

The Lord Our Healer – Part 2

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Last week we considered from the Word of God, God's willingness to make the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ extend to the whole man. We saw that text in 3rd John 1:2, "Beloved, my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is that you prosper and be in health as your soul prospereth." And, therefore, concluded that it is the general will of God that His people be well and strong for that purpose of service that He gives. But we also concluded that He is sovereign, that He sits upon the throne, that He reigns, and that He rules. We do not know all the answers to this question. There are a great many questions which now we only see through a glass darkly. But we did see that it was the will of God that our Lord Jesus be known to us by His lovely name, Jehovah Rapha, the Lord that Healeth Thee. We did not have time however to understand the Biblical basis of our confidence that the Lord would heal us.

And so, tonight I am suggesting to you that we study together what the Word of God has to teach about the grounds of our expectancy Biblical grounds that we have for seeing the Lord Jesus Christ as our healer. His name we have seen. But this evening, if we begin in Galatians the 3rd Chapter, and then make our way through other Scriptures, I feel that we will establish the Biblical grounds for our confidence that He is the Lord for the body. While you are turning, may I remind you of this, that He has made full and complete perfect provision for our healing by the first fruit of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is in the heavenlies at the right hand of the Father. And one day we are going to have bodies like unto His own body of glory. Now this we know. There is no question about that. Everyone understands that in the atonement of Christ is provision for glorified bodies, bodies like unto His own body of glory. We know that. And so when we say that the sacrifice of Christ extends to the physical, we are simply stating that which everyone expects and everyone assumes, because in that day we shall receive these bodies of immortality, glorified bodies, incorruptible bodies, like unto His own, of flesh and bone. For then the life shall be in the spirit, and not in the blood. The question is what grounds do we have to expect our Lord to meet our needs in the interim, from the time our sins are pardoned until we lay down these mortal bodies, these bodies that are corruptible.

Do we have grounds to believe the Lord is desirous and willing? Now furthermore we must remember that all pastors pray for the sick. You understand that now. Every one, every pastor, that serves the Lord, prays for the sick. No question about that. Long before I understood what I am seeking to share with you what I am tonight, I prayed for the sick. Of course I prayed in unbelief, I prayed with a sincere heart but no grounds of expectancy, and no understanding of the Word. I prayed nevertheless. And so every pastor prays for the sick. The question is, what grounds does he have, what does he see in the Word and in the provisions of God's grace. It is not a question as to whether or not the atonement of Christ extends to the physical. That is established. We know by His resurrection the first fruits of the resurrection that that fruit which is to follow will be similar, and it has been stated. We further know that all pastors, all preachers pray for the sick. All Christians do, one way or another, either in expectant confidence or they pray because of a sense of responsibility and duty.

But what are the Scriptural grounds. This is the issue before us tonight, and I am proposing that we begin in the 3rd Chapter of Galatians, and I assume your Bible is open to this portion. I think perhaps if we begin with the 7th verse we will have enough of the context: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: The blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:7-14).

Now the question that we must see in this text, the 13th verse, is this: Is the curse of the law identically the same as the penalty of the law? The wages of sin is death said the prophet. The soul that sinneth it shall surely die is the statement that has

been made and has been extended to the point where our Lord Jesus Christ, that He might deliver us from the penalty of sin, namely death, died in our place instead. So I say it again, the question is this, Is the penalty of the law, death, identically the same as the curse of the law? For we understand from this 13th verse that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. Now if the curse is the same as the penalty, then we understand that we have to assume that He has redeemed us from the consequences of sin in terms of eternal separation from Him in hell. But if, from the Word of God, we can establish that the curse is related to the penalty, but is not identical with the penalty and that Christ has redeemed us from the curse as well as the penalty, then we will see more perfectly the nature of this redeeming grace. And, therefore I am asking you to think with me clearly and definitely as to the answer to this question from the Word of God, Is there a distinction between penalty and curse. We understand that the penalty is death. "The day thou eatest thou shalt die" (Gen. 2:17). But what is the curse? Is it identically the same? If so, our question is answered. If there is a difference, we ought to understand that difference from the curse of the law.

