

IS THE HEALING OF THE BODY IN THE ATONEMENT?

From UNSEARCHABLE RICHES

What is the believer's proper attitude, or what is God's purpose as to the healing of believers in answer to prayer without the use of other means at the present time?

We are often told that "the healing of the body is in the atonement." There is no doubt but that not only the healing of disease, but the resurrection and vivification of the body are provided for in the work of Christ on Calvary. Yet the resurrection has not yet taken place, even though it is ours in Him. In fact all blessing of every kind is latent in the cross of Christ, yet all waits God's opportune and fitting time and place.

Isaiah, who prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem, tells them of the "Man of Sorrows" that

"Surely *He* bears our illnesses,
And was burdened with our pains" (Isa. 53:4).

And that this really refers to bodily infirmity we are assured, for "He cast out the spirits with a word, and all who are ill He cures" (Mat. 8:16). The first kingdom commission was given soon after this when He told His twelve apostles to "be curing the infirm, be rousing the dead, be cleansing lepers, . . ." This was repeated to the seventy and was given again in connection with the creation commission at the end of Mark's gospel. The Acts gives us many cases of healing so that Peter heals the lame man at the gate Beautiful, and the paralytic Aeneas, and restores Dorcas to life. But Paul is not a whit behind the chief of the apostles. He heals the Lystrian cripple, casts out the spirit of Python from the Philippian damsel, and restores Eutychus to life. In fact he was blessed with extraordinary powers so that even handkerchiefs from him drew diseases from the sick (Acts 19:11, 12). As he progressed in his course his ministry underwent a change. He himself was burdened with infirmities. He delighted in

Faith, Hope, Love *abide*: the other Graces *cease*

infirmities, for whenever he was weak, then he was powerful (2 Cor. 12:10, 11). The exalted nature of the revelations he received made this necessary. God's *grace* was his alone sufficiency. Timothy, his genuine child in the faith (1 Tim. 1:2), like whom there was no one (Phil. 2:20-22) was also afflicted with frequent infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23). Why did he not heal him? Why did he prescribe wine? Epaphroditus, while with Paul, was sick, very nigh death, in fact, yet Paul did not even attempt to heal him. Besides this he had left Trophimus at Miletum sick. Why did he not heal him?

The fact that all of these are grouped together in the final and culminating ministry of the apostle, together with the entire absence of any healing at that time, is eloquent for those who have ears to hear. So long as the apostle was proclaiming Christ according to the flesh he was not undone by any one in the gift of healing. But when the most glorious administration of the mystery began to dawn, which had hitherto been a secret, he himself suffered bodily infirmity and his closest friends suffered likewise. The reason was that the transcendent spiritual blessing was best emptied into broken vessels, whose boast would be humbled by physical infirmities. Israel will be blessed with every physical blessing and this will overflow to the nations that share her bliss. But we are blessed with every *spiritual* blessing which often demands physical infirmity for its manifestation.

Let anyone get a grasp of present truth and the healing of the body will be seen in its true place—earthly, soulish, pertaining to the kingdom of which the prophets and apostles spoke. But our blessings transcend all this: in fact God is going to change our very bodies into *spiritual* bodies in the resurrection and fit them for the heavenly spheres. In the meanwhile it is our privilege not only to use remedies for our stomach's sake (1 Tim. 5:23), but to enjoy that celestial nectar which cheers the heart of God and man (Jud. 9:13), which is the best tonic until He comes to transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to His body glorious. A.E.K.

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