

## **Why the Born Again Christian should expect Divine Health and Healing**

**James 5:14** *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.*

**Matthew 9:27-30a** <sup>27</sup> *When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"* <sup>28</sup> *And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."* <sup>29</sup> *Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."* <sup>30</sup> *And their eyes were opened.*

**Matthew 15:21-28** <sup>21</sup> *Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.* <sup>22</sup> *And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."* <sup>23</sup> *But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."* <sup>24</sup> *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* <sup>25</sup> *Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"* <sup>26</sup> *But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."* <sup>27</sup> *And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."* <sup>28</sup> *Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

### **I want to continue speaking to you regarding the Doctrine of Divine Healing this morning.**

I understand that just mention this as a topic in some Christian circles and persons begin to rush for cover, afraid they will take on shrapnel from some kind of fanatical bombshell. And it is easy to understand their uneasiness considering the exposure many of us have had to the kind of goofiness that attends the "healing ministries" as seen in a number of late-night television hucksters. Still we must not ignore that throughout the Bible there is clear teaching on this very subject of healing.

**It will not be difficult to show from the Bible that God's healing of our bodies is presented as available to the Christian today.**

**It can also be shown that God's healing of our bodies is significantly limited by the requirement of our faith to receive it.**

Let me begin by saying a couple things about faith:

**1<sup>st</sup> when God commands us to faith, He doesn't call us to believe in something that is unbelievable or to have faith in something that is a shot in the dark.**

**The faith and belief that God's call us to is always supported by strong evidence.** In fact, there cannot be anything called the Christian faith without strong evidence. Faith without evidence is fanaticism. When you don't have the faith in God, in Christ, it is a result of resisting the evidence God has placed before you.

**Ex.** You'll recall that Thomas doubted the resurrection of Jesus Christ though he received testimony of that fact from credible and compelling eye witnesses. His

unbelief was stubbornness and willfulness. Jesus appeared to him afterward as recorded in **John 20:27** *Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."* Do you see this? Faith for Thomas was a call to respond to the compelling evidence. Unbelief is a refusal to submit to that evidence.

There are very few notes of Christ expressing exasperation during his ministry in Israel but when you find it, it is usually as the result of the lack of faith found in those who he is with, those who have the evidence for faith before them. *"Oh you of little faith."* It is the expression of the Lord to His own disciples on more than one occasion. There he was among them and they still resisted the evidence. Or in Nazareth his home town we read in **Mark 6:5,6** that Christ *...could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. <sup>6</sup> And He marveled because of their unbelief.* They had the evidence of who he was more than anyone but they ignored it or refused it.

That said we must appreciate the gentleness of the Lord Jesus with Thomas the doubter. He showed him the evidence and simply said, *'don't be unbelieving but believing.'* Now in this matter of **Divine healing** the Lord Jesus would simply come to us with the same kind of direction. I want to take it upon myself from God's word to show you just some of the evidence God has given us so that we may have faith for the healing and the giving of health to our bodies.

**2<sup>nd</sup>** (still speaking of faith) **for a definition of faith let us say that faith is a trustful expectation.** When it comes to laying hold by faith of the healing God would provide; or offering up as **James 5:14** says, **"The Prayer of Faith"** let me encourage you to keep this measure in mind so you can know if you prayed in that way. **Your faith for healing will be expressed by a trustful expectation for the same from the hand of God.** This trustful expectation will not leave you focused on remedies or on constantly taking your pulse... your eyes will come off of yourself and will settle in upon the Lord Jesus and you will rest in Him, trustingly, expectantly for what you have asked.

**Transition:** For today I propose to take up a consideration of one piece of evidence that would give rise to such expectations; such faith, such trust in Jesus for your health and healing. We will look at other pieces of evidence next week.