Now it is very profitable that we should find the first mention of any key word. And if you will turn to Genesis, the 3rd Chapter, you will find the first mention of this word, curse. One of the hermeneutical principles of the word is the first mention principle. Find out the first time a word is used, understand its context, its setting, how it is employed by the Holy Ghost, and you have a great deal of light upon the future use of that word. For instance, we find the word repentance in the 6th Chapter of Genesis when it says, It repented God that He had made man. He changed. It is not emotion. There was sorrow there, but it was a change of mind and attitude in regard to man. And thus we extend the word, repentance, clear down to its last use and it means change your mind, change your intention, and change your purpose, your direction. So, with the word curse, when we find out where it is first used, then we will have some idea as to its future use in the Word. And I have asked you to turn to the 3rd Chapter, and we are here now. We will begin our reading with the 12th verse. This gives us the setting: "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:12-14).

Changed condition, changed function. But did it imply death? Did it imply cessation of being, or end of punishment, or in the sense of immediate matter, or is it changing the conditions from those which had been seemingly honorable to some degree at least, to that which is unpleasant and degrading and continuous. I think it is quite obvious here that the curse changes the condition from one of some measure of blessing to one of an endured and continued punishment. The curse is extended in vs 15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: (notice) cursed is the ground for thy sake;" (this does not sound like death, does it? It sounds like a changed condition.) (Gen. 3:15-17)

What is the effect of the curse? In the case of the serpent it was that he should go upon his belly and eat dust, degraded and thus dishonored. But now with the ground, what is it? Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns, thistles shall it bring forth to thee. And so there is an aspect of continuous suffering and an extended penalty, a changed condition, from that which was pleasant to that which was unpleasant.

Notice, the curse extends to man's labor. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return" (Gen. 3:19).

Thus we find that the curse in this first instance is a change of condition, from pleasantness to unpleasantness, from health to suffering, from joy to sorrow, from fruitfulness to meagerness, from freedom from thorns and thistles to the place where they shall be a continual harassment to man in his efforts of agriculture. I think this gives us a little insight.

And would you say at this point we have succeeded in establishing the fact that they are not the same. Well if you will see that we have begun to establish it, then we are at least making some progress. My proposition is that there is a distinction between curse and penalty. The penalty means death, and curse means a foretaste of that death that is extended over somewhat of a long period for the purpose of inducing man to change from the course that was leading to death. In other words, it is a foretaste of death in order to be brought to the position of repentance so that he can be forgiven. God, in other words, is gracious, giving this little period of time so that there could be an adjustment made that would spare him from the necessity of bringing the penalty into fulfillment.

Now let us see if this is extended even further. I will ask you to turn to Deuteronomy, chapter 28. We are now brought into a situation where Moses is taking leave of Israel, going up into Mt. Ebal, where he will die and go into the presence of the Lord, and we are face to face with his last words to the people with whom he has borne so patiently and for so many years, 40 years. "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto: and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee" (Deu. 28:1-11).

Let us go down to vs 15: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses (and here is the next use of the word) all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: (the very opposite of blessing then. Notice the extended quality to this curse. Not instantaneous as death would be, but extended, continued, projected.) Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, (oh, now we are seeing another element introduced) until thou be destroyed" (Deu. 28:15-20). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). The curse comes at the time the law is broken, and the curse penalty is pronounced until the penalty is carried out. I say a foretaste of the penalty given for the purpose of inducing those under the penalty to repent that they might be forgiven and restored to fellowship with Him. Now if this then is the case. And I am personally sure that it is, and then we would see that the curse from which we have been redeemed by the death of Christ on the cross is something in addition to our having been pardoned for past sins. And not simply a redundant expression of the same thing. And if this is true then the children of God ought to understand this. And they ought to realize this, that they should share in the heritage of the Lord, and enjoy the blessing that has been provided for them by the Cross work of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so it is extremely important. I am not just dealing with words. I am not a purist, simply trying to establish a point for no good purpose. I am trying to lay down here part of the emancipation proclamation that was issued at Calvary. Whatever the curse is, it is from the curse of the law that we have been redeemed, and because Christ hung on a cross and it was said, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a cross" (Gal. 3:13).

