

No. 22, *Physical Healing*

For some time we have been considering the subject of *The Miracle in Scripture*, having dealt with it from various perspectives, seeking to cover some main features of the topic. In the course of the study we gave some time to look specifically at the issue of the miracle of tongues-speaking, simply because it is such a prevalent matter in today's religious & spiritual climate.

But in thinking on this issue of the prevalence of tongues-speaking my mind was turned to another prevalent issue in the realm where there is such a focus on the miraculous, namely – the issue of *healing*. Along with the emphasis on tongues-speaking in the modern Charismatic/Pentecostal movement there is a tremendous emphasis on healing. Indeed, it is true to say that it is this emphasis on healing that dominates the movement, motivates it, and actually is the reason for its popularity and acceptance. Innumerable are the examples, the quotes, etc that could be given to highlight the fascination that exists among hordes of people with the subject of physical healing. It is this emphasis on physical healing that has built the mega-churches that exist in various parts of the world; that has generated the multi-million financial empires that leading charismatic personalities control. Let's face it – people like to be healthy so, when experiencing sickness of some kind, they are very ready to entertain the teaching that it is always God's will to heal. Thus, they are very ready to give full support to a movement that convinces them that they can be brought into a state of perfect health.

However, let me state at once that the emphasis on healing within charismatic circles is unscriptural, dangerous and gravely damaging to the soul. Consequently, I felt that before we conclude this study on *The Miracle in Scripture* I should give some attention to this matter of physical healing, simply examining the Scripture and setting before some basic facts as revealed to us by the Lord.

THE TEACHING OF THE CHARISMATIC ON PHYSICAL HEALING IS A DENIAL OF THE BASIC TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE ON THE FALL OF MAN

Charismatic teachers state that all that is good is the work of God, while all that is bad is the work of Satan. On this premise they then proceed to teach that sickness is bad and therefore all sickness is from the devil. Their conclusion then is that sickness is *never* God's will for His people. One so-called "faith healer" wrote – "*Jesus clearly saw sickness as Satan's work.*"

This kind of teaching reveals that the Charismatic/Pentecostal movement is theologically bankrupt – of even the most basic tenets of Biblical truth. The teaching that all sickness is from Satan and is never God's will is a denial of the doctrine of the fall of man and the placing of the curse on all creation. Note the words in Gen 3: 19 – "*dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.*" Ponder these words carefully – they were the announcement by God that man's disobedience and sin had introduced the situation where physical life in this world for every individual would cease at a certain point. But think of the import of these words – they clearly infer that as a result of a certain process would man return to dust. What is that process? It is the process that involves one way or another, the experience of sickness, disease, ill-health etc, culminating in death itself. Note therefore –

(a) **The subjection of man to sickness and death was imposed by God.**

It is a denial of Scripture to teach that the devil placed the curse on the world, including sickness and death. Rather, it was God who withdrew the special blessings that made Eden paradise, and changed the whole course of life by a single judicial pronouncement recorded here in v.v. 16-19. While Satan instigated the fall of man, the curse that was imposed was God's judicial act and His righteous judgment for man's disobedience and sin.

(b) **Note also that the whole human race is subject to the curse.**

The sorrows, trials, sickness, calamities of this life all stem from the fall and are experienced alike by all men, saved & unsaved. All mankind, believers and unbelievers, share the same fallen earth, the same altered physical life, the same propensity to sickness, the same hostile disease ridden environment, and the same susceptibility to disease and decay, 1 Cor 15: 22 – "*In Adam all die.*" The teaching here is clear – all men, saved or unsaved, are subject to death by virtue of their natural union with Adam

The point is that it is totally wrong to teach that it is never the will of God for a believer to be sick – the curse is on the entire race just not on a section of it. God is speaking to Adam & Eve in Genesis 3 as the progenitors of the whole human race.

(c) **Note also that the curse imposed on the human race contained an element of mercy.**

By these physical calamities, including illness and sickness, the Lord has set a constant reminder to man of his lost estate. It is a fact of life and experience that many a man has been brought to repentance when he became subject to some sickness. Thus, it is a denial of this particular purpose of God in subjecting man to sickness for Charismatic preachers to teach that sickness is of the devil.

Charismatic teachers would have a situation where the curse is reversed without having men face the cause of it all – the entrance of sin at the time of the fall. Cf. Matt 4: 3 – note that Satan's first temptation was of this very kind. He suggested that Christ should turn the stones into bread. The temptations took place in the wilderness, v.1, thus in an environment where the effects of the curse were most apparent. Thus, Satan was essentially suggesting that Christ should reverse the effects of the fall *without dealing with the cause of it all – the fall and sin.*

(d) **Finally, note that the curse imposed on the human race is only removed through Christ the Redeemer.**

Note v.15 – the promise of the redeemer, who would deal with Satan the instigator of the fall of man that brought in the curse. But this promise of the conquest of Satan also contained in embryonic form the promise of the deliverance from the totality of the curse. See v.v. 20 – note the name Adam gave his wife: *Eve*, which means "living". Here is the evidence that Adam already had saving faith. He had just heard the pronouncement of the sentence of death, but he gives his wife this name indicating his faith that the promised Redeemer would bring life to men. Note then v.22 – this was done to reveal the means by which redemption would come: through the death & blood-shedding of a substitutionary Redeemer. The final outcome of redemption is ultimate deliverance from the curse, but only at the coming of Christ in glory, Rom 8: 23.