

# Jehovah Rapha-The LORD Your Healer

Jehovah showed (Moses) a [tree](#) ([cross](#)-1Pe 2:24+)  
and he threw it into the ([bitter](#)) waters and the waters became [sweet](#).  
(Exodus 15:25+)

## RUN TO THE STRONG TOWER (Proverbs 18:10)...

**JEHOVAH RAPHA**  
**THE LORD YOUR HEALER**  
(The Great Physician)  
(Exodus 15:22-27+)

CONTEXT	TRUTH ABOUT GOD	TRUTH ABOUT MAN	TRUTH ABOUT HEALING
<p><b>What is the Progressive Revelation of God's Names?</b></p> <p><a href="#">Genesis 1</a> - <b>Elohim</b> - Creator - He created you for His glory &amp; you are His workmanship created for good works in Christ Jesus</p> <p><a href="#">Genesis 2</a> - <b>Jehovah</b> - I Am that I Am - see Exodus 3:1-14+</p> <p><a href="#">Genesis 14</a> - <b>El Elyon</b> - God Most High - Sovereign &amp; In Control of every event in your life, all filtered through His fingers of love &amp; designed to conform you to the image of His Son</p> <p><b>Genesis 15</b> + - Adonai - Lord, Master, Owner for you are not your own but bought with a price</p> <p><a href="#">Genesis 16</a> - <b>El Roi</b> - God Who Sees All your trials &amp; afflictions. Angel of Jehovah appears</p> <p><a href="#">Genesis 17</a> - <b>El Shaddai</b> - God</p>	<p>See column on context for additional truths about God</p> <p>Wilderness Journey click map to enlarge</p> <p><b>How does Israel arrive at bitter waters in Ex 15:22ff? Was it by "chance"?</b></p> <p>Ex 13:18, 21, 22+: Hence Elohim led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea &amp; the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt.... Jehovah was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, &amp; in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people."</p> <p>So clearly Israel is not at Marah by "chance" but by providence,</p>	<p><b>How does Israel respond to the first trial?</b></p> <p>Ex 14:10, 11+: As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked *, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. Then they said to Moses, "Is it because * there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness ? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt ?</p> <p>So we see that from the outset many in the camp had a grumbling, murmuring spirit, reflecting the fact that they really did not trust Jehovah to deliver them out of this "tight spot".</p> <p>How often we too are like Israel, having experienced Jehovah's redemption &amp; deliverance from bondage &amp; yet quickly shrinking back into unbelief thinking that the next trial is too big for Him to handle &amp;/or why did He even allow it in the first place?</p> <p>As the last notes of the glorious song of victory fade away...we come to the next scene...</p> <p><b>How does Israel respond to the next "wilderness test"?</b></p>	<p><b>What kind of disease does Jehovah Rapha heal? What is the meaning of the Hebrew word "RAPHA?"</b></p> <p>The answer to this question can be discerned from a survey of the 60+ uses (and additional discussion) of <a href="#">"rapha"</a> the Hebrew word for "heal". The 1st use (Ge 20:17) refers to <b>PHYSICAL</b> healing (of barrenness) by Elohim in answer to Abraham's prayer (The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Jas 5:16b+, <a href="#">Spurgeon</a>)</p> <p>The next use is translated "physicians" in (Ge 50:2). In 1Ki 18:30 we get a picture of what rapha means when Elijah <a href="#">"repaired (rapha)"</a> the altar of the Jehovah which had been torn down".</p> <p>In a scene similar to that at Marah's bitter waters Elisha "went out to the spring of water &amp; threw salt in it &amp; said, "Thus says the Jehovah, 'I have <a href="#">purified (rapha)"</a> these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer." (2Ki 2:21)</p> <p>So clearly <a href="#">rapha</a> conveys the idea of restoring something to its "normal" or useful state. In (2Chr 7:14) we see the famous statement "I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin &amp; will <a href="#">heal (rapha)"</a> their <a href="#">land"</a> So the land polluted by the sin of idolatry</p>

<p>Almighty - All Sufficient &amp; able to complete His good work in you</p> <p><b>Genesis 22 - Jehovah Jireh</b> - God Will See &amp; Provide the sacrificial offering</p> <p>Exodus 3:14+ - <b>Jehovah</b> the great I Am Who is anything &amp; everything I will ever need</p> <p><b>Exodus 12</b> + - Passover Lamb - Redeemed by the blood of the lamb</p> <p><b>Exodus 15</b> + - <b>Jehovah Rapha</b> - God your healer of all your diseases</p> <p><b>Exodus 17</b> +- <b>Jehovah Nissi</b> - Lord Your Banner Who wins the victory</p> <p>Exodus 31:13+, Lev 20:8+, Lev 21:8,15,23+, Lev 22:9,16,32+ - <b>Jehovah Mekeddeshem</b> - Lord Who Sanctifies You &amp; makes you holy unto Himself</p> <p><b>Judges 6</b> + - <b>Jehovah Shalom</b> - LORD is your peace even in the midst of tumult &amp; distress</p> <p>The longer Israel journeyed with God, the more He revealed to them His character &amp; His ways - a progressive revelation. When He delivered them from Egypt, Israel came to know God as Jehovah Who heard &amp; responded to their cry for deliverance because of His covenant with Abraham (Ge 15:13-</p>	<p>being led by El Roi Who sees all things, even before they happen &amp; Who as El Elyon is in total control of every detail even whether the water tastes bitter or sweet.</p> <p><b>So the question is "Why did God allow this situation?"</b></p> <p>The key is in Ex 15:25: "there He <b>tested</b> them"- How? With bitter water to see if they would trust Him as Jehovah Jireh their provider or whether in unbelief they would grumble!</p> <p>These same tests are allowed into our lives as believers. Will we trust Him? We must remember that the disappoints are also God's appointments &amp; every extremity is an opportunity to see God's great &amp; mighty deeds &amp; to learn something about ourselves.</p> <p>As <b>Max Lucado</b> put it... "Their jubilation over liberation soon becomes frustration over dehydration."</p> <p><b>Why does God test His children?</b></p>	<p>Ex 15:22, 23, 24+ Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea &amp; they went out into the wilderness of Shur ("wall") &amp; they went 3 days in the wilderness &amp; found no water. When they came to <b>Marah</b>, (means "bitter" Ru 1:20+) they could not drink the waters of <b>Marah</b>, for they were <b>bitter</b>; therefore it was named <b>Marah</b>. So the people <b>grumbled</b> at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink ?" (cf other <b>grumbling</b> (cf. Ex. 14:10, 11, 12+; Ex 16:2+; Ex 17:3+; Nu 14:2; 16:11, 41).</p> <p>Are you surprised that when after great victory, you experience defeat, discouragement, dissension or depression? Have you noticed how the spiritual "attacks" of the enemy (which are allowed by God) are intensified immediately after we experience spiritual victory? Be alert.</p> <p>So here we find Israel, 3 days after victory and in a "no water" situation with parched &amp; burning. Their physical plight made it easy to forget the past mercy &amp; provision of Jehovah which are "new every morning." When the pain comes it is easy to let your mind slip from the truth of past provisions isn't it? Israel's physical condition began to impact their spiritual joy. Nothing is more paralyzing than thirst. Place yourself in their sandals: dust &amp; rocks everywhere, children crying, nothing but sand &amp; more sand in your path &amp; then on the horizon the hope of water as someone sees a palm grove. Your expectations are high. Your anticipation almost uncontrollable. You bring the cool water to your lips &amp; spit it out because it is so bitter. All hope destroyed, what else is left but to grumble at Moses.</p> <p><b>But Who were they really grumbling against?</b></p> <p>Obviously Jehovah Who had led them by the "pillar of cloud by day &amp; the pillar of fire by night". (<b>See Shekinah glory of the LORD</b>) It's God's fault we're in this fine mess!</p> <p><b>How would you characterize Israel's spiritual walk at this time?</b></p>	<p>could be "healed" &amp; made useful &amp; fruitful by Jehovah Rapha (in answer to repentant prayer). In (2Chr 30:20) after Hezekiah prayed "Jehovah heard Hezekiah &amp; <b>healed</b> the people." In <b>context</b> this clearly refers to "spiritual" healing as they had been remiss in celebrating the LORD's Passover (cf 2Chr 30:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20)</p> <p>Eliphaz trying to "comfort" Job reminds him of the Almighty (Shaddai) saying "He inflicts pain &amp; gives relief. He wounds &amp; His hands also <b>heal (rapha)</b>." (Job 5:18, cf Dt 32:39; Isa 30:26; Hos 6:1+)</p> <p>Clearly God alone is the Source of all healing (even if He chooses to use human vessels or other means). Echoing a similar usage of <b>rapha</b> in the Psalms, David cries out to Jehovah Rapha "O Jehovah, be gracious to me. <b>Heal</b> (rapha) my <b>soul</b>, for I have <b>sinned</b> against You." (Ps 41:4+), here referring to <b>SPIRITUAL</b> healing.</p> <p>And in (Ps 107:20+) we see Jehovah answer sinful Israel's cry of distress - "He sent His word &amp; <b>healed</b> them &amp; <b>delivered</b> them from their <b>destructions</b>" In (Ps 147:3+) we see the tenderness &amp; compassion of Jehovah Rapha Who "<b>heals (rapha)</b> the brokenhearted &amp; binds up their wounds." referring to <b>EMOTIONAL</b> (spiritual) healing. (Je 6:14) speaks of false healing "They have <b>healed (rapha)</b> the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' but there is no peace." (<b>Click Jer</b> for all 11 uses). The 5 uses of <b>rapha</b> in Hosea refer primarily to spiritual healing of apostate Israel.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">&gt;&lt;&gt;&gt;&lt;&gt;&lt;&gt;</p> <p>In sum Jehovah Rapha, the Great Physician heals physical, spiritual &amp; emotional ills. Although physical healing is important, man's greater need is for healing of relationships &amp; our spiritual disease called sin. All around us we see the ravages of sin &amp; the need for healing. The need today is not much different from</p>
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21+; Ex 2:24+; Ex 3:7, 8+; Ex 6:5+)

What is the context for the revelation of Jehovah Rapha? What had just transpired?

The Lord's Passover

Ex 12:7,11,23,27+

'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood & put it on the two doorposts & on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it....Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, & your staff in your hand; & you shall eat it in haste --it is the Jehovah's Passover. (Jehovah Pesach)..."For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians & when He sees (cf [El Roi](#), **Jehovah Jireh**) the blood on the lintel & on the two doorposts, Jehovah will pass over the door & will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you....'It is a Passover sacrifice to Jehovah Who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.' " & the people bowed low and worshiped.

So Israel learned as Abraham had in Genesis 22 that God was Jehovah Jireh, the

Pr17:3 The refining pot is for silver & the furnace for gold but Jehovah tests hearts ([Mt Henry](#))

Ps 66:10-[note](#) For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. [Spurgeon](#) (cf Isa 48:10 [Spurgeon](#)) (Job 23:10)

For additional insight on the "thorny" topic of tests, see [Afflictions As Beneficial](#)"

Other times of testing:

Ge 22:1, Ex 16:4+, Ex 20:20+, Dt 8:1-3,16, Dt 13:3 // Jdg 2:22+, Jdg 3:1,4+, Ps 81:7+, Jer 9:7,Jas 1:3ff+, 1Pe 1:6,7+

God had one Son without sin, but He never had sons without trials. It is not known what quality grapes yield until they come to the wine press. When we are squeezed what comes out indicates what's on the inside! When you came to "Marah" this week, what came out? Grumbling like Israel or crying out like Moses?

What was Jehovah Jireh's provision for bitter water?

What greater provision did it foreshadow?

Ex 15:25+ Jehovah showed him a [tree](#) & he threw it into the waters & the waters became [sweet](#).

Most of Israel was walking by sight (& sense) & not by faith. They were aggravated & probably felt a bit mocked by God. They were free from slavery to Egypt but not to the lusts of their flesh & they looked at their circumstances rather than to the God of all circumstances. An easy trap for us all to fall into. How ironic that Israel fail to believe that He who could hold back the walls of water in the Red Sea could also provide a cup of water to drink. Who do I look to when the "bitter" trial comes? To God or to myself or anything but God? An "uplook" can make all the difference in the world on your "outlook". How easy it is for us all to forget that God is "with us" and "for us" when difficulties arise.

"Life is a great laboratory, and each experience x-rays our hearts to reveal what we really are. The waters of Marah revealed that the Jews were worldly, thinking only of bodily satisfaction; they were walking by sight, expecting to be satisfied by the world; they were ungrateful, complaining to God when trials came their way." Wiersbe's expository outlines on the Old Testament

When life gives you lemons make lemonade God's way - Cry out to Jehovah Rapha

How did Moses react to the "bitter" water trial Ex 15:25+?

Then he cried out to the Jehovah, and Jehovah showed him a [tree](#) & he threw it into the waters & the waters became [sweet](#). There He made for them a statute & regulation & there He [tested](#) them.

When we experience difficult circumstances & come to a place where disillusionment, despair, disappointment, or bitterness fill the "wells" of our life, we need to remember that God has the power to make the bitter into sweet. And remember that our bitter circumstances are there to test us & to teach us to trust the Almighty God to meet every need (cf Php 4:19+), but not every "want".

Contrast:

Isaiah's time as described in (Is 1:5, 6+) where Isaiah describes Israel as a physical body sick from head to heart to toe. How wonderful in that same chapter (Isa 1:16, 17, 18, 19, 20+)

Isaiah gives preview of a clear prophecy that by Messiah's "[scourging](#) we are [healed \(rapha\)](#)" (Isa 53:5+)

Peter ([see note on preceding column](#)) reaffirms this great truth in (1Pe 2:24+) - "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were [healed](#)." It follows then that...

Jehovah Rapha

is our

Lord Jesus Christ

How should we respond when we find ourselves drinking from the waters of Marah?

Ken Hemphill in his excellent book [which I highly recommend] [The Names of God](#) answers with the following practical suggestions:

"First, listen earnestly to the voice of God. What is God trying to say to you in your present circumstances? Sometimes we tend to hear God clearly when we are on the mountaintop of spiritual victory. When we get to Marah, we must tune our

LORD Who provided the sacrifice they needed to be redeemed from slavery - the Passover Lamb.