And therefore I am extending it again a pressing the point for I want you to see it. The penalty is destruction. The penalty is death. But, because God is gracious, from the moment one earns the penalty until the penalty is carried out there is a foretaste of it given in the form of a curse. So that at any time during this period that one becomes shall we say weary of the curse and aware of the nature of the penalty because of it, in repentance, in return, God will pardon and forgive, and they can be spared

the penalty. And thus the good office work of the curse was to give to man an insight into the nature of the penalty. This is extremely important to you in your life day by day.

Let us notice now, beginning with the 21 verse, this further extension of the penalty. "The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, ... (vs 22) The Lord shall smite thee... (Now we are coming to the body, and its ills, and its needs,) with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish" (Deu. 28:21-22).

And here again, destruction, perishing, are set in contrast to the curse.

Then we will come down to vs 27: "The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods (or hemorrhoids), and with the scab, and with the itch...vs 28: The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and a blindness, and astonishment of heart:..." (Deu. 28:27-28). And then in vs 35: "The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head" (Deu. 28:35).

Well, I think this gives us insight into the nature of the curse. It is going to touch the field. It is going to touch the flock. It is going to touch the family, the children. It is going to touch possessions. It is going to touch the body. And it is going to come, being allowed from the Lord, upon those that are under the penalty, in order that they might have an inducement to seek for forgiveness and pardon.

Let us go then back to Galatians. I think with this before us it may help us to see our text. Yet once again. Chapter 3 and vs 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." And I would have you see this allusion now, or statement rather; for it is not an allusion. Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Do you know where the first picture of the Cross in the Bible is to be found?

I would suggest that when you have opportunity you read it carefully. We will turn to it now. Exodus, the 12th Chapter, if you please. I think you can see in just a brief moment something of what is here. The first picture of the Cross. And I will read again a somewhat extended portion, beginning with the 3rd vs: "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Exo. 12:3-6).

(And now notice, two things are done with the lamb.) "And they shall take the blood... (Remember this. We are talking now about the blood) and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, where in they shall eat it. When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exo. 12:13). For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. And let us understand that it was the pouring out of the blood of God's dear Son that made atonement for our sins. Had our Lord Jesus not died, then there would have been no redemption. It was necessary for Him to die and to shed His blood that we be redeemed for it is the shedding of blood that makes atonement for the soul.

But let me ask you, if all we secure from the death of Christ is deliverance from the penalty of sin, and that by the shedding of blood, why was it necessary for our Lord to endure nine excruciating hours of agony? The first three, in preparation for the cross, when they crushed on His brow that crown of thorns. It was not the blood that dripped from the spear points of the thorns that made atonement for the soul, for there was no pouring out of life there. It was just that beginning of agony. The plucking of the beard, and the buffeting of the face, and then being taken and scourged with the cat-o'-nine tails, ripping the flesh from His back, as the thongs with pieces of glass, bone, and stone tore at the flesh. Certainly it was not the blood that came from His wounded back that carried with it His life. Why was this necessary if it is simply the shedding of the blood. You recall what happened to the Lamb. The knife of the priest, or the knife of the head of the house flashed, and the blood was caught in a basin, and the life of the lamb came forth with the blood, and the blood was put on the doorpost, and it was when the angel of death saw the blood that he passed over the first born in that house. If it was always secure from the death of

Christ, as atonement of past sins, and redemption from the penalty of the law, (my question is,) Why was it necessary for Christ to endure three agonizing hours of suffering before He was nailed to the cross, and six hours on the cross? For it was 3 hours until 12, and then 3 hours of darkness, until He died. Why, I say, were these nine hours necessary if all we secure is the remission of past sins which came from the shedding of blood? Why could not the spear of the soldier in the garden have been thrust into our Lord's side there on the garden path? There would have been the giving forth of His life. There would have been the shedding of His blood. And it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. But the answer is seen here.