### **1. The evidence for the Christian's faith in healing from God begins with the Covenant that God has made with us.**

My wife and I have a different relationship with each other than we share with any one else. It is a relationship founded upon a covenant we made with one another. We made that covenant just over 34 years ago. We pledged our lives to one another until death. In other words we staked our very lives on this commitment to one

another. Our marriages are covenanted relationships in which we gave to one another our very selves. God has brought the Christian into just that kind of relationship. It is a **covenanted relationship** where God has given Himself to us and we are given to Him. WE can look at this covenant relationship and the evidence it gives us for faith for healing from God's side and ours.

### **A. Looking at the Covenant from God's side...**

You and I were not the first people to be brought into this covenant relationship. Before the coming of Christ this covenant relationship with God belonged uniquely with the people of Israel. God made a covenant with the people of Israel to be their God and for them to be His people. In making this covenant God declared to them one of His names. The name Yahweh or Jehovah as the certifying name of the Covenant. It is the name of God pledging Himself, putting Himself behind His pledge to His people. As God revealed Himself to His people, He would take this name Yahweh (which means 'I am that I am' or 'I will be what I will be.') and He would compound it with some provision of Himself offered for His people and it would be a name pledged to them. God would be this to them...

- *Yahweh/Jehovah Ro 'eh* – **The Lord our Shepherd** – really in Scripture this was the word of a King. A good King was to live among His people and feed them, lead them and care for them. (Psalm 23:1)
- *Yahweh/Jehovah - Jireh* - **The Lord will Provide** (Genesis 22:14).
- *Yahweh/Jehovah - shalom* - **The Lord our peace** (Judges 6:24)
- *Yahweh/Jehovah-tsidkenu* – **The Lord our righteousness** (Jeremiah 23:6)
- *Yahweh/Jehovah- shammah* – **The Lord ever present** (Ezekiel 48:35)
- *Yahweh/Jehovah – m-qadesh* – **The Lord who makes holy** (Exodus 31:13)
- *Yahweh/Jehovah – nissi* – **The Lord our banner or victory** (Exodus 17:8-15)

And then there was this in this covenant pledge of God giving Himself to the people the first name He gave to them after they had escaped Egypt. They came to a spring to drink but it was poisoned and there, God cured the waters so they could drink in from them in health. Over those waters God tells them that if they will obey his voice and keep his commands, he will not put on them any of the diseases that they saw him lay on the Egyptians when He was delivering them out of slavery. And the name in pledge He gives to them as a covenant was...

- *Yahweh/Jehovah - rophah* – Saying, **I am The Lord that heals thee** (Exodus 15:26).

Now If we had the time we could follow the people of Israel all they way through their wandering in the wilderness, then into the promised land, then through the period of the Kings (from David, Solomon, Hezekiah, the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, we are now hundreds of years into their experience as the people of God) and we could go all the way down to the time of Daniel and the period of Jewish captivity

in Babylon and in all these periods we could demonstrate how God continued to offer to his covenant people Israel this promise and provision of health and healing for their bodies. It was theirs because God had pledged himself to them in this way.

When the Lord Jesus came to Israel, one of his missions was to demonstrate that he was the Messiah/King of Israel and that He had come to bring to them the pledge of God in covenant relationship. So, if you study Christ life you will see Him offering Himself to the people and demonstrating Himself before the people in such a way that He fulfilled these compound names of the covenant God in Israel to the Jews.

**Jehovah Ro'eh - The Lord our Shepherd** – Jesus we are told looked upon the people with compassion as sheep without a shepherd. He again declares that he has come for the lost sheep of Israel. In **John 10:11** the Lord Jesus proclaims, “*I am the Good Shepherd.*” *I give my life to the sheep.* He feeds us, leads us and cares for us. He is our king.

**Jehovah Jireh - The Lord will provide** – Many times in the story of Christ’s earthly ministry we see Him providing for the needs of those he is with. For example - He multiplies the loaves and the fishes to feed the 5000 and in so doing He is presenting Himself as the Lord who provides.