### How do John, Paul & Peter explain the OT Passover lamb?

Jn 1:29+ he saw Jesus coming to him & said, "Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world"

1Co 5:7b "Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed"

1Pe 1:18, 19+ ...you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished & spotless, the blood of Christ.

[See list](#) of 23 similarities between the Passover Lamb and Jesus Christ

### What was Jehovah Jireh's next provision in Exodus 14?

Ex 14:10, 13, 14, 31+ As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked & behold, the Egyptians were marching after them & they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to Jehovah... But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by & see the salvation of Jehovah which He will accomplish for you

There is little doubt that the "healing" of the bitter waters by a tree foreshadowed another "healing" tree, the "tree" of Calvary. The Greek Septuagint translates the Hebrew for "tree" with **xulon**, which is used in...

1Pe 2:24 + "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross ("tree" **xulon**), so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; **for** (term of explanation) by His (Jehovah Rapha's) wounds you were **healed**."

*And not coincidentally the same Greek word (xulon) is used for the "tree of life" in Gen 2:9 and Rev 22:2,14+ which also was for healing!*

Rev 22:2b+ "the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations"

Not everyone agrees with this explanation of the **tree** -- in the "Shabbat Shalom" column in the Jerusalem Post (2/7/02) Rabbi Riskin writes "Clearly the **tree**... is a symbolic reference to Torah [The Law] as well as to perfection"

**To which Paul would respond...**

Bitter circumstances drove Israel to grumbling & Moses to prayer. **Where do they drive us?** Moses Cried to LORD (He Prayed) He threw tree in water (he Obeyed what he heard)

### Note progression of water:

Too much water  
(Red Sea)

>>>>>>>

No water

>>>>>>>

Bitter Water

**Warren Wiersbe** - The people went from rejoicing to complaining! It is easy to sing when the circumstances are comfortable, but it takes faith to sing when you are suffering. God tests us in the everyday experiences of life to see whether we will obey Him. He is able to change our circumstances, but He would rather change us (Php 4:10+, Php 4:11, 12+, Php 4:13+)."

**J Vernon McGee** - "Friend, there are many frustrations, disappointments, and sorrows in life. Your plans can be torn up like a jigsaw puzzle. You may have a little grave on a hillside somewhere. I have. May I say that we all have our Marahs. You will not bypass them. You cannot detour around them, skip over them, or tunnel under them.

God uses a branding iron. I remember West Texas, in the spring of the year when the calves were branded. As a boy I would see the branding iron put down on a little fellow. Oh, how he bellowed! It made me feel sort of sad to hear him cry. But from then on everyone knew to whom he belonged. After a calf was branded, it would not get lost. God does that for us today"

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Every complaint against our circumstances, every grumble about the weather, our job, our parents, our health, our foes, ultimately is directed against the El Elyon, God Most High Who "works all things after the counsel of His will" (Eph 1:11+, [Spurgeon](#))

This is the mistake Israel made at Marah. Because their **eyes were not on Jehovah (and they literally should have been since He was there in a pillar of fire by**

ears attentively to the voice of the Lord. Ask yourself what God is saying through your circumstances. What does God want to do in your life? What have you learned about God from these events?

**Second**, do what is right. In other words, behave righteously. Instead of responding by grumbling & complaining when you find yourself at Marah, do what is right. You can overcome your circumstances by focusing on the reliability of the nature of God. Because He never changes, you can know that He is loving & trustworthy & will meet your every need.

**Third**, obey God's commands. When you find yourself with bitter waters, look to see if there are areas of disobedience in your life. Our desire to obey Him emerges from the fact that we know



today for the Egyptians whom you have seen today you will never see them again forever Jehovah will fight for you while you keep silent... When Israel saw the great power which Jehovah had used against the Egyptians, the people feared Jehovah, & they believed in Jehovah & in His servant Moses

### How did Israel respond to Jehovah giving them victory over Pharaoh?

Ex 15:1, 2, 3, 11, 17, 21+: Then Moses & the sons of Israel sang this song to Jehovah & said, "I will sing to Jehovah for He is highly exalted. The horse & its rider He has hurled into the sea. Jehovah is my strength & song & He has become my salvation; This is my Elohim & I will praise Him, My father's Elohim & I will extol Him. Jehovah is a warrior; Jehovah is His name... "Who is like Thee among the gods, O Jehovah? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders... "You will bring them & plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, the place, O Jehovah which You have made for Your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Adonai, which Your hands have established... Miriam answered them, Sing to Jehovah

"The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law [Torah] but thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 15:56, 57)

*"Christ redeemed us from the **curse** of the Law, having become a **curse** for (Gk = *huper* = on our behalf = substitutionary atonement) us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE" (xulon)" (Gal 3:13+).*

### What other truth is revealed about God in Ex 15:26?

And He said "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of Jehovah your Elohim & do what is right in His sight & give ear to His commandments & keep (guard as a watchman, protect, treasure) all His statutes I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians (cf Dt 28:60, 61, 62, 7:15); for I, **Jehovah, am your healer.**" Jehovah Rapha (Rophe) (yhwh ropecha)

[Spurgeon's sermon - Jehovah Rophi](#)

**Under what conditions would Jehovah Heal Israel or exempt them from the plagues of Egypt?**

(1) Listen (give earnest

**night & smoke by day**), they grumbled and blamed God's appointed leader Moses for the bitter water.

Doesn't that sound familiar?

When God surely and wisely leads us to a "Marah experience" **our response is a telltale indication of where our eyes are.**

When they are not on the Lord, we grumble loudly and blame our wife, our employer, our friend, or our government.

### Who have you blamed this week?

Cry out to Jehovah Rapha & then cling to the Tree He made available at Calvary.

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### RELATIONSHIP OF THE HEBREW WORD RAPHA TO THE GREEK WORD IAOMAI

In Exodus 15:26+ the context clearly emphasizes Jehovah's provision, His healing touch and thus His Name, the LORD our Healer. While this healing can be physical, our greater need and the one most emphasized in the OT uses of the root word [rapha/rophe](#) is for spiritual healing. And so for example in Hos 6:1+ the prophet writes

**Come**, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us, but He will heal ([rapha](#); Lxx= [iaomai](#)) us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.

As noted in Hosea 6:1+, the Lxx translates [rapha/rophe](#) with the verb [iaomai](#) which means to heal physically, but more importantly in many contexts refers to "healing" from the "wounds" we have all suffered from sin. And so in the NT, 1 Peter 2:24+ -note uses the same verb [iaomai](#) explaining that "by His (Jehovah Rapha's) wounds (stripes) you were healed ([iaomai](#)) quoting Isa 53:5b+ which uses [rapha](#) for "healed"." In context Peter is clearly speaking not of physical, but of spiritual healing. Because of Adam's sin, we have all been "infected" with the deadly "sin virus" (Ro 5:12+), which is "eternally terminal" unless cured by the Great Physician, Jehovah Rapha, Jesus our Messiah! We all have "hardening" of the

His character. Thus our obedience is the response of joyous confidence."

### Truth to Remember About Illness & Healing

#### (1). Sickness can be related to personal sin.

Ps 38:3+ There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine indignation. There is no health ([shalom](#)) in my bones because of my sin. (read context of Ps 38:3-11+ [Spurgeon's note](#))

Ps 38:18+ For I confess my iniquity. I am full of anxiety because of my sin.

There is a direct correlation between sin & sickness, sickness not just of the body but of the soul (see [Spurgeon's sermon below](#)). Don't misunderstand - as shown by the Scriptures below not every physical illness is a reflection of personal sin. In fact personal sin may not even be a contributing factor. Nevertheless, because unconfessed sin is at least a possible contributor in some instances of physical illness we should be willing to ask God to search our hearts as in Psalm 139 below...

Ps 139:23, 24+ Search me O God, & know my heart. Try me & know my anxious thoughts & see if there be any hurtful way in me & lead me in the everlasting way ([Spurgeon #1; #2](#))

If sin is discovered or uncovered we should deal with it immediately. To not do so can have consequences as shown by Solomon's counsel in Proverb 28...

Pr 28:13,14 (**note**) He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes (leaves behind, departs from) them will find compassion (mercy, pity, tender affection). How blessed is the

for He is highly exalted. The horse & his rider He has hurled into the sea."

What an incredible praise chorus. Imagine you were there & had just seen the entire Egyptian army destroyed... as Israel reached the other side of the shore they began to sing this song extolling Jehovah's for His great & marvelous deliverance.

**Is He still the same Deliverer? How does my life show I truly believe that? What thought do I need to take captive & replace with the truth that He is able to deliver me either in the trial or through the trial?** (cf Da 3:17,18+)

**How does faith relate to worship?**  
[Click Here](#)

heed)

(2) Obey (do what is right)

(3) Seek truth (give ear to His commandments)

(4) Watch over His word, treasuring it, preserving it (Keep all His statutes).

Health, illness & Obedience go together & give us the principle: Obedience brings Blessing & Disobedience brings judgment even as Pharaoh's rebellion against God brought 10 plagues.

**John MacArthur ...**

"Since this is what He is, Jehovah-Rapha, obedience to divine instruction and guidance will obviously bring healing, not the consequence of plagues like those visited upon Egypt. **This promise is limited in context to Israel, most likely for the duration of the Exodus only.** The MacArthur Study Bible

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Although I agree with the above comment, an application of this truth is that God will be as "Jehovah Rapha", the LORD Who heals, to everyone who trusts in Him as their "Healer" for Isaiah prophecies that "by His **scourging** we are **healed**."

arteries (Gk = sklerokardia, Mt 19:8; sklerotes = stubbornness in Ro 2:5+) of our spiritual hearts. Jehovah Rapha "cuts us open" (so to speak), circumcising our heart in effect giving us a "heart transplant," a new heart heart of flesh in place of our old sin-sick heart of stone. (cf Ezekiel 36:26+).

May God's Spirit grant that every reader of these truths about Jehovah Rapha, receive Him as their Savior or if already saved, be continually enabled to walk in His sin healing (sanctifying) power (cf Col 2:6+ , Gal 5:16+) for the glory of the Name of Yeshua our Messiah. Amen

man who fears always, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity. (adversity, affliction, distress)

**Unforgiveness** is an example of a sin that can lead to one being given over to the "torturers" (Mt 18:34,35). **John MacArthur** comments that...

When believers forget their own divine forgiveness by God and refuse to extend human forgiveness to fellow believers, the Lord puts them under such **torturers** (the word can refer to inquisitors) as stress, hardship, pressure, or other difficulties until the sin is confessed and forgiveness is granted. As James tells us, "Judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy" (Jas 2:13+). ([Matthew 16-23](#))

**Wiersbe** says that "The world's worst prison is the prison of an unforgiving heart. If we refuse to forgive others, then we are only imprisoning ourselves and causing our own torment. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Craig Blomberg** adds "Counselors often discover that a client's unwillingness to forgive someone lies deep at the heart of all kinds of personal problems. (The New American Commentary)

**Related Resource:** Links related to forgiveness/unforgiveness

**(2). Although in one sense all illness is the consequence of the fall of man & sin entering the world, not all disease is directly related to personal sin.**

Jn 9:1, 2, 3 "As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. & His disciples asked Him "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind ? Jesus answered "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."

Jn 11:4b referring to Lazarus' illness Jesus said "This sickness is not to

([rapha](#)) (Isa 53:5+) for "all of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him." (Isa 53:6+) & so He is the "Healer" to all who take refuge in Him. (Note "[rapha](#)" can be translated "Physician" so this passage gives support to the phrase "The Great Physician"

The test Israel faced in the wilderness is the same one believers face today: They & we have to listen to the voice of God, do what is right & obey His commandments. This is the pattern for victory when we face bitter circumstances which might otherwise bring discouragement & disillusionment. Listen to God & obey His commandments.

**From Ex 15:26 Who will put the diseases on whom?**

Clearly in context Jehovah Rapha, the same God who gives healing.

**How does the above truth parallel the scriptures below?**

end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

**(3) Christians can be weak, sick or sleep if they are careless taking communion**

1 Cor 11:23-34, 29, 30 "For he who eats and drinks, eats & drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak & sick, and a number sleep. (metaphor for death)"

Jehovah Rapha Who heals is also the One Who must judge sin, even in the life of a child of God who will not judge it himself. (see Dt 32:39, Isa 45:6, 7)

**(4) The Cross (tree) is source of healing for sins**

Isa 53:5b+ The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are [healed](#) [[rapha](#)].

1Peter 2:24+ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were [healed](#).

Gal 3:13+ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"

Rev 22:2+ On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every \* month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The bitterness caused by sin can be healed by the Cross of Christ Who became a curse for us on the Tree & made available the Tree of Life forever.

**(5). Confession & prayer for one another can bring healing**

Dt 32:39 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death & give life. I have wounded & it is I who [heal \(rapha\)](#), & there is no one who can deliver from My hand.

Isa 45:6, 7 That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am Jehovah & there is no other, The One forming light & creating darkness, causing **well-being (shalom** = health, peace) & creating calamity. I am Jehovah Who does all these.

These verses show that as El Elyon, the sovereign Most High God holds the power to "put plagues" on anyone He chooses but it is always in the light of His perfect justice. He also has the mercy to heal whoever He chooses (Ps 103:3-[note, Spurgeon \(1\), \(2\)](#)).

**What can we learn from the next place God led them?**

Ex 15:27+ Then they came to Elim (Palm) where there were twelve springs of water & seventy date palms, & they camped there beside the waters.

God tested Israel who responded by

Jas 5:16+ Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

**(6) The Word of God is the source of healing**

Ps 107:19<sup>+</sup>, Ps 107:20<sup>+</sup> "Then they cried out to Jehovah in their trouble. He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His [WORD](#) & [healed \(rapha\)](#) them & [delivered](#) them from their destructions"

Pr 4:20, 21, 22 My son, give attention to my WORDS. Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight. Keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them & [HEALTH](#) to all their body. (Health is Hebrew "marpe" derivative of "rapha")

**(7) Fear of the LORD is associated with healing**

Mal 4:2+ But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with [healing](#) in its wings; & you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.

Pr 3:7, 8 Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear Jehovah & turn away from evil. It will be [healing](#) to your body & refreshment to your bones.

**(8) Jehovah Rapha heals the brokenhearted & the souls of men**

Ps 147:3<sup>+</sup> "He [heals](#) the [brokenhearted](#) & [binds](#) up their [wounds](#)."

