyed His commands. He wants obedience before anything else from Christians (CP 1Sam 15:22-23 with Jn 14:15, 21 and 1Jn 2:4-5).

Finally, we must never interpret God's gift of healing other than in the light of scripture. If someone else did not get healed we cannot let it influence our thinking. It does not alter the fact of scripture, that healing is available to them (CP Ro 3:3-4). Why they did not receive their healing is between them and God. We ourselves must never give up on God. If our healing does not manifest itself immediately, and we know that we have met all the conditions for healing, just keep on believing and thanking God for it. He will do it (CP Mk 11:22-24; Php 4:6-7; 1Jn 5:14-15).