**Jehovah Shalom – The Lord our peace.** From the outset of his birth and the angelic announcement He came to bring us into peace, wholeness. When the disciples were out on the boat with him and there was a storm ready to sink the boat, Christ was asleep in the bow. And as he prepared to leave his disciples, He said to them in **John 14:27** *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you...* This was a provision of the covenant.

**Jehovah – tsidkenu – The Lord of our righteousness** – Jesus was the sinless man, perfect in every way. He showed us how life is to be lived justly. But He came not only to set an example but to be our righteousness, to give that life to us.

**Jehovah- shammah – The Lord ever present.** One of the wonderful things that Christ did was He brought into human view God living among us in flesh. He was God taking on our life and living it with us. After his resurrection and just before he ascended into heaven, he commanded us to go into all the world to preach his gospel and then He said to us, “*And behold I am with you even to the end of the age.*”

**Jehovah m-gadesh – The Lord who makes holy.** The Lord Jesus showed us this power while he walked on earth. Nothing in the minds of the Jew was more impure than a leper except maybe that of a dead body. The Lord Jesus touched lepers and cleansed them of their disease. And raised the dead releasing them from the decay of death. He makes the foulest clean. He makes us holy still - doesn't he?

**Jehovah Nissi – The Lord our banner of victory.** Every day the disciples walked with Jesus they had a growing sense that they were stepping into a future glory. They were planning for it. “Lord when you come into your kingdom grant that my sons may sit on your left and your right.” They were debating just before the last supper as

to which of them would be greatest in Christ Kingdom. Victory was written all over his power over Satan and Demons. But the cross seemed to crush all of that. Yet listen, it was at the cross where it seemed Satan had won that Christ shouted out in Triumph. *“It is Finished.”* He had conquered the payment of our sins. He had won us back from the defeat and destruction of our rebellion. He had vanquished the grave. **Now then - Jehovah Rophe – The Lord our healer.** No aspect of the Messiah, no expression of the covenant God who gives Himself to His people was more fully on display during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ than that of the Lord our healer.

Now I know that as Christians we look forward to Christ return, to going to heaven, to the opening up in eternity of the fullest expressions of Christ to our hearts. There we will enter into the culminating glory of this covenant relationship. There we will know Him as our king, our peace, our provision and provider, our righteousness, our ever present One, our holiness, our victory and victor, and as the our healer of bodies and souls in a way that we can only take slices of glory in now. It all come to us fully then.

But let me ask you? Is Jesus the covenant God who is ever Present with you here and do you comfort yourself in His presence by faith now? Does he offer to you His peace here and do you even now find peace in Him? And righteousness and holiness and victory and provision - is this also something right now in this life you claim and take advantage of by faith??? Do you? Can you present evidence, testimony of this today as well? Of course you do! Of course you can! **What would the Christian life be if we didn't; if you couldn't!!! It would be a farce and nothing but a bunch of empty words.** So now if you take from Jesus by way of covenant here on earth, at this present hour these provisions and pledges of His life that you will take from him in culminating full glory over there, you are living by faith. **But let me ask you... by faith are you... can you take him as healer too?** Of course, you can and of course you should! The Lord Jesus has covenanted, God has covenanted, pledged Himself to us for now and for all eternity just in this way. That is evidence!!!! That is evidence for faith to trustingly, expectantly go to Christ for your health and healing.

### **B. Looking at this Covenant from our side.**

From God's side He is the great I am. The Great keeper of the pledge. **From our side we are the children of the pledge.** We are the recipients of the what God gives to us from Himself, of Himself. Through faith in Jesus Christ we have been adopted into this covenant relationship where God has pledged Himself to us. Jesus died to pay for our sins and make us clean. He gave His life so that we may begin an unending life pledged to Him and He pledged to us. **Romans 8:32** says, *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?* What are these 'all things?' I would suggest these are the all things found in all that God has pledged Himself to be to us in covenant relationship with us.