Ps 41:4<sup>+</sup> As for me I said "O Jehovah, be gracious to me. [Heal](#) my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." ([Spurgeon](#))

There is healing for your deepest pains & disappointments. There is victory over addictions, past hurts as



testing God & yet God still in His kindness led them to a "rest stop" of water & palm trees. God's "Elim's" are not far from the "Marah's" -- there will times of trial, but there will also be seasons of restoration. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Ps 30:5KJV)

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**Warren Wiersbe** adds "Life is not always battles and bitter waters. God brings us to the refreshing oases from time to time, and for this we should praise Him. However, we can never claim our inheritance if we linger at Elim. We are pilgrims, not residents. Life is a combination of the bitter and the sweet, triumphs and trials. If we are following God, however, we never need fear what comes our way. And after the trial there is often a spiritual "Elim" where God refreshes us. We must accept the bitter waters with the sweet, knowing that God knows what is best for us."

well as past failures. There is physical but even better spiritual healing available by running to the strong tower of Jesus your Jehovah rapha. If you have become sidetracked at Marah, bitter in soul & spirit, feeling that life is unfair or God is unfair, the only way to go from Marah to Elim & find sweet water is to run to Jehovah rapha, the God Who heals.

### OTHER RESOURCES

[Spurgeon's sermon - Jehovah Rophi](#)

[Jehovah Rophe - by Nathan Stone](#)

[Commentary on Exodus 15](#) by Bob Deffinbaugh (click here for his thought provoking applications)

**J.C. Ryle-Sickness** (including "general benefits which sickness confers on mankind" - Michael Brown in [Israel's Divine Healer](#) however says Ryle "*overly extols the positive benefits of sickness*" so read with Biblical discernment!)

[Israel's Divine Healer](#) by Michael Brown and Walter Kaiser

## STUDY THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES FOR INSIGHTS ON JEHOVAH RAPHA

### RAPHA IN THE OT

**Heal** (Physician) ([07495](#))(**rapha/rophe**) means to heal (both figurative and literal healing), to make whole, to restore to normal (restore health), to cure, to repair. In 1Ki. 18:30 it refers to "**repairing**" the altar of the Jerusalem temple. **Rapha** in its participial form, **rophe** (meaning "one who heals") is the Hebrew word used of **physicians** in Jer. 8:22; Gen. 50:2; 2Chr 16:12; Job 13:4. Rapha is usually translated in the Septuagint with the Greek verb [iaomai](#) ([see discussion below](#)).

**Related Resource:**

- Hebrew Honey" = Hebrew Word Studies - a work in progress

**Brown and Kaiser** remark that the root Hebrew *rp'* "fundamentally means "to heal"....The Lord as *rope'* (rapha) could be supplicated to make infertile wombs fruitful, mend earthquake-torn lands, make poisonous waters wholesome or restore an apostate people....the Hebrew usage of *rp'* (includes ideas) such as "heal, fix, mend, restore, repair, remit, make wholesome/fresh," etc....Thus in Ex 15:26..."I am the LORD your Healer"...fits quite naturally in a context that recounts (a) the Lord's making undrinkable waters wholesome (Ex 15:22, 23, 24), and (b) His promise to keep obedient Israel free of all the "sickness" (mahala) he inflicted on Egypt (including, presumably, making the Nile waters undrinkable, along with smiting Egypt's land, people, cattle). Clearly, He was more than Israel's "Great Physician," in twentieth-century, Western terms. Rather, He was the Restorer, the One Who made them whole. Thus one of the reasons why I translate *yhwh rope 'eka* as "the LORD your Healer" is that "Healer" conveys a wider range of meanings than do the terms physician, doctor, Arzt (German), or medecin (French). ([Israel's Divine Healer](#))

**Renn** - Miraculous healing by the hand of God is found in Gen. 20:17; Ex 15:26;Dt 32:39; 2Ch. 30:20. In Nu 12:13, Moses successfully pleads with Yahweh to cleanse Miriam from her leprosy. A promise of healing is given in 2Ki. 20:5, 8; and in Ps 6:2 the psalmist begs for healing. Divine refusal to heal, as part of the covenant curse, is noted in Dt 28:27, 35. Physical healing of an indeterminate or general nature, without the mention of any agency, is recorded in Ex 21:19; Lev. 13:18, 37; 2Ki. 8:29; Job 5:18....**The metaphorical use of rapha** is found in a variety of contexts — for example, in 1Ki. 2:21, 22 the water is "healed" in the sense of making it potable. The healing, or restoration and renewal, of the land of Canaan occurs in a number of places (cf. 2Ch 7:14; Ps 60:2; Isa 19:22). In Ezek 47:8 ff. a spectacular vision of renewal describes the divine promise to bring about a transformation of Canaan through the "healing" effect of the river flowing out from under the sanctuary of the visionary temple.**Rapha** also indicates healing in the sense of personal renewal (cf. Ps 41:4; 147:3; Eccl 3:3). Isa. 6:10; 30:26 both speak of heart renewal, or conversion. Especially significant is the use of this term to indicate the forgiveness of sin through the vicarious suffering of the Messiah in Isa. 53:5. Similar references to such divine healing are found in Jer 3:22; 8:11; 30:17; 33:6; Hos. 6: 1; 7:1; 11:3; 14:4. A plea for healing in the sense of renewal, possibly forgiveness, is found in Jer. 17:14. See also Lam. 2:13. Ezek 34: 4; Zec. 11:16 refer to healing in the sense of being cared for from a negative perspective — Israel's leaders have sorely neglected the people and failed to "heal" and nurture them. (Stephen Renn - Expository Dictionary)

**W E Vine** - "To heal" may be described as "restoring to normal," an act which God typically performs. Thus, appeals to God for healing are common (Ps. 6:2 Jer. 17:14). Not only are human diseases "healed," but bad water is restored to normal or "healed" (2Ki 2:22); salt water is "healed" or made fresh (Ezek 47:8); even pottery is "healed" or restored (Je 19:11). A large number of the uses of **rapha** express the "healing" of the nation—such "healing" not only involves God's grace and forgiveness, but also the nation's repentance. Divine discipline leads to repentance and "healing": (Hos 6:1). God promises: (Je 30:17). Even foreign cities and powers can know God's "healing" if they repent (Je 51:8, 9). False prophets are condemned because they deal only with the symptoms and not with the deep spiritual hurts of the people: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Je 6:14; Je 8:11). ([Vine, W E: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. 1996. Nelson](#))

**William White** - The meaning is straightforward in virtually all passages. In the initial occurrence (Gen 20:17) in which God heals Abimelech, the Qal stem is employed. The root is also used of human healing, as a substantive, "physician" (Ge 50:2). **Rapha** is also used of the healing and forgiveness of Gentile nations (Isa 19:22; 57:18). In the Piel and Hithpael stems the causative aspect is foremost (1Kgs 18:30), "He healed (repaired) the altar." However, a human subject is generally the object of the healing (Ex 21:19), "He shall cause him to be thoroughly healed." The Hithpael has the passive mood characteristic of the stem (2Kgs 8:29; 9:15), "In order that he could be healed." The other occurrence of the Hithpael is 2Chr 22:6. Possibly the most significant usage is in the Niphal stem (1Sa 6:3), "Then you shall be healed"; (Dt 28:27), "of which you cannot be healed." The stem is also used for the restoration of objects (Je 19:11); the turning of salt water into fresh (2Kgs 2:22). The themes of healing and restoration as connotations of **rapha** are combined in the usage of Isa 53:5, "With his stripes we are healed." In many of the occurrences, it is God who causes healing or afflicts with disease or catastrophes which cannot be healed but by divine intervention. ([Harris, R L, Archer, G L & Waltke, B K Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Moody Press](#))

**Baker** - A verb meaning to heal, to make fresh. It describes the process of healing, being restored to health, made healthy, usable, fertile (Baker, W.. The Complete Word Study Dictionary : Old Testament. Page 1070. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers)

**The Open Bible** - Rapha is a verb, which means quite literally **"to heal of hurts."** Sometimes God is the Healer as He is in Gen. 20:17 and Ps. 107:20+. At other times humans are the healers or physicians (2 Chr. 16:12; Eccl. 3:3). In the figurative sense, God heals the hurts of the nation, which indicates restored favor and forgiveness. There are many uses of the word in this context. The other figurative use of the word comes in the context of individual distress, which can be healed as in Job 5:18 and Ps. 41:5. (The Open Bible : New King James Version)

**The NAS translates rapha as** -- become fresh(3), completely healed(1), heal(24), healed(22), healer(1), healing(2), heals(3), physician(1), physicians(4), purified(2), reappeared(1), repaired(2), take care(1).

**The KJV translates rapha as** - heal 57, physician 5, cure 1, repaired 1, misc 3; 67

Below are all 62 verses in the NAS that use **rapha** - Translated in the NAS as become fresh(3), completely healed(1), heal(24), healed(22), healer(1), healing(2), heals(3), physician(1), physicians(4), purified(2), reappeared(1), repaired(2), take care(1).

Take some time and study these passages to increase your understanding of this beautiful Hebrew word. Note that you can click on each link to read the verse in context and some of these passages are associated with sermons (see right hand side of page). You may have to click the "back arrow" twice to return to this page.

Gen. 20:17; Gen. 50:2; Exod. 15:26; Exod. 21:19; Lev. 13:18; Lev. 13:37; Lev. 14:3; Lev. 14:48; Num. 12:13; Deut. 28:27; Deut. 28:35; Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 6:3; 1 Ki. 18:30; 2 Ki. 2:21; 2 Ki. 2:22; 2 Ki. 8:29; 2 Ki. 9:15; 2 Ki. 20:5; 2 Ki. 20:8; 2 Chr. 7:14; 2 Chr. 16:12; 2 Chr. 22:6; 2 Chr. 30:20; Job 5:18; Job 13:4; Ps. 6:2; Ps. 30:2; Ps. 41:4; Ps. 60:2; Ps. 103:3; Ps. 107:20<sup>+</sup>; Ps. 147:3; Eccl. 3:3; Isa. 6:10; Isa. 19:22; Isa. 30:26; Isa. 53:5; Isa. 57:18; Isa. 57:19; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 6:14; Jer. 8:11; Jer. 8:22; Jer. 15:18; Jer. 17:14; Jer. 19:11; Jer. 30:17; Jer. 33:6; Jer. 51:8; Jer. 51:9; Lam. 2:13; Ezek. 34:4; Ezek. 47:8; Ezek. 47:9; Ezek. 47:11; Hos. 5:13; Hos. 6:1; Hos. 7:1; Hos. 11:3; Hos. 14:4; Zech. 11:16

**Note** that many (if not most) of the uses of **rapha** refer to spiritual healing. Some refer specifically to spiritual healing of the nation of Israel (eg, Hosea 14:4), a national healing which Jehovah Rapha will bring about at the Second Coming when "all Israel" (all who believe in Messiah) will be saved. (See Ro 11:25, 26, 27+)

Genesis 20:17 Abraham prayed to God, and God **healed** Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children.

Genesis 50:2 Joseph commanded his servants the **physicians** to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.

Exodus 15:26 And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your **healer**."

Exodus 21:19 if he gets up and walks around outside on his staff, then he who struck him shall go unpunished; he shall only pay for his loss of time, and shall take care of him until he is completely **healed**.

Leviticus 13:18 "When the body has a boil on its skin and it is **healed**,

Leviticus 13:37 "If in his sight the scale has remained, however, and black hair has grown in it, the scale has **healed**, he is clean; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

Leviticus 14:3 and the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp. Thus the priest shall look, and if the infection of leprosy has been **healed** in the leper,

Leviticus 14:48 "If, on the other hand, the priest comes in and makes an inspection and the mark has not indeed spread in the house after the house has been replastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean because the mark has not **reappeared**.

Numbers 12:13 Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "O God, **heal** her, I pray!"

Deuteronomy 28:27 "The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be **healed**.

Deuteronomy 28:35 "The LORD will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be **healed**, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

Deuteronomy 32:39 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who **heal**, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.

1 Samuel 6:3 They said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty; but you shall surely return to Him a guilt offering. Then you will be **healed** and it will be known to you why His hand is not removed from you."

1 Kings 18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he **repaired** the altar of the LORD which had been torn down.

2 Kings 2:21 He went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'I have **purified** these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer.'" **22** So the waters have been **purified** to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

2 Kings 8:29 So King Joram returned to be **healed** in Jezreel of the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. Then Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel because he was sick.

2 Kings 9:15 but King Joram had returned to Jezreel to be **healed** of the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael king of Aram. So Jehu said, "If this is your mind, then let no one escape or leave the city to go tell it in Jezreel."

2 Kings 20:5 "Return and say to Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David, 'I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will **heal** you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD.

2 Kings 20:8 Now Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign that the LORD will **heal** me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?"

2 Chronicles 7:14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will **heal** their land.

2 Chronicles 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the **physicians**.

2 Chronicles 22:6 So he returned to be **healed** in Jezreel of the wounds which they had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. And Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

2 Chronicles 30:20 So the LORD heard Hezekiah and **healed** the people.

Job 5:18 "For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, and His hands also **heal**.

Job 13:4 "But you smear with lies; You are all worthless **physicians**.

Psalms 6:2-[note](#) Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am pining away; **Heal** me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed.

Psalms 30:2-[note](#) O LORD my God, I cried to You for help, and You **healed** me.

**Spurgeon:** David sent up prayers for himself and for his people when visited with the pestilence. He went at once to head quarters, and not roundabout to fallible means. God is the best physician, even for our bodily infirmities. We do very wickedly and foolishly when we forget God. It was a sin in Asa that he trusted to physicians and not to God. **If we must have a physician, let it be so, but still let us go to our God first of all; and, above all, remember that there can be no power to heal in medicine of itself; the healing energy must flow from the divine hand.** If our watch is out of order, we take it to the watchmaker; if our body or soul be in an evil plight, let us resort to him who created them, and has unfailing skill to put them in right condition. As for our spiritual diseases, nothing can heal these evils but the touch of the Lord Christ: if we do but touch the hem of his garment, we shall be made whole, while if we embrace all other physicians in our arms, they can do us no service. "O Lord my God." Observe the covenant name which faith uses -- "my God." Thrice happy is he who can claim the Lord himself to be his portion. Note how David's faith ascends the scale; he sang "O Lord" in the first verse, but it is "O Lord my God," in the second. Heavenly heart music is an ascending thing, like the pillars of smoke which rose from the altar of incense. I cried unto thee. I could hardly pray, but I cried; I poured out my soul as a little child pours out its desires. I cried to my God: I knew to whom to cry; I did not cry to my friends, or to any arm of flesh. Hence the sure and satisfactory result -- Thou hast healed me. I know it. I am sure of it. I have the evidence of spiritual health within me now: glory be to thy name! **Every humble suppliant with God who seeks release from the disease of sin, shall speed as well as the Psalmists did, but those who will not so much as seek a cure, need not wonder if their wounds putrefy and their soul dies.**

Psalms 41:4-[note](#) As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me; **Heal** my soul, for I have sinned against You."

