



Truth For These Times



50B. MIRACLE HEALING

The Bible is full of assurances of the healing power of God. “I am the LORD who heals you,” He said to Israel in the wilderness. Exodus 15:26. “Bless the LORD, O my soul --- who heals all your diseases.” Psalms 103:1-3. Our bodies are the work of God, the product of His hand, therefore we can take courage in times of sickness, turning to Him as the One who knows best what is needed for our recovery.

When Jesus came to live among men, one of His first works was to heal the sick.

Matthew 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

There were no puzzling symptoms to Jesus – He perceived the cause and knew the cure for every disease. He made the dumb speak – the deaf hear – the blind see – the mad sane – the lame walk and the leper clean. These were miracles indeed made possible through the power of God. Jesus bestowed this power upon His disciples and they went forth under the command of Jesus to cast out devils, heal the sick and preach the kingdom of God. Luke 9:1,2. Later, Jesus widened His circle of helpers, imparting to seventy disciples the same beautiful healing ministry. Luke 10:89. Jesus knew that many would never appreciate the deep spiritual truths of His kingdom while their minds were dulled by sickness and their bodies racked with pain.

Mark 16:17,18 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

Just before His ascension Jesus promised an extension on the gift of healing. Those who were to continue the work of preaching the gospel would have the gift of raising the sick to health through the power of God. After Pentecost amazing power flowed through them for the help and healing of a needy world. Miracles of healing are recorded in Acts 3:1-8 where a lame man was restored at the Temple gate; Acts 9:33,34 where a paralytic was cured and Acts 14:8-10 where a cripple leaped and walked perfectly healed. Extraordinary miracles were also performed at the hands of Paul, Acts 19:11,12 and Acts 28:7-9.



Jesus worked many miracles during His ministry on earth.

People were miraculously healed in Bible days, but is it reasonable to assume that gifts of healing are available now? The Bible promise is still there! Without doubt many of the marvelous advances in medical science, have resulted from the enlightenment by the Holy Spirit of godly doctors, nurses, dieticians, research chemists, and others who have dedicated their lives to the service and uplifting of their fellow men. But if human effort and medical science fail, God can step in to heal miraculously when it seems best to Him to do so. This does not mean, of course, that everybody who is sick can expect to be healed. We must always pray as Jesus prayed

“Your will be done”. It is not always God’s will to heal; otherwise no Christian would ever die. Sometimes God calls a person to lay down his life – his work is finished – but he is saved eternally. Our eternal life is the most important. We must all die some time, (unless the Lord comes first) but the most important factor is to be right with God so that we can enjoy the gift of life everlasting.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

If we are sick what should we do? Pray to God. Tell Him privately of your needs or, if the matter is serious, we can follow the procedure outlined in the fifth chapter of the book of James.

James 5:13-15

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? 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 will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.



Call the elders of the church that they might pray over the sick one; also anoint the sick with oil and the Bible promise is that the Lord will raise him up. Countless believers can testify to the healing power of God through following the counsel of this portion of Scripture.

Presumably, however there are some conditions attached. One could not expect God to act miraculously in a case where the patient had not made a full surrender of his life to Christ. Could one ask God for deliverance from lung cancer while secretly planning to continue to smoke cigarettes? Nor could one hope to be cured of cirrhosis of the liver while planning to continue the drinking of alcoholic drinks.

Divine healing is possible today. If you need it, you may have it if God sees it is for your present and eternal good. But it will come only as a result of earnest prayer, unquestioning faith, full surrender, and a total resignation to His will.



We should trust God that He knows best when and if to heal.

Some believe today that if a person is not healed it is because he does not have sufficient faith. This certainly cannot be substantiated from the Word of God. It is true that many were healed “according to their faith”, but on the other hand, others were healed without even asking, and without having to give a verbal or physical demonstration of faith. For example this was so of the man Jesus healed by the pool of Bethesda (John 5) and the lame man healed by Paul at the gate of the Temple Beautiful (Acts 3). We should pray the prayer “Lord, if your name can be glorified, please bring healing. If it can’t I will trust you.” Faith

is trusting in God – no matter what happens. We cannot force the hand of God and tell Him what to do. Faith is not forcing God to act because we believe so strongly; it is trusting God no matter what the outcome may be. This was Job’s faith. In his pitiful condition of degraded health he cried: “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” Job 13:15.