We notice in this 7th verse very explicit directions were given for the blood of the Passover lamb, but equally explicit directions were given for the body of that lamb. Now notice in vs 8: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire..." (Exo. 12:8). Have you ever seen in picture, or had described for you, the manner in which the Oriental until this day, the Arabian, the Lebanese, and others, who live in somewhat primitive state, will roast the lamb over an open fire? Well first the lamb is prepared, and then a long rod is placed through the body in such a way that it can be turned. But in order that the fire may get into the inside cavities, usually a little cross stick is placed to spread the breast in such a way that the fire can penetrate into all of the flesh, that it might roast the more evenly, and the more quickly.

And I said, Where is the first picture of the cross? And I see it right here. When this lamb was placed on a rod, the cross stick to spread the breast, so that as it was there on the forked stick over the coals, it could be slowly turned and the flesh could be roasted. And here you see the picture of the cross. Hours were spent, how many I do not know. I presume from my own experience in Africa that if we were roasting a lamb over an open coal fire we would allow six to eight or nine hours for it to be done, because there would be a considerable loss of heat. But that is just a beside-the-point. But here is a provision being made. This is a picture of what is taking place and what is transpiring.

Now, can you see this? Here are a people that have been slaves. You know something about the diet that they would have had; if they were forced to make bricks without straw, there is every reason to suppose that they would have been on starvation rations. And there could have been all the accompanying diseases of malnutrition. There would have been the injured: Those that had been hurt in the construction projects, those that had been bruised by the long whips of the slave masters, those that had had diseases, warping, twisting the flesh. Here were a people that had been nearly 4 hundred years in slavery, and they were to be delivered. Now, we are aware of the fact that there were twelve tribes, but I must admit that when I first began to think of Israel going out of Egypt I thought of thirteen tribes. There were the twelve and then there was the ambulance corps that brought up the litter cases, because they were going to take them all and there would have to be someone to bring the cripples, and someone to bring the ill and the diseased, for they could not have been left. Obviously, God protected them from the angel of death, but what about the weak, the sick among them? Well can you see the picture? Here is the lamb being roast, and the hour is come when all the family, all of the family gather around it, and they began to eat. And when they have finished the lamb, and there was to be none of it left. And if any of it was left, it was to be burned with fire. What reason, I do not know. But it was that it might be, I think, that the provision thus is for the redeemed people, the ones that are under the blood, the covenant people. But here you will see the family gathered, the cripple, the sick, the infirm, those that have the curse of the law as we found it described with consumption, and fever; and all the other things. And as they eat the flesh, they are slowly but definitely healed. So that when the hour comes for departing from Egypt there is not a sick person in all their number. And this is the express statement of the Psalms. I do not have the reference here; I believe it is Psalm 105, and you will find it. There was not a sick person among - in all their number. I do not find it right at the moment, but it brought them forth — oh yes, vs 37: "He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes." This is the testimony, that when 2 million people left Egypt, there was not a feeble person among them.

Does this mean something to your heart? Does this carry meaning to you? Now, where was the source of it? Was it from the blood? I think not. For the only thing the blood was to do was to be a witness to the angel of death. Where then was this life? Where then was this strength? Where then was this healing? that came to this slave people that prepared them for this long pilgrimage? I would like to believe that it was from the body of that lamb that was suspended over the fire, and which the families partook. It gave to us then a picture that we have seen here in Galatians, the 3rd Chapter, and again I want you to return to it, that the truth might be tied in as we move step by step in our thinking.

Christ also hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. And so, for hours, the body of the lamb, the blood of which has been shed and sprinkled on the door post to protect against the angel of death, the body I say of that lamb is suspended on a cross over a fire in order that the people that are under the blood might partake of the flesh of the lamb and be strengthened for the journey that is before them.

Now I think if you will go with me to Isaiah, Chapter 53, you will see a further insight into the oft debated and argued portion here in this wonderful redemption chapter; "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:4-5). What part of the suffering of Christ was the stripes? Was it from the stripes that His blood was shed and His life was poured out for the atonement of sin? I think not. It was in that first of the agony that He began to suffer about six o'clock that morning.