**Spurgeon:** **Heal** my soul. My time of languishing is come, now do as thou hast said, and strengthen me, especially in my soul. We ought to be far more earnest for the soul's **healing** than for the body's ease. We hear much of the cure of souls, but we often forget to care about it. **For I have sinned against thee.** (Ed Comment: Note that "for" is a **term of explanation** - David explains why he needs soul healing - sin wounds the soul [cf Ps 32:3-4] - do we understand that truth? Then why do we so often commit sins with nary a second thought or a somber concern? **May God's Spirit remind us all that sin injures our innermost**

**being and may the Spirit use this truth to enable us to turn to God so that we turn from sin. Amen)** Here was the root of sorrow. Sin and suffering are inevitable companions. Observe that by the psalmist sin was felt to be mainly evil because directed against God. **This is of the essence of true repentance.** The immaculate Saviour could never have used such language as this unless there be here a reference to the sin which He took upon Himself by imputation; and for our part we tremble to apply words so manifestly indicating personal rather than imputed sin. **Applying the petition to David and other sinful believers, how strangely evangelical is the argument: heal me, not for I am innocent, but I have sinned. How contrary is this to all self righteous pleading! How consonant with grace! How inconsistent with merit!** Even the fact that the confessing penitent had remembered the poor, is but obliquely urged, but a direct appeal is made to mercy on the ground of great sin.

**O trembling reader,  
here is a divinely revealed precedent for thee,  
be not slow to follow it.**

Psalm 60:2-[note](#) You have made the land quake, You have split it open; **Heal** its breaches, for it totters.

**Spurgeon:** As a house in time of earthquake is shaken, and the walls begin to crack, and gape with threatening fissures, so was it with the kingdom. (Ed: **United States of America - Are you listening? May God revive us that once again we would truly be one nation UNDER [submitted to, yielded to] God! Amen**)

Psalm 103:3-[note](#) Who pardons all your iniquities, Who **heals** all your diseases;

**Spurgeon:** When the cause is gone, namely, iniquity, the effect ceases. Sicknesses of body and soul came into the world by sin, and as sin is eradicated, diseases bodily, mental, and spiritual will vanish, till "the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick." Many-sided is the character of our heavenly Father, for, having forgiven as a judge, he then cures as a physician. He is all things to us, as our needs call for him, and our infirmities do but reveal him in new characters.

In him is only good,  
In me is only ill,  
My ill but draws his goodness forth,  
And me he loveth still."

God gives efficacy to medicine for the body, and his grace sanctifies the soul. Spiritually we are daily under his care, and he visits us, as the surgeon does his patient; healing still (for that is the exact word) each malady as it arises. No disease of our soul baffles his skill, he goes on healing all, and he will do so till the last trace of taint has gone from our nature. The two alls of this verse are further reasons for all that is within us praising the Lord.

Psalm 107:20-[+](#) He sent His word and **healed** them, And delivered them from their destructions.

**Comment:** Beloved, do not miss this truth! The Word of God is not only for our spiritual nourishment and growth in godliness but is the divine balm for the **healing** of our sin sick souls! Run to the Great Physician's book, taking in His prescription for spiritual health.

**Spurgeon:** Man is not **healed** by medicine alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God is man restored from going down to the grave. A word will do it, a word has done it thousands of times.

Psalm 147:3-note He **heals** the brokenhearted And binds up their wounds.

**Spurgeon:** This the Holy Spirit mentions as a part of the glory of God, and a reason for our declaring his praise: the Lord is not only a Builder, but a Healer; he restores broken hearts as well as broken walls. The kings of the earth think to be great through their loftiness; but Jehovah becomes really so by his condescension. Behold, the Most High has to do with the sick and the sorry, with the wretched and the wounded! He walks the hospitals as the good Physician! His deep sympathy with mourners is a special mark of his goodness. Few will associate with the despondent, but Jehovah chooses their company, and abides with them till he has healed them by his comforts. He deigns to handle and heal broken hearts: he himself lays on the ointment of grace, and the soft bandages of love, and thus binds up the bleeding wounds of those convinced of sin. This is compassion like a God. Well may those praise him to whom he has acted so gracious a part. The Lord is always healing and binding: this is no new work to him, he has done it of old; and it is not a thing of the past of which he is now weary, for he is still healing and still binding, as the original hath it. Come, broken hearts, come to the Physician who never fails to heal: uncover your wounds to him who so tenderly binds them up!

Ecclesiastes 3:3 A time to kill and a time to **heal**; A time to tear down and a time to build up.



Isaiah 6:10 "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be **healed**."

**Comment:** Spiritual healing for spiritual repentance!

Isaiah 19:22 The LORD will strike Egypt, striking but **healing**; so they will return to the LORD, and He will respond to them and will **heal** them.

Isaiah 30:26 The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, on the day the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and **heals** the bruise He has inflicted.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are **healed**.

**Spurgeon:** [See his devotional](#)

**Comment:** Spiritual not physical healing is the primary sense. Sin is a "disease" which the "stripes" of the Messiah can heal

Isaiah 57:18 "I have seen his ways, but I will **heal** him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, 19 Creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," Says the LORD, "and I will **heal** him."

Jeremiah 3:22 "Return, O faithless sons, I will **heal** your faithlessness." "Behold, we come to You; For You are the LORD our God.

**Comment:** Again see the incredible love and lovingkindness of God to stoop and heal the repenting soul.

Jeremiah 6:14 "They have **healed** the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace.

**Comment:** False teachers offer what they cannot give, for true spiritual healing and healing for broken hearts comes only from God!

Jeremiah 8:11 "They **heal** the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace.

Jeremiah 8:22 Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no **physician** (no healer) there? Why then has not the health of the daughter of my people been restored?

Jeremiah 15:18 Why has my pain been perpetual And my wound incurable, refusing to be **healed**? Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive stream With water that is unreliable?

Jeremiah 17:14 **Heal** me, O LORD, and I will be **healed**; Save me and I will be saved, For You are my praise.

Jeremiah 19:11 and say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Just so will I break this people and this city, even as one breaks a potter's vessel, which cannot again be **repaired**; and they will bury in Topheth because there is no other place for burial.

Jeremiah 30:17 'For I will restore you to health And I will **heal** you of your wounds,' declares the LORD, 'Because they have called you an outcast, saying: "It is Zion; no one cares for her.'"

Jeremiah 33:6 'Behold, I will bring to it health and healing (marpe), and I will **heal** them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth.

Jeremiah 51:8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken; Wail over her! Bring balm for her pain; Perhaps she may be **healed**.  
9 We applied **healing** to Babylon, but she was not **healed**; Forsake her and let us each go to his own country, For her judgment has reached to heaven And towers up to the very skies.

Lamentations 2:13 How shall I admonish you? To what shall I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I liken you as I comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is as vast as the sea; Who can **heal** you?

Ezekiel 34:4 "Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not **healed**, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.

Ezekiel 47:8 Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become **fresh**.

Ezekiel 47:9 "It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will

be very many fish, for these waters go there and the others become **fresh**; so everything will live where the river goes.

Ezekiel 47:11 "But its swamps and marshes will not become **fresh**; they will be left for salt.

Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah his wound, Then Ephraim went to Assyria And sent to King Jareb. But he is unable to **heal** you, Or to cure you of your wound.

Hosea 6:1 "Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us, but He will **heal** us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.

**Comment:** Note the repetition of repentance and healing. Amazing grace indeed!

Hosea 7:1 When I would **heal** Israel, The iniquity of Ephraim is uncovered, And the evil deeds of Samaria, For they deal falsely; The thief enters in, Bandits raid outside,

Hosea 11:3 Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that **healed** them.

Hosea 14:4 I will **heal** their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.

Zechariah 11:16 "For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd (**the Antichrist**) in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, **heal** the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.

## TO HEAL GREEK = IAOMAI

**Heal** ([2390](#)) (**iaomai**) means to cure, to heal, to restore. **iaomai** is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole, restore to bodily health or heal. To cause someone to achieve health after having been sick. In the passive it means to be healed or cured. Figuratively, **iaomai** speaks of deliverance from sin and its evil consequences and thus to restore (to spiritual good health), make whole, renew (Mt 13:15). In the passive, **iaomai** figuratively means to be restored, to recover or to be healed as in 1Pe 2:24.

**iaomai** refers primarily to physical healing in the NT (although clearly there is overlap because some of these instances involved demonic oppression - Lk 9:42), and much less commonly to spiritual healing or healing (saving) from "moral illnesses" and the consequences of sin. When used in this sense **iaomai** has much the same meaning as **sozo**, to save, make whole, restore to spiritual health. Here are the uses of **iaomai** used with a spiritual meaning = Mt 13:15, John 12:40, Acts 28:27 - preceding quotes from Isa 6:10, 1Pe 2:24 = quote from Isa 53:5.

It is interesting that most of the NT uses in the Gospels refer to physical healing by Jesus (excepting the physical healing that resulted by release from demonic oppression). However in the OT (Lxx) uses **iaomai** refers primarily to spiritual healing by the Messiah (Isa 53:5, Isa 61:1, et al).

Presumably the fact that Luke was a physician explains why he made frequent use of **iaomai** (14/26x). The related word **iatros** (Mt 9:12 Mk 2:17 5:26 Lk 4:23, 5:31, 8:43, Col 4:14) is derived from **iaomai** and is actually the word used for "medical doctor" in modern Greece (cf English "iatrogenic" illness or malady caused by or secondary to medical treatment)! In ancient Greece this word group was extended from its medical use to convey a sense of restoration or to making good. The word **iatros** is also ascribed to several Grecian deities (Here is an interesting background article = [Healing deities, healing cults](#)).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **Rapha** in Ex 15:26 with the verb **iaomai**. It is interesting that the first use of **iaomai** in the Lxx is in answer to Abraham's prayer for Abimelech's wife, and both were "healed...so that they bore children." (Ge 20:17). In Lev 14:3 **iaomai** refers to healing "in the leper." In Nu 12:13 Moses interceded for Miriam when she sinned asking "O God, heal her, I pray!" but He did not immediately heal her but had her shut up 7 days to bear her shame (Nu 12:14-15). In the cursings to Israel for their breaking the Mosaic covenant God promised boils that "cannot be healed." (Dt 28:27, 35). In Dt 30:3 Moses wrote that Jehovah would "**restore** you (Israel) from captivity," where **restore** (Heb = shub) is translated "**heal**" (**iaomai**) in the Lxx. Clearly this has to do primarily with "spiritual" healing, resulting in restoration. In 2Ki 2:21 after salt was thrown in the spring, Jehovah said "I have **purified** (rapha; **iaomai** - also in 2Ki 2:22) these waters." While a number of OT uses of **iaomai** signify physical healing, the majority use **iaomai** primarily of spiritual healing (although some uses are difficult to classify and/or overlap with physical healing, eg, Nu 12:13, Dt 28:27, 35) - Dt 30:3, 2Chr 7:14, Ps 6:2, Ps 30:2, Ps 41:4, Ps 147:3, Pr 12:18, Isa 6:10, Isa 19:22, Isa 30:26, Isa 53:5, Isa 57:18, 19, 61:1, Jer 3:22, 6:14, Jer 15:18, Jer 17:14, Jer 51:8-9, Lam 2:13, Hos 5:13, 6:1, 7:1, 11:3, 14:4, Zech 11:16.

One of the most familiar OT verses uses **iaomai**...

and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and **will heal** (rapha; iaomai) their land. (2Chronicles 7:14)

In one of the most important OT passages Isaiah writes of Messiah...

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are **healed** (rapha, iaomai). (Isaiah 53:5)

**Comment:** Healing here refers to forgiveness of sins and that is how 1Peter 2:24 interprets iaomai.

God emphasizes His sovereignty declaring...

'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded (Heb = machats = smite, wound severely) and it is I who **heal** (Heb = rapha, Lxx = iaomai), And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (Deut 32:39, Job 5:18)

**iaomai** - uses in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Gen. 20:17; Exod. 15:26; Lev. 14:3; Lev. 14:48; Num. 12:13; Deut. 28:27; Deut. 28:35; Deut. 30:3; Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 6:3; 1 Ki. 18:30; 2 Ki. 2:21; 2 Ki. 2:22; 2 Ki. 20:5; 2 Ki. 20:8; 2 Chr. 7:14; 2 Chr. 30:20; Job 5:18; Job 12:21; Ps. 6:2; Ps. 30:2; Ps. 41:4; Ps. 60:2; Ps. 103:3; Ps. 107:20<sup>+</sup>; Ps. 147:3; Prov. 12:18; Prov. 18:9; Prov. 26:18; Eccl. 3:3; Isa. 6:10; Isa. 7:4; Isa. 19:22; Isa. 30:26; Isa. 53:5; Isa. 57:18; Isa. 57:19; Isa. 61:1; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 6:14; Jer. 15:18; Jer. 17:14; Jer. 19:11; Jer. 51:8; Jer. 51:9; Lam. 2:13; Hos. 5:13; Hos. 6:1; Hos. 7:1; Hos. 11:3; Hos. 14:4; Zech. 11:16;

**Septuagint Lexicon** - to heal Ge 20:17; to repair, to restore Hos 14:5; to quench 4Macc 3:10; to soothe (of pain) Isa 30:26; to purify 2Ki 2:21; to deliver 2Chr 7:14; to forgive 2Chr 30:20. Passive - to be removed from (of a disease) Lev 14:3; to be healed, to recover 1Sa 6:3, those who need correction Pr 26:18; your healer Ex 15:26; Is 7:4 I will heal

**iaomai** - 26x in 26v in the NT - NAS Usage: curing(1), heal(4), healed(16), healing(2), heals(1), perform healing(2).

**NOTE:** (P) representing physical healing and (S) representing spiritual healing precede each of the NT verses below that use iaomai -

(P) Matthew 8:8 But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be **healed**."