When a person is not healed, even if he dies after being anointed; what then? Was his faith in vain? Did he do something wrong? Did God betray His trust? No, of course not. Sometimes we need to understand that there is more to life than faith healing. It may be far more important to understand faith dying. True faith must face suffering and even death, as well as life's positive aspects. It is eternity that counts the most after all. The greatest of all rewards is to him *who "dies in the Lord"* – Eternal Life.

FAITH HEALINGS AND MODERN MIRACLES

In the book entitled, "Like a Mighty Wind" by Cliff Dudley, is an account of many modern miracles. Some of the miracles are:

1. Turning water into wine.
2. A cloud to shield team members through the jungle and even prevent heat and rain striking them.
3. Twenty people fed by four cassava roots.
4. Dirty clothes cleaned by prayer.
5. Walking on water.



We must test miracles, as not all miracles come from God – some are simply a hoax.

In the Bible we read of many miracles. If one does not believe miracles then he does not believe the Bible. For example there was the crossing of the Red Sea when the Israelites left Egypt; the healing of Hezekiah's boil (2 Kings 20); Jesus turning water into wine; the multiplication of the bread and the fish when Jesus fed the five thousand; and the raising of Lazarus from the dead. These are but a few of the miracles of Scripture.

A committed Christian, Dr. Pearl K. England, anthropologist at Mankato (Minn.) State College, visited Timor during 1972 to investigate the Tori stories. Dr. England reported that in most cases Mel Tori's stories (Tori was a member of the youth evangelistic team on the island of Timor who reported these miracles) were not only unsubstantiated but repudiated, and further, a source of embarrassment to his pastor and fellow youth evangelists. The miracle of turning water into wine was repudiated; the walking on water was accomplished by walking on rocks just beneath the surface of the water and the multiplied cassava root was only a tall story. The so-called "miracles" failed under the eye of investigation – this is not so of Bible miracles; they were substantiated by the people of the time. This brings us to the point where we must be aware of deception. Of the 1.5 million pilgrims who visit Lourdes each year, only a handful were *tentatively* certified by Catholic Church officials as having been cured. It is not always wise to believe reports of miracles or healings without honest investigation first.



Satan will seek to deceive the whole world with miracles and wonders in the last days.

However, some miracles do occur. Are all miracles and healings of a supernatural nature from God?

Revelation 13:14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.

The devil's game is deception. If he can trick people into believing error, and cause them to be lost, he is delighted to perform a miracle to convince them – particularly a miracle of healing. A person healed by false methods will not bother seeking any further for truth. Some will say, Satan will not cast out Satan, which Christ Himself pointed out – and this is true. However, in Christ's day Jesus had a monopoly on healing, but the Bible, in these verses, reveals that the devil will be able to perform miracles, especially at the end of time – Why? – To deceive. Miracles, wonders and healings have been performed through Spiritualism too, but no Christian would say Spiritualism is of God, for the Bible calls it an “abomination” (Deut.18:9-12). There are many documented cases of healings in spiritualistic séances. In identifying God's true church of the last days, Revelation 12:17 and 14:12 show that they have three characteristics: They keep the commandments of God, they keep the faith of Jesus, and they have the testimony of Jesus. Miracles and healings are not mentioned.

Some of the modern day healings are as follows:

1. Seeing through a plastic eye – whether it is in or out.
2. Raising a man from the dead – when the body is putrefying.
3. Lengthening of limbs.
4. Filling teeth, and many more.



We must test everything by the Bible – seeing is NOT believing.

It is true that miracle healings do occur – even in spiritualism that we have already mentioned, but perhaps we should not be so gullible as to believe all we hear or read. It pays to investigate. For example, Roland Hegstad, the writer of the book “Rattling the Gates”, (an excellent book on tongues speaking and miracles), investigated a case of the healing of a baby in Nashville Tennessee. The mother said that two doctors could do nothing, so she took the baby to a prominent faith healer, who was said to have healed the child. The baby died a few months later and the mother refused to allow a post mortem to be carried out. It seems that the child died in spite of the faith healing performed.

During a crusade in Detroit, Oral Roberts prayed for Mrs. Wanda Beach. She was a diabetic – 37 years of age. She phoned her parents – said she was completely healed and felt wonderful. She threw away her insulin and within 36 hours was in hospital suffering from a diabetic coma. She died despite emergency treatment. Was it the emotional excitement she experienced that led her astray and made her believe she was cured?



Many Charismatic “healers” are frauds – taking advantage of vulnerable people.