May I point out to you then this, that all of the suffering from six in the morning when He was bound, buffeted and scourged, until three in the afternoon was the period of time in which our Lord was identifying Himself with us and accepting the curse of the law. The penalty of the law was death. The curse of the law was a foretaste of the penalty, endured before the penalty was afflicted. And so from 6 in the morning until 9, He had these several things happen to Him. First, the stripes, and the stripes to which reference is made, are the cat-o'-nine tails wielded by a vigorous and probably vicious executioner who would so, and we are told by some of the ancient writers that men became so adept at the use of cat-o'-nine tails that by a simple flick of the wrist, at the last downward swoop they could actually tear the flesh right from the body. And so you will see our Lord Jesus, having the stripes laid to His back at six in the morning. For Pilate sent Him out to be scourged. This meant how many times. Sometimes they were dead within nine. Sometimes it would go to 19. Sometimes to 39 stripes. But it says here that with His stripes we are healed. It did not say that we were delivered from the penalty of sin. That is by the shedding of blood. And the blood that was shed incidental to His being bruised with the stripes was not the blood that carried His life to the satisfying of the penalty of the law. It is a foretaste of it. And so, this is the first aspect.

And I am suggesting to you there that during these 9 hours rather, from 6 on that morning of our Lord's death, until 3 in the afternoon, all that He experienced was part of the curse of the law, a foretaste of that which was to come. Now the Word expressly states, and again I refer to Galatians in the 3rd chapter and the 13th verse, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The purpose for crucifixion was to extend the agony and the pain of death. The individual had committed a capital crime, so heinous in the eyes of the authorities that he should not be dignified by an instant death of beheading, reserved for decent criminals. But because the one who was worthy of the cross was such, so vile, so horrible, the only way they could fit a punishment commensurate with the crime was to cause the death to be slow, and agonizingly slow. And so nails would be driven through the hands and through the feet and he would be hung upon a tree, there exposed, there undergoing constant pain, slowly dying. But imagine now with our Lord's case. His back has been laid absolutely bare by the cat-o'-nine tails. His face has been buffeted with the swelling the breaking incidental to that. The blood has gushed from the points of the thorns down His brow. And where was it that He was crucified? Well those of you that are acquainted with the history of our Lord's Day, know that Calvary was essentially a place of rubbish, refuse, and you can imagine from an Oriental city, any of you that have been there, something of what was accompanying that scene. You could probably hardly have seen the features of the One upon the cross, because of the mass of flies that would have been buzzing. So can you see, innumerable wounds puncturing the flesh, the continuous dripping of the blood, the bruise of the back, and all covered with flies. Now this is going on from 6 in the morning, until 3 in the afternoon.

And I want to ask you the question again. If all we receive from the death of Christ is atonement for past sins, why was it necessary for Him to undergo these nine excruciating hours? The answer that I give to you is this: Because our Lord Jesus not only wanted to deliver us from the penalty of what we had done, but He wanted to deliver us from the curse of the law as well. And the curse of the law was the foretaste of the penalty. And thus the only way He could deliver us was to take our place, to identify Himself with us, and the Father put us in Him so that what happened to Him happened to us.

Now then, I want you to see the picture. The Lord Jesus Christ was on the Cross for you. He was on the cross as you. He died not only to deliver you from the penalty of what you have done, but He died to deliver you from the tyranny of yourself, and to deliver you from the curse of the law. Would it help you if you saw that during these hours He was actually undergoing this? We have spoken now about bruises. We have spoken about stripes. But you might say, But what about diseases, what about organic diseases? Did our Lord have any taste of this? It has spoken of consumption, about heart trouble, of eye trouble, If you will go to Psalm, Chapter 22, and Psalm 38 with me briefly, I think you will see that our Lord, for it is a Messianic Psalm, it is referring to Him, actually had more than we have described. Here in the 22nd Psalm we find the Cross agony of our Lord Jesus uttered centuries before He actually went to the Cross. Here He is forsaken of the Father, for He is there under the curse of the Law and in your place and mine. In vs. 6, "I am a worm, and no man; are proach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him" (Psa. 22:6-8). And then, "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion" (Psa. 22:12-13). Here is all that hell can do. And then, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels" (Psa. 22:14). What better description is there of heart disease is there than this? "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me" (Psa. 22:15-17). Something of the agony that our Lord endured in these hours. Heart trouble, eyes dim that He could not see.