(P) 13 And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was **healed** that very moment.

(S) Matthew 13:15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD **HEAL** THEM.'

(P) Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was **healed** at once.

(P) Mark 5:29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was **healed** of her affliction.

(P) Luke 5:17 One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform **healing**.

(P) Luke 6:18 who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being **cured**. 19 And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all.

(P) Luke 7:7 for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be **healed**.

(P) Luke 8:47 When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately **healed**.

(P) Luke 9:2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform **healing**.

11 But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of **healing**.

42 While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and **healed** the boy and gave him back to his father.

(P) Luke 14:4 But they kept silent. And He took hold of him and **healed** him, and sent him away.

(P) Luke 17:15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been **healed**, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice,

(P) Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and **healed** him.

(P) John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and was imploring Him to come down and **heal** his son; for he was at the point of death.

(P) John 5:13 But the man who was **healed** did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in that place.

(S) John 12:40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I **HEAL** THEM."

(P) Acts 9:34 Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ **heals** you; get up and make your bed." Immediately he got up.

(P) Acts 10:38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and **healing** all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

(P) Acts 28:8 And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and **healed** him.

(S) Acts 28:27 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD **HEAL** THEM."

(S) Hebrews 12:13-note and (continues from the exhortation in Heb 12:12-note) make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be **healed**.

**Wuest** - The exhortation is to the born-again Jews who had left the temple, to live such consistent saintly lives, and to cling so tenaciously to their new-found faith, that the unsaved Jews who had also left the temple and had outwardly embraced the NT truth, would be encouraged to go on to faith in Messiah as High Priest, instead of returning to the abrogated sacrifices of the Levitical system (**Ed**: Those who returned to the Law were never truly born again. And to do so would make them "spiritually sick" and would result in eternal death if they were never healed by the wounds of Messiah - 1Pe 2:24). These truly born-again Jews are warned that a limping Christian life would cause these unsaved Jews to be turned out of the way. These latter had made a start towards salvation by leaving the Temple and making a profession of Messiah (**Ed**: Without possession of the life giving, indwelling Spirit of Christ). But they needed the encouraging example and testimony of the saved Jews. The words "turned out of the way" are the translation of another medical term, ektrepo "to turn or twist out. (**Ed**: So clearly "be healed" in this context speaks of "being healed" of the tendency to go back to the ritual of the Temple sacrifices and the keeping of the Law of Moses as supposed means of meriting salvation or of growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.)

**MacArthur** says "The writer of Hebrews also used it (iaomai) metaphorically to speak of spiritual restoration."

(P/S)? James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be **healed**. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

**Comment**: Here while the healing may be physical, it is associated with spiritual intervention (prayer) and with the implication that the healed party is restored to spiritual soundness.

**MacArthur** says "James uses it to refer to God's forgiveness, making the repentant believer spiritually whole again."

(S) 1 Peter 2:24-note and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

**Comment:** By simple observation of the context one can discern that Peter is not referring to physical healing in this verse as some interpreters claim. Peter explains ("for") in the next verse that the healing was "for" or "because" (see **term of explanation**) his readers were continually straying like sheep, clearly a picture of "sin sickness" not physical sickness. In fairness, there is a sense in which Christ's substitutionary death did bring about the potential for "physical" healing -- in the sense that it guaranteed our future glorification when we receive our new resurrection bodies and when all sickness will be forever eradicated and believers will experience no sickness, pain, suffering, or death (Rev 21:1-4-[note](#), Rev 22:1-3-[note](#)). Some falsely teach that physical healing is present in the atonement making reference to Isaiah 53:5 passage and the passage from Matthew 8 where we read...

And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill 17 in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES, AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES." (Mt 8:16-17)

Observe that the context of Mt 8:17 is clearly Jesus' healing activity during His earthly ministry so that the prophecy in Isaiah 53:4 was fulfilled (note that verse 17 begins "in order that" indicating the healing just mentioned was in order to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy). When did Jesus perform this healing which fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy? It was clearly **before** the atoning work of Christ on the cross. The point is that physical healing in this life is not inherent or promised in the atoning work of Christ. There is a false doctrine that teaches one should expect to be physically healed because of Christ's work on the Cross. If physical healing does not occur, the problem is that the ill or sick individual lacks the faith necessary to invoke God's healing power. The upshot of this false teaching is that the faith they teach about is faith in "faith" not in Christ. As already alluded to, clearly when believers die our physical bodies are delivered from the presence of disease in the future resurrection life. Furthermore God **can** and **still does heal physical illnesses** because He is a God of lovingkindness and mercy and it is His sovereign pleasure to chose to heal or not to heal. He alone is God, even if He chooses to not heal in answer to our fervent prayers for healing (and we all understand this statement, because we have all prayed passionately for healing of some loved one, and healing did not come about. We must NOT allow anyone to say the reason it did not come about is because we did not have enough faith or the right kind of faith, but because it was the good, acceptable and perfect will of the All Wise, In Control God of life and death, the God of Dt 32:39!).

## **Jehovah-Rophi.**

### **I Am the Lord That Healeth Thee**

by William Cowper

Heal us, Emmanuel! here we are,  
Waiting to feel Thy touch:  
Deep-wounded souls to Thee repair  
And, Saviour, we are such.

Our faith is feeble, we confess,  
We faintly trust Thy word;  
But wilt Thou pity us the less?  
Be that far from Thee, Lord!

Remember him who once applied,  
With trembling, for relief;  
"Lord, I believe," with tears he cried,  
"Oh, help my unbelief!"

She too, who touch'd Thee in the press,  
And healing virtue stole,  
Was answer'd, "Daughter, go in peace,  
Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Conceal'd amid the gathering throng,



She would have shunn'd Thy view;  
And if her faith was firm and strong,  
Had strong misgivings too.

Like her, with hopes and fears we come,  
To touch Thee, if we may;  
Oh! send us not despairing home,  
Send none unheal'd away!

**What do you learn from Miriam's being smitten with leprosy?** for context read entire chapter Numbers 12:1-16

"So the anger of the LORD burned against them and He departed. 10 But when the cloud had withdrawn from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, as white as snow. As Aaron turned toward Miriam, behold, she was leprous. 11 Then Aaron said to Moses "Oh, my lord, I beg you, do not account this sin to us, in which we have acted foolishly and in which we have sinned. 12 "Oh, do not let her be like one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes from his mother's womb!" 13 Moses cried out to Jehovah, saying, "O Elohim, [heal](#) ([rapha](#)) her, I [pray](#)!"

**King Hezekiah's Illness:** 2 Kings 20:1-6:

"In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.' (2) Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, (3) "Remember now, O LORD, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly (4) Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, (5) "Return and say to Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David, "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will [heal](#) ([rapha](#)) you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. (6) "I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake and for My servant David's sake".

**God's Appearance to Solomon after the dedication of the Temple of God:** 2Chronicles 7:12, 13:14:

"Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, 14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will [heal](#) ([rapha](#)) their [land](#).

**A "Negative" Example on the occasion of the Word of God coming to King Asa through the prophet Hanani on the occasion of King Asa's failure to rely on Jehovah to fight the Arameans (contrast King David's example below)**

2 Chronicles 16:9, 10, 11, 12:

"For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars." 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time. 11 Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek **Jehovah**, (as Jehovah Rapha) but the [physicians](#) ([rapha](#))."

**Contrast King David with King Asa above** Psalm 30:2

"O Jehovah my Elohim, I cried to Thee for [help](#), and Thou didst [heal](#) ([rapha](#)) me."

"David sent up prayers for himself and for his people when visited with the pestilence. He went at once to head quarters, and not roundabout to fallible means. God is the best physician, even for our bodily infirmities. We do very wickedly and foolishly when we forget God. It was a sin in Asa that he trusted to physicians and not to God. If we must have a physician, let it be so, but still let us go to our God first of all; and, above all, remember that there can be no power to heal in medicine of itself; the healing energy must flow from the divine hand. If our watch is out of order, we take it to the watchmaker; if our body or soul be in an evil plight, let us resort to him who created them, and has unfailing skill to put them in right condition. As for our spiritual

diseases, nothing can heal these evils but the touch of the Lord Christ: if we do but touch the hem of his garment, we shall be made whole, while if we embrace all other physicians in our arms, they can do us no service. "O Lord my God." Observe the covenant name which faith uses -- "my God." Thrice happy is he who can claim the Lord himself to be his portion. Note how David's faith ascends the scale; he sang "O Lord" in the first verse, but it is "O Lord my God," in the second. Heavenly heart music is an ascending thing, like the pillars of smoke which rose from the altar of incense. I cried unto thee. I could hardly pray, but I cried; I poured out my soul as a little child pours out its desires. I cried to my God: I knew to whom to cry; I did not cry to my friends, or to any arm of flesh. Hence the sure and satisfactory result -- Thou hast healed me. I know it. I am sure of it. I have the evidence of spiritual health within me now: glory be to thy name! Every humble suppliant with God who seeks release from the disease of sin, shall speed as well as the Psalmists did, but those who will not so much as seek a cure, need not wonder if their wounds putrefy and their soul dies. ([Treasury of David](#))

**How is Israel's sin described by Isaiah?** Isaiah 1:4-note, Is 1:5, 6-note

"Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the Jehovah. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They have turned away from Him. 5 Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick And the whole heart is faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil.

**God's Words to Jeremiah regarding His promises to Israel for future restoration (physical & spiritual healing):** Jeremiah 30:13, 14, 15, 16, 17 (Read entire chapter of Jeremiah 30:1-24 for proper context):

'There is no one to plead your cause. No [healing](#) (participle of [rapha](#)) for your sore, no recovery for you. 14 'All your lovers have forgotten you, They do not seek you; for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy (cf Dt 32:39) , With the punishment of a cruel one, because your iniquity is great & your sins are numerous. 15 'Why do you cry out over your injury ? Your pain is incurable. Because your iniquity is great & your sins are numerous, I have done these things to you. 16 'Therefore all who devour you will be devoured & all your adversaries, every one of them, will go into captivity & those who plunder you will be for plunder, And all who prey upon you I will give for prey. 17 'For I will [restore](#) you to [health](#) & I will [heal](#) ([rapha](#)) you of your [wounds](#),' declares the Jehovah, (Jehovah Rapha) 'because they have called you an outcast, saying: "It is Zion; no one cares for her."

The prophet is reminding Israel of her sin and its consequences comparing it to the metaphor of an incurable wound & yet promising future restoration to the land of Israel and spiritual healing by Jehovah Rapha.

**Notice the order in Ps 103:3 - pardoning precedes healing:**

"Who pardons all your iniquities, Who [Jehovah] heals ([rapha](#)) all your diseases."

**C H Spurgeon** commenting on this verse notes that...

When the cause is gone, namely, iniquity, the effect ceases. Sickesses of body and soul came into the world by sin, and as sin is eradicated, diseases bodily, mental, and spiritual will vanish, till "the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick." Many-sided is the character of our heavenly Father, for, having forgiven as a judge, he then cures as a physician. He is all things to us, as our needs call for him, and our infirmities do but reveal him in new characters.

"In him is only good,  
In me is only ill,  
My ill but draws his goodness forth,  
And me he loveth still."

God gives efficacy to medicine for the body, and his grace sanctifies the soul. Spiritually we are daily under his care, and he visits us, as the surgeon does his patient; healing still (for that is the exact word) each malady as it arises. No disease of our soul baffles his skill, he goes on healing all, and he will do so till the last trace of taint has gone from our nature. The two alls of this verse are further reasons for all that is within us praising the Lord. ([Treasury of David](#))

**One Other Tower...**  
**JEHOVAH-ROPHI**

**"The Lord will provide,"—  
The Tower of Healing  
by John MacDuff**

From his book - [COMMUNION MEMORIES](#) and the chapter entitled [The Great Resolve](#)

Among those who partook of the Holy Sacrament, doubtless there were not a few members of the ever wide family of affliction. Some, experiencing soul-sorrows—hidden, unspoken griefs, too deep for utterance or for tears. In the case of others, trials, the nature of which is only too patent to fellow-worshipers and fellow-communicants, from the sable attire and symbols of mourning. It is blessed for you to think of Him whose love you commemorated, as Himself the King of sorrows—the Prince of sufferers—who, just because He was thus "acquainted with grief," is pre-eminently able to heal the broken in heart, and to bind up their wounds. He proclaims as His Name (and He suffered, and wept, and bled, and died, that He might have a right to say it) JEHOVAH-ROPHI, "I am the Lord that heals you." He is the true "Healing-tree," which, cast into your bitterest Marah-pool, will make its waters sweet.

Brethren, if other earthly portions have perished, cleave to Him Who is unfailing and imperishable (Joshua 1:5)—Whose Name survives, when prized earthly names have either faded in oblivion, or are whispered through tears. When, let me ask, is the name of God most comforting? "I have remembered," says the Psalmist, "Your name, O Lord, in the night" (Ps.119:55). It was at Jacob's fierce struggle-hour, as at many of our own, he was led to prompt the earnest question to Him who was wrestling with him, "What is your name?" And, as with the Patriarch, He blesses us there. That Name of God is like a lighthouse, with its six-sided revolving lamps, it shines brightest in the gloom of trial. If some of the loopholes of your Tower be darkened—if the sun has set; and the midnight sky be over and around you; be it yours to sing—"You will light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness," "God our Maker gives songs in the night."

My closing communion wish and prayer is, that that Name, which is above every name, may be to all of you as "Ointment poured forth." "The name of the Lord!" it is spoken of as the badge at a more enduring Feast in the Church of the glorified. "His name," we read, "shall be upon their foreheads." No more; that Name is to form the theme of the saints' everlasting song. For what is the ascription of the Church triumphant—the ransomed conquerors beheld by John in vision, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God? "Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify YOUR NAME?"

O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Three in One in covenant for our salvation—Send us help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion! that the resolve following a transient season of Communion on earth, may form at once the vow and the joy of Eternity—"We will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever." (Micah 4:5)

From **Henry Law** (1877)...

