

THE King's Highway

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SPECIAL NOTICE

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EDITORIAL

DIVINE HEALING.

Rev. Joseph H. Smith.

Question: Is healing in the Atonement?

Answer: Yes. And in fact, though they are not all in equal place, every one of our blessings, as life and health and food and raiment and friends and employment and protection—yea, and all the rest are ours **only** because of the Mediation and Atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Man merits or deserves nothing at all of himself. And since his **Fall** into sin, and his coming under the death sentence, he could have nothing at all but for the Blood of "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." This applies to what sinners receive of God's bounty in physical, and material blessings, unsought for and unthanked for, and to their opportunities for salvation as well as that which is reached by the best of saints upon condition of faith and prayer. That the Father causes His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the evil as well as the good, is due to the Atonement of His one only begotten Son.

But it will not be hard to see that **all things do not hold the same or equal place in the Atonement.** For instance, we recognize that the salvation of adults and responsible persons does not occupy the same place as that of infants and imbeciles (and some think ungodly heathens). The salvation of these has place of unconditional security in the Atonement, whereas the merits of Christ's death are only received by ourselves upon certain conditions. The irresponsible and unaccountable are **covered** by the Atonement; but we can only **reach** its benefits by penitence and prayer and faith.

Moreover, some blessings of the Atonement have such high place that only saints can reach them from mountain peaks of faith, while some are so near the ground that even an under-serving and ungrateful sinner is in danger of stumbling over them into hell.

Healing holds a high place in the Atonement. So high that as the blessing of entire sanctification is too high for us

to expect even a penitent sinner to reach it, and the blessing of forgiveness too high for us to hand down to or minister to one that does not believe in the Lord Jesus, that we wonder sometimes whether we are justified or authorized in proffering the blessing of Healing to all men promiscuously without reference to their relations to Christ or to their life and conduct. However that may be we are convinced of Healing's high place in the Atonement by these considerations:

1. In the olden times it was listed among the **special** privileges and blessings of **God's own people.** And the promises thereof were peculiar to Israel.

2. It figured too among the promises and prophecies of Christ's Redemption.

3. It held a larger place in Christ's own ministry than that of any other of His physical and earthly blessings.

4. Faith for healing is specially encouraged, and strongly urged in the New Testament.

And all this may be due to the fact that sickness bears such a close analogy (as well as oftentimes a close relationship) to sin; and that it is the precursor of death and the occasion of so much alarm as well as distress among men.

But, we note in the next place that **Healing Does Not Hold the "Highest Place in the Atonement."** That it does not rank with Salvation—either as to Justification or Sanctification will appear from a few reflections.

First, It is found sometimes almost upon the plane of the unconditional benefits of the Atonement in that not only irresponsible children, but likewise **adults without any agency of prayer or faith upon their own part are frequently healed by the ministry of others. But this never occurs with regard to the latter's salvation.**

Second, God's healings (for though all are through the Atonement, these are of various sorts) are sometimes administered through purely natural means and often by unspiritual agents, but this is again never so as to Salvation.

And third, Healing is frequently received without any return of glory to God, as in the case of the nine lepers; and without any change for the better in the spiritual or moral life of the person healed. Hence we see that while healing is doubtless in the Atonement, it has not the same place there as Salvation, nor is its ministry to be compared to that of the latter.

This will further appear by remembering:

1. **The Lord made Healing subsidiary to Forgiveness,** speaking thus: **"That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins,"** He said unto the sick of the palsy, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk."

2. In cases like that of the **man born blind, and probably too, that of the one leper that returned to glorify God for his healing, Christ followed up his healing with the greater work of saving the man's soul.** And 3. God's willingness to save all men and His will to sanctify His children is heralded without any qualification; but with regard to the physical. He indites his servant to write that

we say: If the Lord will that we shall live, etc." **There is no "if" at all about His will with respect to our souls, but there is with respect to our bodies.**

And particularly we remark that **Healing has no such place as Holiness in the Atonement.** For it is only to, and of Christians, and Christians too, that are measuring well up to present light, that God's Word declares, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." **Only for the Church** it is said that Christ gave Himself that He "might sanctify and cleanse it." **But the Atonement blessings of healing are often vouchsafed to those who are in a back-slidden state,** and to some who though forgiven of their sins are not yet wholly consecrated as is required in order to receive the sanctifying benefit of the Blood of Christ.

And let us call attention to this fact, that when in **Ephesians, 4th chapter, the Apostle Paul names those of the Spirits gifts which are bestowed "for the perfecting of the saints," he does not include tongues or miracles, etc., and stops short of Healings.** So that save in an analogical or illustrative way, the good work of Divine Healing **does not class at all** with the still more gracious work of Sanctification.

Now there are **a few suggestions**—(not to say exhortations or admonitions) we might offer in conclusion. The **first** of these is that since Healing is in the Atonement, we encourage prayer and faith for the same everywhere. And while not denying the possible place of a "Luke, the beloved physician," nor of a prescription (like that of the apostle of a little wine) for medicinal use, that we nevertheless seek deliverance from slavery to doctors and drugs, and look first and ever foremost to God Himself as our Healer.

The **second** is that we stress the **faith** for healing **more than gifts of healing.** Few possess the latter. (The writer knows not any.) **All Christians are called and invited to the former.** Therefore it is not incumbent upon us, nor is it wise, to be running our sick bodies or our sick friends off for miles to some who are running healing propagandas—for this takes the eyes off the Atonement and fixes them on some human being who may be seeking fame, or to make merchandise of the afflictions of men whereas when we are depending upon **prayer** for healing, rather than gifts of healings, we are encouraging the life of faith at our home location or church, and are honoring the name of Jesus alone.

The **third** is that if "oil" be used, whether medicinally (as Adam Clarke suggests) or symbolically (as many good and holy people believe is intended) let us keep always in mind that it is **not said the "oil," but that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up."** At the best the "oil" (if used symbolically), has no more to do with the healing than the water of Baptism has to do with the washing away of sins in Baptism, or the wine in the Lord's Supper has to do with the cleansing of the soul or the infusion of spiritual life. These all are but symbols of the true grace.

And fourth, let us be zealous and diligent to follow up all cases of healing of others in answer to our prayers with ef-