This by the way is not us claiming miracles as some sign or miraculous wonder! There are those miracles performed by the Lord Jesus and by the Apostles in the early church that can call *signs and wonders*. These signs and wonders were presented before an unbelieving world as a way of establishing the authority and power of the message that was to be proclaimed to them. Not all signs and wonders are good by the way! In the gospels Jesus warns of the coming of the Anti-Christ at the end of the age deceiving people with *signs and wonders*. Eight different times the book of Acts refers to Lord Jesus and the Apostles attesting to themselves by many signs and wonders. And if you follow the history of missions and you will see often when the gospel message arrives in new areas it is attended by miraculous healings or signs and wonders. **But for the people of God, healing is not a proof of God's truth or a way that we seek confirmation of God's word.** We are his people and as His people healing is ours to claim on the basis of a ongoing relationship we have with Him. Healing is not given to us as a sign but as the expected gift of the covenant relationship we have with him. **This is why Jesus rebuked some of the Jews who came to him for a miracle or even for a healing. He rebuked them when they sought that work as a sign.** They were the people of God, the Israel of God, and as such healing was to be their expected portion. When they came seeking a sign they came before God as unbelievers and as a generation outside the covenant expectations. Seeking signs? He said they were wicked and adulterous – that is they were unfaithful to the covenant and were acting like those who had turned away from their covenant with God. In **John 4:47-50** we have the story of a Jewish nobleman who came to Jesus seeking healing for his son. Jesus tested him to see if he was coming in faith as a child of the covenant or if he was merely coming for a sign. *“there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. <sup>47</sup>When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. <sup>48</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.” <sup>49</sup>The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!” <sup>50</sup>Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.”* The child of the covenant believes the Word of promise and provision from God and believes that it is for him or her by right of relationship. That is a trusting expectant faith.

In **Matthew 15:21-28** we have the story of the Syrophenician or Canaanite woman. She was a gentile. She was not of the covenant people Israel. She came to Jesus to seek healing for her demon possessed daughter and the Lord Jesus says to this gentile woman that he had come for the lost sheep of Israel and that it was not proper to take the *children's bread* and feed it to the dogs. The woman found a promise still in his rejection. He came for lost ones and surely she qualified as a lost one too. And she thought even the little dogs eat the food that falls from the children's table. The Lord Jesus commended her hopeful faith and healed the daughter.

Now what Jesus had said to her is instructive for us. He has come to bring the covenant pledges of God to God's people. Here is the application...

**Application:** Listen carefully to what the Lord was saying, **healing was the expected claim of the children of the covenant.** It was the *bread to be given* to them. It was the children's daily bread. You don't wish for it like a sign. That is unbelief. You call for it by faith and claim it as a child almost assuming it, expecting it. Through the blood Jesus Christ, the blood of the new covenant we have been brought into the family promises, the covenant provisions of God. And it is clear for God's children that one of those provisions is for the health and healing to our bodies. We are not to think that our salvation brings to us only spiritual benefits and not to benefits to our minds and emotions and our bodies as well. We are not to think that what is promised us most fully in heaven is not provided sufficiently for us according to our need and our faith here on earth, in this life. The evidence of this Covenant is but one light guiding our faith to expectantly trust God for His provisions of health and healing in this life. So that we can offer up the PRAYER OF FAITH...

**Application:** Seek healing only as you seek Him. Seek it only in that You seek the Life of God supplied for all your needs. Take note again that all these provisions of the covenant come to us out of all God has pledged Himself to be to us. Now how silly to seek for peace, holiness, righteousness, victory, provision apart from seeking God Himself. That is the essence of a false religion. The pursuit for any of these things without God, or incidental to God is religion at its worst. The same to with physical healing. We are not to be asking in faith just for a physical bonus, a boost to our bodies so we can enjoy life more. We seek it as we seek Him and we seek it so that we may know and enjoy Him in every way... ... even in the way of His giving to us out of His own life - health.