A Shepherd heals the ailments of the sheep. His heart is tender love. It is, moreover, skillful care. The flock is subject to variety of ills. Inclement seasons bring disease: contagion may be contracted; injuries from accidents occur, and sickness from many causes weakens. The well-trained Shepherd knows how to use the suitable relief. He watches anxiously, he diligently tends, he wisely nurses, he administers right remedies, and so effects a cure. It is his pride to have a healthy flock.

Here the Good Shepherd cannot be hidden. **Jehovah-Rophi**—"I am the Lord who heals you"—is His chosen name. (Ex 15:26) Is it not written,

"Who heals all your diseases." (Ps 103:3[note](#))

And again,

"He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds." (Ps 147:3[note](#))

In the kingdom of grace the lament is never heard,

"Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?" (Je 8:22)

Over His flock the Sun of Righteousness ever

"shines with healing in His wings." (Mal 4:2)

When He came to procure for His people everlasting health, miracles of bodily healing were foremost in His credentials. His reply to the disciples of John is,

"Go your way, and tell John what things you have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised." (Lk 7:22)

At His word all maladies took flight. No case was too inveterate or too severe. As many as touched the very hem of His garment were made perfectly whole. So, also, He heals the sickness of the soul. His present kingdom is a spiritual Bethesda.

"From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it: but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." (Isa. 1:6)

Each believer is in himself loathsome, as the man "full of leprosy." (Lk 5:12) But let the cry ascend,

"Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."

"Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved for You are my praise." (Je 17:14)

The Good Shepherd will put forth His power, and spiritual health shall be restored. ([Gleanings from the Book of Life](#) -see chapter on God as our [Shepherd](#))

## ADDITIONAL NOTES ON JEHOVAH RAPHA

The first time we see Jehovah **rapha** mentioned it is in connection with **BITTERNESS** in Exodus 15. This is a bitter situation -- do you see how this is so applicable to real life situations? It doesn't matter whether it is physical, emotional or spiritual. Bitter is still bitter. And then the tree in the water makes the water sweet. How does this relate to (Ga 3:13)? As discussed above the Greek word **xulon (word study)** used to translate the Hebrew word for **'tree'** in Ex 15:25 is also used for the Cross of Christ in the NT (1Pe2:24-note). So the picture in the bitter situation in Exodus 15 certainly seems to foreshadow the healing power of the Cross in the NT. It seems fair to suggest that when we encounter a bitter situation and flee to the cross of Jesus Christ, then the bitter can be made "sweet" by Jehovah Rapha. The circumstances may still be present but remember what Paul said in [Ro 8](#) that **"IN all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."** Jehovah Rapha desires for us all to be "super conquerors" even **IN THE MIDST** of those situations that can otherwise potentially produce bitterness in our soul and spirit (see Ro 8:35) So anytime I have "sickness" of spirit, soul, mind or body, I should to run into is the strong tower of Jehovah Rapha. Run to the Great Physician and to the "tree", the Cross, where He Who knew no sin was made sin for us. This does not mean to suggest that we should never go to human physicians. In fact we should always seek wise counsel from trained medical practitioners in these situations. The point is don't bypass the Great Physician on your way to the doctor's office. And remember you can get an appointment with the Great Physician Jehovah Rapha anytime day or night and He always makes "house calls"!

All through Jeremiah we find the phrase **"you did not listen"** (click link for examples) (compare "if you give earnest heed" in Ex15:26?). How often we too are like Judah, unable to hear the voice of the Lord. Instead they listened to false prophets who had

**"healed"** the brokenness of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' but there is no peace." (Jer 6:11, 8:14).

The balm of Gilead is needed.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no **physician** there? Why then has not the **health** of the daughter of my people been **restored**?" (Jer 8:22)

God was not the problem. Judah was. They refused to listen to God or His prophet. Gilead was a city of refuge, where fugitives could go to find refuge. Balm was used for medicinal purposes and cosmetic purposes. Take the balm of Gilead and you not only heal a sick soul but you have a beauty which shows forth on that person's countenance. Is there a balm in Gilead? Yes, there is. The "balm" that is always available to the humble heart, the one who has ears to hear His Word and the truth about Jehovah Rapha Who healed Israel when they cried out by sending "balm" in the form of His word (Ps107:19, 20+).

So what do we do when we need healing? If we are hurting...bitterness, trauma, even from the sins we have committed. Run to Jehovah Rapha, to Calvary and find the "balm in Gilead". And lay hold of the "balm" -- lay hold of truth in His Word (the "balm of Gilead"), truth like **"God causes all things to work together for good"** (Ro 8:28) and then hold fast the Word of life for it is your balm that brings healing to your soul and spirit. When you need healing from bitterness -- Run to Jehovah Rapha. Go to Him first. Cry out to Him "God what shall I do? Is there sin I am unaware of" (Ps 139:23, 24, 1Cor4:4). If so, confess and forsake the sin (Pr 28:13, 1Jn1:9). Go to His Word of promise (Ro 9:9) and saturate yourself with the "balm" of His Word, laying hold of His "precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Peter 1:4)

## COMMENTARY ON Psalm 107:20

**Spurgeon's Comments - He sent his word and healed them.** Man is not healed by medicine alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God is man restored from going down to the grave. A word will do it, a word has done it thousands of times.

**And delivered them from their destructions.** They escape though dangers had surrounded them, dangers many and deadly. The word of the Lord has a great delivering power; he has but to speak and the armies of death flee in an instant. Sin sick souls should remember the power of *the Word*, and be much in hearing it and meditating upon it.

Spiritually considered, these verses describe a sin sick soul: foolish but yet aroused to a sense of guilt, it refuses comfort from any and every quarter, and a lethargy of despair utterly paralyses it. To its own apprehension nothing remains but utter destruction in many forms: the gates of death stand open before it, and it is, in its own apprehension, hurried in that direction. Then is the soul driven to cry in the bitterness of its grief unto the Lord, and Christ, the eternal Word, comes with healing power in the direst extremity, saving to the uttermost.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS.

Ver. 20. When George Wishart arrived at Dundee, where the plague was raging (1545), he caused intimation to be made that he would preach; and for that purpose chose his station upon the head of the East gate, the infected persons standing without, and those that were whole within. His text was Psalms 107:20, He sent his word and healed them, etc., wherein he treated of the profit and comfort of God's word, the punishment that comes by contempt of it, the readiness of God's mercy to such as truly turn to him, and the happiness of those whom God takes from this misery, etc. By which sermon he so raised up the hearts of those that heard him, that they regarded not death, but judged them more happy that should then depart, rather than such as should remain behind, considering that they knew not whether they should have such a comforter with them. "Samuel Clarke (1599-1682), in *"A General Martyrologie."*

Ver. 20. He sent his word. The same expression occurs in Psalms 147:15; Psalms 147:18; compare Isaiah 55:11. We detect in such passages the first glimmering of St. John's doctrine of the agency of the personal Word. The Word by which the heavens were made, Psalms 33:6, is seen to be not merely the expression of God's will, but his messenger mediating between himself and his creatures. It is interesting to compare with this the language of Elihu in the parallel passage of Job 33:23, where what is here ascribed to the agency of the Word is ascribed to that of the "mediating angel, or messenger." "J.J. Stewart Perowne.

Ver. 20. His word who healed them was his essential Word, even the second person in the Godhead, our Lord Jesus Christ, the word who was made flesh and dwelt among us: of this divine Word it was foretold in the Old Testament, that he should arise with the glory of the morning sun, bringing healing in his wings for all our maladies; and accordingly the New Testament relates, that Jesus went about all Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing ALL manner of sickness, and ALL manner of disease among the people. He healed the bodily disease miraculously, to prove that he was the Almighty Physician of the soul. And it is remarkable that he never rejected any person who applied to him for an outward cure, to demonstrate to us, that he would never cast out any person who should apply to him for a spiritual cure. "William Romaine.

Ver. 20. And delivered them from their destructions. From their pits: or, From their sepulchres. That is, from the deaths to which they were near. Others render, From their nets or snares, Others, *their destructions*, the diseases in which they were miserable prisoners. "Franciscus Vatablus.

Ver. 20. And delivered them from their destructions. From the destruction of the body, of the beauty and strength of it by diseases; restoring to health is a redeeming of the life from destruction; from the grave, the pit of corruption and destruction, so called because in it bodies corrupt, putrefy, and are destroyed by worms; and such who are savingly convinced of sin, and blessed with pardoning grace and mercy, are delivered from the everlasting destruction of body and soul in hell. "John Gill.

### HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER.

Ver. 20. Recovery from sickness must be ascribed to the Lord, and gratitude should flow forth because of it. But the text describes spiritual and mental sickness. Notice,

1. The Patient in his extremity.

(a) He is a fool: by nature inclined to evil.



(b) He has played the fool (see Psalms 107:17), "transgression", "iniquities."

(c) He now has lost all appetite and is past all cure.

(d) He is at death's door.

(e) But he has begun to pray.

## 2. The Cure in its simplicity.

(a) Christ the Word is the essential cure. He heals the guilt, habit, depression, and evil results of sin. For every form of malady Christ has healing; hence preachers should preach him much, and all meditate much upon him.

(b) The word in the Book is the instrumental cure: its teachings, doctrines, precepts, promises, encouragements, invitations, examples.

(c) The word of the Lord by the Holy Spirit is the applying cure. He leads us to believe. He is to be sought by the sick soul. He is to be relied upon by those who would bring others to the Great Physician.

## Paschal Lamb Typical Nature of Christ

1. A type of Christ Exodus 12:3 ; 1 Corinthians 5:7
2. A male of the first year Exodus 12:5 ; Isaiah 9:6
3. Without blemish Exodus 12:5 ; 1 Peter 1:19
4. Taken out of the flock Exodus 12:5 ; Hebrews 2:14,17
5. Chosen before-hand Exodus 12:3 ; 1 Peter 2:4
6. Shut up four days that it might be closely examined Exodus 12:6 ; John 8:46 ; 18:38
7. Killed by the people Exodus 12:6 ; Acts 2:23
8. Killed at the place where the Lord put his name Deuteronomy 16:2,5-7 ; 2 Chronicles 35:1 ; Luke 13:33
9. Killed in the evening Exodus 12:6 ; Mark 15:34,37
10. Its blood to be shed Exodus 12:7 ; Luke 22:20
11. Blood of, sprinkled on lintel and door-posts Exodus 12:22 ; Hebrews 9:13,14 ; 10:22 ; 1 Peter 1:2
12. Blood of, not sprinkled on threshold Exodus 12:7 ; Hebrews 10:29
13. Not a bone of, broken Exodus 12:46 ; John 19:36
14. Not eaten raw Exodus 12:9 ; 1 Corinthians 11:28,29
15. Roasted with fire Exodus 12:8 ; Psalm 22:14,15
16. Eaten with bitter herbs Exodus 12:8 ; Zechariah 12:10
17. Eaten with unleavened bread Exodus 12:39 ; 1 Corinthians 5:7,8 ; 2 Corinthians 1:12
18. Eaten in haste Exodus 12:11 ; Hebrews 6:18
19. Eaten with the loins girt Exodus 12:11 ; Luke 12:35 ; Ephesians 6:14 ; 1 Peter 1:13
20. Eaten with staff in hand Exodus 12:11 ; Psalm 23:4
21. Eaten with shoes on Exodus 12:11 ; Ephesians 6:15
22. Not taken out of the house Exodus 12:46 ; Ephesians 3:17
23. What remained of it till morning to be burned Exodus 12:10 ; Matthew 7:6 ; Luke 11:3

## Afflictions Made Beneficial

1. In promoting the glory of God John 9:1-3 ; 11:3,4 ; 21:18,19
2. In exhibiting the power and faithfulness of God Psalm 34:19,20 ; 2 Corinthians 4:8-11
3. In teaching us the will of God Psalm 119:71 ; Isaiah 26:9 ; Micah 6:9
4. In turning us to God Deuteronomy 4:30,31 ; Nehemiah 1:8,9 ; Psalm 78:34 ; Isaiah 10:20,21 ; Hosea 2:6,7
5. In keeping us from again departing from God Job 34:31,32 ; Isaiah 10:20 ; Ezekiel 14:10,11
6. In leading us to seek God in prayer Judges 4:3 ; Jeremiah 31:18 ; Lamentations 2:17-19 ; Hosea 5:14,15 ; Jonah 2:1
7. In convincing us of sin Job 36:8,9 ; Psalm 119:67 ; Luke 15:16-18
8. In leading us to confession of sin Numbers 21:7 ; Psalm 32:5 ; 51:3,5

9. In testing and exhibiting our sincerity Job 23:10 ; Psalm 66:10 ; Proverbs 17:3
10. In trying our faith and obedience Genesis 22:1,2 ; Hebrews 11:17 ; Exodus 15:23-25 ; Deuteronomy 8:2,16 ; 1 Peter 1:7 ; Revelation 2:10
11. In humbling us Deuteronomy 8:3,16 ; 2 Chronicles 7:13,14 ; Lamentations 3:19,20 ; 2 Corinthians 12:7
12. In purifying us Ecclesiastes 7:2,3 ; Isaiah 1:25,26 ; 48:10 ; Jeremiah 9:6,7 ; Zechariah 13:9 ; Malachi 3:2,3
13. In exercising our patience Psalm 40:1 ; Romans 5:3 ; James 1:3 ; 1 Peter 2:20
14. In rendering us fruitful in good works John 15:2 ; Hebrews 12:10,11
15. In furthering the gospel Acts 8:3,4 ; 11:19-21 ; Philippians 1:12 ; 2 Timothy 2:9,10 ; 4:16,17

### Exemplified

1. Joseph's brethren Genesis 42:21
2. Joseph Genesis 45:5,7,8
3. Israel Deuteronomy 8:3,5
4. Josiah 2 Kings 22:19
5. Hezekiah 2 Chronicles 32:25,26
6. Manasseh 2 Chronicles 33:12
7. Jonah Jonah 2:7
8. Prodigal's son Luke 15:21