Now turn to Psalm 38. And here again a Messianic Psalm. He is there in your place, under the load of your sin, and He is crying as you would have cried. He is accepting your sin as His: "There is no soundness in my flesh.. There is no rest in my bones because of my sin... (And he has made my sin so completely His that He calls it His.) Mine iniquities are gone over mine head..." (Psa. 38:3-4). (But those iniquities were not of His committing, but of mine and He made them His.) Now notice in vs 5, "My wounds stink and are corrupt... I am troubled... I go mourning... my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart..." (Psa. 38:5-8). "My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it is gone from me. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off" (Psa. 38:10-11). Vs13: "But I, as a deaf man, heard not; I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth" (Psa. 38:13).

Do you see? Here in Messianic, prophetic utterance, our Lord Jesus is declaring something of that which He is going to undertake in providing your redemption. He is going to identify Himself with you, and in these hours of the Cross, He is going to endure the curse of the law, that He might redeem you from the curse of the law.

Now come back then to the Text in Galatians, and we will make the application to our own hearts.

What does this mean to you? Do you have faith to believe that the death of Christ was sufficient to atone for your past sins? Do you have faith to believe that it was possible for the Lord Jesus Christ, dying 19 hundred years ago to satisfy the Law's demands on your behalf? Do you have faith to believe that the death of a Jew, 19 hundred years ago, could so remove the wrath of God that you can go scot free into His presence, because you have received Him as your Lord and your Savior? Do you have faith to believe that? Does your heart testify to you that your sins are under His Blood, and that He died for you? This is the confidence of every Christian. Well if, my friend, you can believe that when you come up to that hour of death, that that great sword of justice that was aimed at your heart has been buried in His and that you can enter into His presence because He died for you, can you not believe that in those hours of agony He also delivered you from the curse of the law? Or is it so difficult for us to believe that He delivered us from the curse while we can easily believe He delivered us from the penalty.

Let me illustrate it. And I know of no other way than to use an illustration used with you before. Suppose you owed a mortgage, and the mortgage had in it a clause which said that until the mortgage was paid in full every Monday morning the one who held the mortgage would have a perfect right to bring to your home a basket of snakes, vipers, adders, cobras, anything that he could get. And so on Monday morning regularly a delivery man would come and would say, Here is your basket. And you would have to sign the receipt, and then he would open the door, pull the lid and dump the snakes into your

living room and you would spend all week chasing snakes and fearfully running from them. And this was the terms of the mortgage, and you were under dire threat as long as that mortgage was held it was necessary for you are to accept the snakes.

Suppose then someone would come to you and say, Look I love you, I love you enough that I am going to be willing to pay that mortgage. I am going to pay it in full so that you will no longer have this thing hanging over your head. And so he would give you a receipt paid in full, and thus release you from the terms of the mortgage. Now remember, the interest was that you would have to accept the snakes. You would not pay anything else on the mortgage, just accept the snakes. And you could not escape it until the mortgage was paid. So you get this lovely, signed, sealed, certified release from the mortgage. You put it there in your room, and you look at it, and say, Isn't it wonderful this mortgage is not over my head any more. I do not have to fear it.