Faith healer William Fuller of Florida promised dental miracles. He said, “Fillings would appear from nowhere”. He also claimed that silver fillings would be turned to gold. Dr. Radke took pictures of the mouths of 30 people in the healing line and made dental charts of their teeth. Ten healings were claimed. Eight of them claimed silver fillings had been turned to gold. However, Dr. Radke's examination showed them to be oxidized silver fillings – not gold at all. One woman claimed a silver filling. Dr. Radke found that it was there before the healing took place. When the woman was informed of this fact, she readily admitted that she had forgotten the filling was there. One man claimed a

gold filling miraculously bestowed, but Dr. Radke found it to be a tobacco stain without a trace of gold.

Very few faith healings have been documented by competent medical authorities, especially those where it is claimed the dead are raised to life. This of course is not to say that all healings are false, only that they are undocumented. So much of faith healing is a fraud. Not miracles – not supernatural – not even by the powers of darkness, but many people are easily led into deception. Some people make themselves ill by bad thinking and sometimes make themselves well by good thinking. Some people recover despite medication or faith healing – not because of it. There are tremendous recuperative and self-correcting energies in nature – in our own bodies.

There are of course the supernatural healings. Satan can perform these, Revelation 13:14. What he cannot do, he counterfeits. He can inflict disease on men, (Job's case is an example) and he can remove it if it suits his purpose of deception. Those thus treated will be regarded as healed. Satan can transform himself into an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:13,14. This is how many will be overcome. Because their faith is not solidly based on the Word of God, the devil's deception will be to them an overwhelming delusion. They will believe it to be truth when it is actually error.

Matthew 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

Here we see deceived people. They have preached – even in the name of Jesus. They have performed the miracle of casting out devils. (This is not Satan casting out Satan but a deception of it). They have also done many wonderful works; which surely includes works of healings, yet in the end Christ says to them "I never knew you". What a horror – to discover too late that you are on the wrong side – deceived by Satan – eternally lost.



Many who claim to be followers of Christ will be told, "I never knew you".

Why does Christ say to them "I never knew you"? Because true Christianity is not merely a profession. Those who say "Lord, Lord" are the professors, but Jesus states clearly that they will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Why? Because they give lip service but do not keep God's commandments. Who enters the kingdom according to Jesus? "He who does the will of My Father." In other words those who obey God and keep all of His commandments, including the command "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The Christian who enters the Holy City at last is the obedient Christian – the one who has based his faith on the Word of God – not miracles – not feeling only.

IN SUMMARY

Sometimes an illness prevents human pride and helps develop Christian character. This was certainly true of Paul. Three times he prayed for the removal of the "thorn in the flesh" – his bad eyesight – to be taken away; (see Galatians 4:13-15) but Jesus reply was, "My grace is sufficient for you". 2 Cor.12:9. We must always pray the prayer of Jesus, "Your will be done". This is not a lack of faith. We are simply trusting God – He knows best – we fit into His plans. For reasons sometimes unknown to us it is not God's will that certain of the sick be healed. It was true in Paul's case.

When Christ left earth, Satan immediately began to counterfeit His works. Records of the centuries are full of counterfeit miracles, many a part of church lore. We can be sure that Satan will counterfeit miracles toward the end of time. Genuine miracles and healings will certainly occur too. How can we tell the difference? Only by having our faith firmly embedded in the Word of God. When we know the truth it will make us free and deception will not overtake us. The belief that excuses or neglects the law of God is a great deception. Beware of miracle working power that excuses disobedience to God's law. Beware of pretended holiness that permits transgression. It is gross error. A faith built largely on emotionalism rather than reason will lead to the path of error. A faith that seeks its authentication in miracles rather than a "Thus saith the Lord" will lead to deception. A faith that bases its every belief on the Bible will lead to the Kingdom of God. Upon what do you base your faith?



A simple faith, trusting in God's word, will save the need for "exciting deceptions".

Review Sheet – Healings & Miracles

ASSIGNMENT – Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. Are the genuine miracle healings taught in the Bible? Matthew 4:23
Jesus --- the kingdom, and _____

2. Can we still call on divine healing as in Bible days? James 5:13-15
Is anyone among you sick? _____

3. If a person is not healed is it because he lacks faith?
Answer _____

4. Can the devil perform miracles? Revelation 13:14
And he deceives those _____

5. Explain how the devil uses miracles and healings to deceive. Why does he do it?
Answer _____

6. Professed Christians who have done wonderful works and even cast out devils in Jesus name, will one day hear Jesus say, "I never knew you". Why? Explain. Matthew 7:21-23
Answer _____

Can you see the difference between true and false miracles? YES _____ NO _____

Have you determined to put your trust in God's Word? YES _____ NO _____