## Effects of Sin on Mankind's "Health"

from [Names of God by Nathan Stone](#) - see below

The moral & spiritual sickness of mankind is an open, running sore. The heart of man is desperately sick, says Jeremiah ("The heart is more deceitful than all else & is desperately sick; who can understand it? Jer 17:9). Herein its fundamental disease - the sin which alienates it from God-the sin which manifests itself in open and secret evil of every sort, in high places and in low, which brought the judgment of Jehovah in times of old, and ever since, and must yet. How sorely mankind is in need of a healer, a physician! The world lies in the bitterness and bond of iniquity. It is like the waters of Marah to which the children of Israel came in the wilderness. It is not sweetness and life but bitterness and death. Yet the antidote to its poison, the remedy for its sickness, is ever near-even at hand, as it was near the waters of Marah. For there God performed His miracle of healing by means of a tree growing nearby. It was the tree of God cast into the waters there that healed and sweetened them....Now Marah may stand for disappointment and bitter experiences in the life of God's children, who have been redeemed, as was Israel in Egypt through the Passover Lamb, and snatched by divine power from the terrible pursuing enemy; who meet, like Israel at Marah, with severe testing and trial, and in their disappointment and discouragement sometimes murmur with a bitter and faithless complaint, forgetting the great salvation and power of God. Certainly Marah stands for the sweetening of those bitteresses, the curing of the ills to which both flesh and spirit are heir. True, God has implanted healing properties in waters and drugs even to the present day for the healing of bodily ills. He has made man capable of wresting secrets from nature which have marvelously advanced the art of healing. It is true that His is the healing hand behind it all. But this incident is intended chiefly as a lesson and warning against that sin and disobedience which lie at the root of all sorrow, suffering, and sickness in the world. The tree there cast into the waters is obviously a figure of the tree on which hung the Jehovah of the New Testament-even Jesus, the only remedy for the cure of mankind's ills-and which alone can sweeten the bitterness of human experience through that forgiveness of sin and sanctifying of life which it accomplished. - [Names of God \(online\)](#)

**JEHOVAH-ROPHE**  
by Nathan Stone

[Names of God](#)

THE NAME **Jehovah-rophe (rapha, rophi)** means Jehovah heals. It is the second of the compound names of Jehovah. The name Jehovah-jireh arose out of the incident of Jehovah's provision of a substitute in place of Isaac whom He had commanded Abraham to sacrifice upon the altar. We learned that it stands for Jehovah's great provision for man's redemption in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and who was offered up on the very spot where Abraham had predicted--"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" --that is, Mount Moriah in Jerusalem, the scene of Calvary.

There is a wonderful and significant order in these compound names of Jehovah as they appear in the Scriptures (in contrast to the waste and desolation which certain critics have wrought upon the Scriptures; whose "assured results" have only obscured the light for those who accept them). In these names there is a progressive revelation of Jehovah meeting every need as it arises in the experience of His redeemed people--saving, sustaining, strengthening, sanctifying, and so on; and not only for the redeemed of that day but for God's saints in all ages. The things that happened to Israel, the apostle Paul tells us, were our examples (1Cor 10:6)

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come," he again remarks in 1Cor 10:11.

For this name of God, Jehovah-rophe, arises out of one of Israel's earliest experiences in the wilderness as told in Exodus 15:22, 23, 24,25, 26. Indeed it was their first experience after the crossing of the Red Sea and the singing of the great song of triumph. But the same chapter which records Israel's triumphant song also records the first murmurings of discontent and bitterness. In Exodus 15:22 we read:

"So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water."

In the first flush of victory they went along joyfully the first day, and perhaps even the second day. But the way was hot and weary, and their water was giving out. The third day was well along and still there was no water. Their throats were parched. They felt their plight becoming desperate. They forgot the might and mercy of the God who had so marvelously delivered them. In their anxiety and anger they murmured against Moses in bitter complaint. Then in Ex 15:23:

"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah" (which means bitter).

We can imagine their feelings of relief and joy as they first came in sight of this well, but what angry disillusionment when they find the waters bitter--an aggravation and a mockery of their thirst. They were maddened by this setback to their hope and expectation. What were they to do? Were they and their children to die there of thirst? Then God showed Moses a certain tree, which, when cast into the waters, turned them from bitterness to sweetness so that the people drank. They were refreshed and strengthened and heartened for the journey ahead. Their murmuring was turned to praise as their confidence in Jehovah and His servant Moses was renewed.

But it was not God who was there on trial. It was the people. He was proving them, and saying to them (Ex 15:26) :

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight . . I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah that healeth thee" (i.e., Jehovah-rophe)

The word **rophe/rapha** ([see word study](#)) appears some sixty or seventy times in the Old Testament, always meaning to restore, to heal, to cure, or a physician, not only in the physical sense but in the moral and spiritual sense also. As out of Abraham's trying experience in the mount there came a new and comforting name of God, **Jehovah Jireh**, so out of Israel's bitter experience in the wilderness there comes another new and comforting name of God, Jehovah-rophe, Jehovah heals. And Jehovah here pledged Himself on condition of their obedience to be always their Healer.

## MAN'S NEED OF HEALING

Perhaps the first lesson we may draw from this story, since these events are all examples to us, is humanity's need of healing, of a physician--even in a physical sense. The Old Testament reveals a number of instances in which God's power is manifested, even though sometimes by natural means, to heal the bodies of men. A notable instance is that of King Hezekiah who was not only healed but granted a definite additional span of years to live.

Nothing is more obvious and tragic and costly than the toll which sickness has exacted from human life and happiness. Disease is rife and often rampant the world over and has wrought untold havoc. It is no respecter of persons and stretches out its tentacles into

all classes and communities and climes. It is a grim fact of human existence with which mankind has always had to cope and which has called for the exercise of its best brains, and effort, and resourcefulness. Terrible plagues and scourges have at times threatened the existence of an entire continent and have actually destroyed large portions of populations. Yes, mankind is physically sick and is in constant need of a physician, of healing. According to the Old Testament, God, Himself the one who heals, has used sickness and disease present in the earth as an instrument of judgment upon sin. For David's sin against Him, God offers him the choice of one of three punishments. The responsibility of the terrible choice involved is so great that David simply places it in the hands of God who chooses to bring pestilence (1Chr 21:12, 13, 14). The many hospitals and asylums and institutions everywhere, built and maintained at great cost, bear witness to the prevalence and tragedy of sickness in the world. What a mass of disease and sickness upon the earth when the Great Physician walked upon it in the flesh. Healing is certainly a great and noble and effective part of the missionary enterprise of the Church. How appropriate to the physical need of men is the name Jehovah-rophe!

But man's need of healing is even greater in the moral and spiritual realm. For here the ravages of sin are even more grim and obvious. The tragedy and sorrow and pain and woe are even greater. In a figure of the physical the prophet Isaiah describes the moral and spiritual condition of his own people:

"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:5, 6).

The moral and spiritual sickness of mankind is an open, running sore. The heart of man is desperately sick, says Jeremiah 17:9. Herein is its fundamental disease--the sin which alienates it from God--the sin which manifests itself in open and secret evil of every sort, in high places and in low, which brought the judgment of Jehovah in times of old, and ever since, and must yet. How sorely mankind is in need of a healer, a physician! The world lies in the bitterness and bond of iniquity.

It is like the waters of Marah to which the children of Israel came in the wilderness. It is not sweetness and life but bitterness and death. Yet the antidote to its poison, the remedy for its sickness, is ever near--even at hand, as it was near the waters of Marah. For there God performed His miracle of healing by means of a tree growing nearby. It was the tree of God cast into the waters there that healed and sweetened them.

## **JEHOVAH THE HEALER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

This brings us to the second point, that Jehovah is the great Healer of men. He alone has the remedy that can heal the spirits of men. He is the remedy for the healing of man. And the Gospel is concerned primarily and chiefly with the moral and spiritual sickness and healing of mankind, for behind all the evils and physical sickness is sin. The importance of Marah in Israel's and human experience is attested by the fact that God gave Himself this new name here--Jehovah, who heals. The significance of the name Jehovah must be recalled here as "used in connection with beings who can apprehend and appreciate the Infinite." Therefore this name first appears in connection with His dealings with men. We learned that the title Jehovah and its use suggest moral and spiritual attributes in God--righteousness, holiness, love; that He holds man, created in the image of God, responsible for such moral and spiritual qualities. Man's sin and fall therefore called forth the judgment of Jehovah. But the love of Jehovah triumphs over judgment in providing a redemption, as we saw in the name **Jehovah Jireh**. So, too, the One who heals from the sin which mars and corrupts mankind is again Jehovah, as distinguished from His other names.

Now Marah may stand for disappointment and bitter experiences in the life of God's children, who have been redeemed, as was Israel in! Egypt through the Passover Lamb, and snatched by divine power from the terrible pursuing enemy; who meet, like Israel at Marah, with severe testing and trial, and in their disappointment and discouragement sometimes murmur with a bitter and faithless complaint, forgetting the great salvation and power of God. Certainly Marah stands for the sweetening of those bitternesses, the curing of the ills to which both flesh and spirit are heir. True, God has implanted healing properties in waters and drugs even to the present day for the healing of bodily ills. He has made man capable of wresting secrets from nature which have marvelously advanced the art of healing. It is true that His is the healing hand behind it all. But this incident is intended chiefly as a lesson and warning against that sin and disobedience which lie at the root of all sorrow, suffering, and sickness in the world. The tree there cast into the waters is obviously a figure of the tree on which hung the Jehovah of the New Testament--even Jesus, the only remedy for the cure of mankind's ills--and which alone can sweeten the bitterness of human experience through that forgiveness of sin and sanctifying of life which it accomplished.

Certainly God could and did heal physical maladies in the Old Testament whenever it pleased Him. Moses cried out to Jehovah in behalf of Miriam smitten with leprosy:

"Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee" (Nu 12:13).

The Old Testament clearly reveals God's anxious desire and purpose to heal the hurt of His people, and the wounds and sorrows of all mankind. Certainly God removed plagues and pestilences. But the fact that He visited such plagues and pestilences as punishment is evidence of the underlying root of it all sin. The psalmist acknowledges this when he says:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul ... who [first] forgiveth all thine iniquities and [then] healeth all thy diseases" (Ps 103:2, 3).

Other Scriptures state this even more strongly.

"Why criest thou for thine affliction? Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee" (Jer 30:15).

"Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? Hath thy soul loathed Zion? Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble! We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee" (Jer 14:19, 20).

Then many references to sickness and wounds are simply figurative expressions of moral and spiritual ills, so that it is rather in this sense that God is known as Jehovah-rophe--Jehovah who heals. This is what Jeremiah means when he says:

"For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith Jehovah" (Je 30:17)

and again:

"Return, ye backsliding children and I will heal your backslidings" (Je 3:22).

So Isaiah speaks of the day in which

"Jehovah bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound" (Is 30:26).

He predicts the coming of One upon whom the Spirit of Jehovah God will rest in order, among other things, to bind up the brokenhearted (Is 61:1).

The will, and the power, and the longing are present in Jehovah to heal. The only obstacle in the way is man himself. The remedy is there--near at hand--as near as the tree at Marah's waters.

"The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart," says Moses (Deut 30:14),

There is salvation for every sin, healing for every evil. The remedy only awaits acknowledgment or application. This, man has often been unwilling to do. A king of Judah smitten with a disease, evidently and appropriately because of a certain evil act, sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians (2Chr 16:12). It was because of sin that the remedy lay for him in Jehovah's hand alone, even though physicians may have been sufficient for the cure otherwise. For the hurt of his people, brought about by sin, Jeremiah asks:

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer 8:21, 22).

The remedy was there--in Jehovah Himself--but they went on and on refusing it "till there was no remedy" (or healing) (2Chr 36:16). And centuries later the word of the Lord Jesus to His people was,

"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn 5:40).

## **JESUS THE HEALER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

The Jehovah who heals in the Old Testament is the Jesus who heals in the New.

The ministry of the Lord Jesus began with healing, In the synagogue at Nazareth, having returned in the power of the Spirit from His great temptation, He opened His public ministry by quoting Isaiah 61:1:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18).

In Luke 4:23 we find Him saying to them:

"Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in



thy country."

The reference was to acts of healing which the Lord Jesus had performed there. In the same chapter various acts of healing are recorded--the healing of fevers, the cleansing of leprosy, the casting out of demons, So He continued all through His ministry. They brought to Him all that were diseased. And He went about

"teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23).

These miracles of healing constantly amazed the people and He cited them as proofs of His identity and mission. When John in prison doubts His identity, He sends back word:

"Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:4, 5).

"The same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me," He said (John 5:36).

But as with Jehovah of the Old, so with Jesus of the New Testament, physical healing was only incidental to His chief object, which was the healing of the souls of men. His opening words in the synagogue at Nazareth declared His mission to be to preach the Gospel, to preach deliverance, to set at liberty (**Ed: Cf Jn 8:31, 32, 36 - see related word studies on eleutheroo = set free, emancipate, set at liberty and eleutheria - freedom, liberty**). His miracles of healing were proof of His identity and mission--His credentials. Healing men's bodies was a great and blessed work, indeed. Yet many of the sicknesses He healed were striking symptoms of that dark, dread disease which has its roots in the soul of men and not in the body--the disease of sin. How often He cast out demons! And what does demon-possession stand for but sin-possession? How often He healed the leper! And what is leprosy but a type of sin in its foulness and vileness. The Old Testament is clearest in its teaching of this truth. How often He said to those He healed, "Sin no more!" or "Thy sins are forgiven thee!" And He silences His carping critics and accusers with the words:

"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Mt 9:12);

and connecting the idea of sickness and healing with sin, He continues:

"for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt 9:13).

True, He went about healing bodies and doing good, but His invitation ever was:

"Come unto me and I will give you rest"--"rest [or cure] unto your souls." (Mt 11:28, 29, 30)

Then the Lord Jesus consummated His ministry by becoming that tree which made the bitter pools of human existence waters of life and healing and sweetness. The teaching of Marah is wonderfully fulfilled in Him. There they were taught the corruption and the bitterness of the purely natural waters which are only an aggravation of the soul's sickness and need. Only the tree of God's provision and choice could purify and sweeten and satisfy. To the woman at the well the Lord Jesus said:

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn 4:13, 14).

On a great feast day in the Temple at Jerusalem He cried:

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:37, 38, ASV).

The Lord Jesus is both the tree and the waters.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."

He is the Well of salvation (Isa 12:3), the Water of life, sweet, saving and satisfying.