But next Monday morning the delivery man comes. Knocks on the door, and you go and say, Look, I wasn't expecting you. The mortgage is paid. I don't know anything about a mortgage. I only know this, that I am supposed to bring you a basket of snakes every Monday morning, and it is Monday morning, and here is the snakes. Now take it. So you say, I don't want the snakes. I don't care what you want. I have been bringing them for a good many years. Now you take them. Sign it here. I don't think I should, but...Sign that paper. AND SO, intimidated and coerced you sign it and he opens the door and dumps them out. And this goes on for a few more weeks. Till finally the one who paid the mortgage comes to you and says, What are you doing? Well, I'm awfully glad that you paid the mortgage, but you know I'm getting awfully tired of fighting these snakes all the time. What are you doing, fighting snakes? Why of course that man brings them every Monday morning, and he says I'm supposed to take them, so I have been signing for them. I have been accepting. Don't you understand that I not only redeemed you from the penalty of the mortgage, but I redeemed you from the curse of it as well, the interest of it. And you do not have to accept those snakes. Well what should I do? Well the next time he comes you refuse. Well what do you mean? What grounds do I have to refuse? Listen. When I paid your mortgage, I not only paid the principal, but I accepted the interest as well, and I have paid that, and I took all of those snakes. And he says, See here. I have been bitten by the cobra, bitten by the adder, I have been bitten by the viper, and every snake that would ever harass you has bitten me, and you do not have to take them any longer because I took them for you. And the next Monday morning the delivery man comes and he has his basket of snakes, and this time the door is not opened. And through the keyhole you say, Now look, I have had the last of your snakes. You see the one who paid the mortgage has redeemed me from the curse. And not only the principal is paid, but he has delivered me from the interest that you have been demanding. And I utterly refuse any longer to play with your snakes. I am not going to do it, for I have been redeemed from the penalty of the mortgage. I have been redeemed from the curse of the mortgage.

Does this give you any insight? into the reason why He said, By His stripes we are healed. Because the Lord Jesus in those hours of agony let everything of the curse of the law fall upon Him. In those nine hours, He gathered together the suffering of the ages, and He endured it that He might redeem us not only from the penalty of our sin, but from the curse of the law as well. And therefore when we understand this, we begin to understand something of what is meant when it said, Healing is in the atonement.

Now does this mean that Christians won't get sick? Of course not, for they live in a world where sickness is everywhere. Does it mean also that there will not come a time when God may allow sickness to come? He did in the case of Epaphroditus. He did in the case of Timothy. Well you say, How can this be? I only know this. That God establishes principles, and God expects these principles to be acted upon. And God expects these principles to be obeyed. And when there is an exception He is prepared to do as He did in the case of Paul, when he had a thorn in the flesh, who besought the Lord three times, and then he got an explanation from the Lord as to why. And so it is my responsibility to teach principles, and the truth of the Word of God; and it is your responsibility to act upon those principles; and it is God's responsibility to explain why it may not work in the exceptions that He wishes to allow. But it is my responsibility to say, Thus saith the Lord. It is your responsibility to stand upon what the Lord says, and then He will move to meet. And when He finds that in His infinite wisdom there is reason why He cannot meet, then He will give adequate explanation and adequate grace. But we must understand the principles so that we have some foundation for our coming to Him.

And so I submit to you that the reason why you can go when sickness touches your body to your lovely Lord Jesus is this that He endured the curse of the Law. And you can say, Lord Jesus, there is sickness, there is heart trouble, there is weakness, this, whatever it is, has been taken by you. Now, unless you give me some sovereign revelation as to why I should accept it, then I will have to stand on the fact that you have redeemed from the curse of the Law and it is that redemption that I claim now, as the foundation of my confidence that you will meet me in this need and remove the cause of it in order that you may be glorified two ways, by what it has disciplined me to do, and by the glory you get from the removal.

Oh I am so glad that God has shown this truth to my heart. Now may I suggest that the reason that I am sharing it with you is that some ten years ago now, nine actually, when God wonderfully healed my eyes, wonderfully healed me of sinusitis; there was one condition that was only partially healed. And so I wondered about it. I had been anointed. I had been prayed for. And finally I had to come to the Lord and say, Lord, this just has not gone. It has not gone as I expected. There must be something You want to teach. And so through a suggestion that came from a book, in the hunger of my own heart, He drove me into that which I have been sharing with you. And incidentally I have never seen it written anywhere else; this makes no claim. I surely will find it before the week is out now that I have said it. I am making no claim to originality. But the point is this, that as the need in my own body pressed me to the Lord, I found that He could lead into a truth, and on the grounds of that truth I found the deliverance for which I have waited. And it was worth the wait.

Oh, I want you to understand today, dear heart, that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Now this is good news. This is good news. And may the Spirit of God just press it to your heart, and help you to lay hold upon it. But rather than to become concerned about your sickness at the moment, won't you become concerned about His grace and contemplate Him, and see Him until somehow in magnifying the name of the Lord, the wonder of all that He is dawns upon your heart, He gives you His faith, and you lay hold upon Him. Oh I am so glad tonight that I worship a risen, glorified Lord, who has redeemed us with full, complete, perfect redemption from the penalty of the law, from the power of sin, from the curse of the law. And it even includes a glorified body, a body like unto His own body of glory tomorrow just ahead. Isn't He a wonderful Savior? Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful Savior who has made full, complete, and perfect provision for His needy people through the pilgrimage.

Now reach out. He is passing by. Touch the hem of His garment. Just touch the hem of His garment. And let all the wonder of His grace and love fill and flood your heart, for there is everything in Christ, everything you need in this wonderful Lord, who loved you enough to give Himself for you.

Shall we bow in prayer? Our Father, we just love to boast on the Lord Jesus Christ and tell how wonderful He is, and Thou art for having given Him, and how complete the provision of Thy love is, and how much Thou hast done for us in Thy Son, and how glad we are that sinners, laboring under a conscience that burns with guilt, can find cleansing and pardon, and can begin again as children, born into the Father's family, with life and joy and peace. Oh, how wonderful it is, Father, that Thou hast anticipated that sinners would come with their sin and guilt and stand at the door of grace and plead for mercy, and Thou hast made a full provision for cleansing from past sins. And then we thank Thee, Father, that when children of Thine are weakened by their battle with temptation, and with the tyranny of their traits and nature, that they can come to the Cross and see that when the Lord Jesus died they died, and there is victory in our identification with Christ. And how grateful we are to Thee, Father, that when our bodies are filled with fever and sickness and weakness, and the decay of years and time, that we can come to Thee and find strength for our day, and strength and healing because the Lord Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law, and then when we contemplate that day, just ahead, when we put off this mortal and shall put on immortality, and put off this corruptible to put on bodies like unto His own body of glory, and then to ever be with the Lord. O Father of our Lord Jesus, we praise Thee, we worship Thee, we adore Thee, for Thou art the author of this great salvation. Thou hast given Thy Son. Thou hast allowed Him to come. Thou hast honored His death. Thou hast raised Him from the dead, and we praise Thee that Thou hast with Thy Son freely give us all things. And so tonight we would ask Thee to encourage the hearts of Thy people, and bless them as they lay hold of provisions of Thy grace, and as they reach out to touch the Lord Jesus as He passes by, yes just to touch the hem of His garment is enough to release His love and His power into needy expectant, waiting hearts. And so, Father, we pray that because we have been together, and because we have read and considered Thy Word and meditated upon its truth, that our Lord Jesus shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and Thy people shall see of the

provisions of Thy love and find them sufficient, and together we may rejoice that we serve the risen Christ, that He is just the same today as when He went away, that He has neither lost His power nor His love, but He is still mighty to save, and strong to deliver. So encourage the hearts of Thy people, quicken them with Thy faith, meet and answer prayer, and let the testimonies of those that lay hold of Thee become encouragement to still others. And should there be among us, Lord, those who have special need tonight, of mind of spirit, of body, whatever it might be, might they make known that, need and invite prayer and help. And we do thank Thee for Thy presence, and we thank Thee that Thou art here to bless. And so we will give Thee all the praise and all the adoration and worship that we can, waiting for the day when with new tongues we shall glorify Thee as Thou dost deserve. Until that time, O Lord, keep our eyes off of ourselves, and onto the Lord Jesus. Help us to see Him whom Thou hast exalted with a name above every name. And in seeing Him, we know, looking unto Him, there will be the release of His life into our lives that we might glorify Him.

Invitation.

Let us stand for the Benediction: Now may the grace, measureless, fathomless, boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion, the unveiling, the revelation, the comforting of the Holy Ghost, be and abide with each of us now and until we meet together around the feet of our glorified Lord. Amen.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, July 1, 1962 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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