In Him the tree of life and the river of life in Eden's garden are free and accessible once more to Adam's sons. This is the picture presented to us in the closing scene of the Book of Revelation:

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev 22:1, 2).

The Word of Jehovah which He spoke by His messenger, the prophet Malachi, has found glorious fulfillment and awaits a yet more

glorious fulfillment.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal 4:2).

What Jehovah was to Israel at Marah, so the Lord Jesus is to all who will receive and obey Him, the Great Physician. How sad, that, like Israel of old who refused Jehovah till there was no remedy, multitudes today have refused the healing sacrifice and ministry of Jehovah-Jesus! And along with many who call themselves by His name, they prefer other physicians and remedies to Him--culture, science, philosophy, social improvement--forgers of lies and physicians of no value, as Job calls them (Job 13:4). But praise God for the multitudes who have received Him, and applied His remedy, and have been made whole, and **"take the water of life freely"** (Rev 22:17). (from Nathan Stone's recommended book on the [Names of God](#))

**JEHOVAH ROPHI**  
**NO. 1664**  
**DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JUNE 11TH, 1882,**  
**BY C. H. SPURGEON**  
**AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

**I am the Lord that healeth thee.-Exodus 15:26.**

WE shall consider this passage in its connection, for I have no doubt that the miracle at Marah was intended to be a very instructive illustration of the glorious title which is here claimed by the covenant God of Israel,- "I am Jehovah-Rophi, the Lord that healeth thee." The illustration introduces the sermon of which this verse is the text. The healing of the bitter waters is the parable of which the line before us is the lesson.

How different is the Lord to his foes and to his friends. His presence is light to Israel and darkness to Egypt. Egypt only knew Jehovah as the Lord that plagueth and destroyeth those who refuse to obey him. Is not this the Lord's memorial in Egypt that he cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? He overthrew their armies at the Red Sea, and drowned their hosts beneath the waves; but to his own people, in themselves but very little superior to the Egyptians, God is not the terrible avenger consuming his adversaries, but "Jehovah that healeth thee." Their mental and moral diseases were almost as great as those of the Egyptians whom the Lord cut off from before him, but he spared his chosen for his covenant sake. He bared the sword of justice against rebellious Pharaoh, and then he turned his tender, healing hand upon his own people, to exercise towards them the heavenly surgery of his grace. Israel knew him as the Lord that heals, and Egypt knew him as the Lord that smites. Let us adore the grace which makes so wide a difference, the sovereign grace which brings salvation unto Israel, and let us confess our own personal obligations to the mercy which has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Again, how differently does God deal with his own people from what we should have expected. He is a God of surprises, he does things which we looked not for. God deals with us not according to our conception of his ways, but according to his own wisdom and prudence: for as the heavens are high above the earth so high are his thoughts above our thoughts. You would not have supposed that a people for whom God had given Egypt as a ransom would have been led into the wilderness of Shur; neither would you have guessed that a people so near to him that he cleft the sea and made them walk between two glassy walls dry shod, would have been left for three days without water. You naturally expect to see the chosen tribes brought right speedily into a condition of comfort; or, if there must be a journey ere they reach the hind that floweth with milk and honey, you look at once for the smitten rock and the flowing stream, the manna and the quails, and all things else which they can desire. How singular it seems that after having done such a great marvel for them the Lord should cause them to thirst beneath a burning sky, and that too when they were quite unprepared for it, being quite new to desert privations, having lived so long by the river of Egypt, where they drank of sweet water without stint. We read at other times, "Thou, Lord, didst send a plenteous rain, whereby thou didst refresh thine inheritance when it was weary "; but here we meet with no showers: no brooks gushed forth below, and no rain dropped from above. Three days without water is a severe trial when the burning sand is below and the blazing sky is above. Yet the Lord's people in some way or other are sure to be tried; theirs is no holiday parade, but a stern march by a way which flesh and blood would never have chosen.

The Egyptians found enough water, and even too much of it, for they were drowned in the sea, but the well-beloved Israelites had no water at all. So is it with the wicked man; he often has enough of wealth, and too much of it, till he is drowned in sensual delights and perishes in floods of prosperity. He has his portion in this life, and in that portion he is lost, like Pharaoh in the proud waters. Full often the Lord's people are made to know the pinch of poverty; their lives are made wretched by sore bondage, and they faint for a morsel of bread: they drink from a bitter fountain, which fills their inward parts with gall and wormwood. They are afflicted very much, almost to the breaking of their hearts. One of them said, "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every

morning." They lie at the rich man's gate full of sores, while the ungodly man is clothed in scarlet, and fares sumptuously every day. This is God's strange way of dealing with his own people. He himself hath said, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Thus he made his people know that the wilderness was not their rest, nor their home: for they could not even find such a common necessary as water wherewith to quench their thirst. He made them understand that the promised brooks that flowed with milk and honey were not in the wilderness, but must be found on the other side of Jordan, in the land which God had given to their fathers, and they must journey thither with weary feet. "This is not your rest," was the lesson of their parched lips in the three days' march. You know what teaching there is in all this, for your experience answers to it. Do not marvel, beloved, if with all your joy over your vanquished sin, which shall be seen by you no more for ever, you yet have to lament your present grievous want. The children of Israel cried, "What shall we drink?" This was a wretched sequel to "Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously." Have you never made the same descent? If you are in poverty you are, no doubt, tempted to put that trinity of questions, "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" You are not the first to whom this temptation has happened. Do not marvel at all if up from the triumph of the Red Sea, with a song in your mouth and a timbrel in your hand, you ascend into the great and terrible wilderness, and enter upon the land of drought. This way lies Canaan, and this way you must go. Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom, and therefore let us set our minds to it.

By this grievous test the Lord was proving his people, and causing them to see what was in their hearts. They would have known no wilderness without if there had not been a wilderness within, neither had there been a drought of water for their mouths if the Lord had not seen a drought of grace in their souls. We are fine birds till our feathers are ruffled, and then what a poor figure we cut! We are just a mass of diseases and a bundle of disorders, and unless grace prevents we are the sure prey of death. O Lord, we pray to be proved, but we little know what it means!

Let this suffice for an introduction, and then let our text come in with comfort to our hearts, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." It was to illustrate this great name of God that the tribes were brought into so painful a condition; and indeed all the experience of a believer is meant to glorify God, that the believer himself may see more of God, and that the world outside may also behold the glory of the Lord. Therefore the Lord leadeth his people up and down in the wilderness, and therefore he makes them cry out because there is no water; all to make them behold his power, and his goodness, and his wisdom. Our lives are the canvas upon which the Lord paints his own character.

We shall try this morning to set forth before you, by the help of the divine Spirit, this grand character of God, that he is the God that healeth us. First, we shall notice the healing of our circumstances, dwelling upon that in order the better to set forth the greater fact, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Secondly, we shall remember the healing of our bodies which is here promised to obedient Israel, and we shall set forth that truth, in order to bring out our third point, which is the healing of our souls: "I am the Lord that healeth thee,"-not thy circumstances only, nor thy bodily diseases only, but thyself, thy soul, thy truest self; for there is the worst bitterness, there is the sorest disease, and there shall the grandest power of God be shown to thee, and to all who know thee.

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## **I. The Glorious Jehovah Shows His Healing Power Upon Our Circumstances.**

The fainting Israelites thought that when they came to Marah they should slake their thirst. Often enough the mirage had mocked them as it does all thirsty travelers: they thought that they saw before them flowing rivers and palm trees, but as they rushed forward they found nothing but sand, for the mirage was deluding them. At last, however, the waters of Marah were fairly within sight, and they were not a delusion: here was real water, and they were sure of it. No doubt they rushed forward helter-skelter, each man eager to drink, and what must have been their disappointment when they found that they could not endure it. A thirsty man will drink almost anything, but this water was so bitter that it was impossible for them to receive it. I do not read that they had murmured all the three days of their thirsty march, but this disappointment was too much for them. The relief which seemed so near was snatched away: the cup was dashed from their lips, and they began to murmur against Moses, and so in truth against God. Here was the proof of their imperfection: they were impatient and unbelieving. Have we not too often fallen into the same sin? Brethren, let your conscience answer! When you have felt a sharp affliction, and it has continued long, and you have been wearied out with it, you have at length seen a prospect of escape, but that prospect has completely failed you. What woe is this! When the friend you so surely relied upon tells you that he can do nothing; when the physician upon whom you put such reliance informs you that his medicine has not touched the malady, when the last expedient that you could adopt to save yourself from bankruptcy, the last arrow in your quiver has missed the mark-how your spirit has sunk within you in dire despair! Then your heart has begun to wound itself, like the scorpion, with its own sting. You have felt as if you were utterly spent and ready for the grave. The last trial was too much for you, you could bear up no longer. Happy have you been if under such conditions you have not been left to give way to murmuring against God. These poor Israelites were in a very pitiable condition. There was the water before them, but its horrible flavour made them shrink from a second taste. Have you not experienced the same? You have obtained that which you thought would deliver you, but it has not availed you. You looked for light, and beheld darkness; for refreshment, and beheld an aggravated grief. The springs of earth are brackish until Jehovah heals them; they increase the thirst of the man who too eagerly drinks of them. "Cursed is he that

trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.”

Now, dear friends, in answer to prayer God has often healed your bitter waters and made them sweet. I am about to appeal to your personal experience, you that are truly pilgrims under the guidance of your heavenly Lord. Has it not been so with you? I should have no difficulty in refreshing your memories about Marah, for very likely its bitterness is in your mouth even now, and you cannot forget your sorrow. But just now I wish to refresh your memories about what came of that sorrow. Did not God deliver you? Did he not, when you cried to him, come to your rescue? I appeal to facts, which may be stubborn things, but they are also rich encouragements.

Has not the Lord oftentimes made our bitter waters sweet by changing our circumstances altogether? When the poor in heart have been oppressed, God has taken away the oppressor, or else taken the heart away from the oppression. When you have been in great straits and could not see which way to steer, has not the Lord Jesus seemed to open before you a wider channel, or himself to steer your vessel through all the intricacies of the narrow river, and bring you where you would come? Have you not noticed in your lives that most remarkable changes have taken place at times when anguish took hold upon you? I can bear my witness, if you cannot, that the Lord has great healing power in the matter of our trials and griefs. He has changed my circumstances in providence, and in many ways altered the whole aspect of affairs.

On other occasions the Lord has not removed the circumstances, and yet he has turned sorrow into joy, for he has put into them a new ingredient, which has acted as an antidote to the acrid flavour of your affliction. You were not allowed to leave the shop, but there came a fresh manager, who shielded you from persecution: you were not permitted to quit your business, but there came a wonderful improvement in your trade, and this reconciled you to the long hours. You were not made to be perfectly healthy, but you were helped to a medicine which much assuaged the sharpness of the pain; thus has your Marah been sweetened. Have you not found it so? The weight of your affliction was exceeding great, but the Lord found a counterpoise, and by placing a weight of holy joy in the other scale he lifted up your load, and its weight was virtually taken away. You have been at Marah, but even there you have been able to drink, for a something has been put into the waters of afflictive providence which has made them endurable.

And where this has not been done the Lord has by a heavenly art made your bitter waters sweet by giving you more satisfaction with the divine will, more submission, more acquiescence in what the Lord has ordained. After all, this is the most effectual remedy. If I cannot bring my circumstances to my mind, yet if God helps me to bring my mind to my circumstances the matter is made right. There is a degree of sweetness about pain, and poverty, and shame when once you feel, “The loving Lord ordained all this for me: my tribulation is of his appointing.” Then the soul, feeling that the affliction comes from a Father’s hand, accepts it, and kicks against the pricks no longer. Surely, then, the bitterness of life or of death will be past when the mind is subdued to the Eternal will. These people said, “What shall we drink?” and they would have concluded that Moses was mocking them if he had answered, “You shall drink the bitter water.” They would have said, “We cannot bear it; we remember the sweet water of the Nile; and we cannot endure this nauseous stuff.” But Moses would have said, “Yes, you will drink that, and nothing else but that, and it will become to you all that you want.” Even so, beloved, you may have quarreled with your circumstances, and said, “I must have a change; I cannot longer bear this trial.” Has not the Lord of his grace changed your mind, and so influenced your will that you have really found comfort in that which was uncomfortable, and content in that which made you discontented? Have you never said when under tribulation, “I could not have believed it: I am perfectly happy under my trial, and yet when I looked forward to it I dreaded it beyond measure. I said it would be the death of me, but now I find that by these things men live, and in all this is the life of my spirit.” We exclaim with Jacob, “All these things are against me,” but the Lord gives us more grace, and we see that all things work together for good, and we bless the Lord for his afflicting hand. So you see the Lord Jehovah heals our bitter waters, and makes our circumstances endurable to our sanctified minds.

Brethren, all this which you have experienced should be to you a proof of God’s power to make everything that is bitter sweet. The depravity of your nature will yet yield to the operations of his grace: the corruptions that are within you will yet be subdued, and you shall enter into the fullest communion with God in Christ Jesus. I know you shall, because the Lord is unchangeable in power, and what he has done in one direction he can and will do in another. Your circumstances were so terrible, and yet God helped you; and now your sins, your inbred sins, which are so dreadful, he will help you against them, and give you power over them. You shall overcome the power of evil: by his grace you shall be sanctified, and you shall manifest the sweetness of holiness instead of the bitterness of self. Cannot you believe it? Does not God’s power exhibited in providence around you prove that he has power enough to do great things within you by his grace? Moreover, should not this healing of your circumstances be to you a pledge that God will heal you as to your inner spirit? He that brought you through the sea and drowned your enemies will also drown your sins, till you shall sing, “The depths have covered them: there is not one of them left.” He that turned your Marah into sweetness will yet turn all your sense of sin into a sense of pardon: all the bitterness of your regret and the sharpness of your repentance shall yet be turned into the joy of faith, and you shall be full of delight in the perfect reconciliation which comes by the precious blood of Christ. Sustaining providences are to the saints sure pledges of grace. The sweetened water is a picture of a sweetened nature: I had almost said it is a type of it. God binds himself by the gracious deliverances of his providence to give you equal deliverances of grace. It is joyous to say, “He is the Lord that healed my circumstances,” but how much better to sing of his name as “The Lord that

healeth thee." Do not be contented till you reach to that; but do be confident that he who healed Marah will heal you; he that has helped you to rejoice in him in all your times of trouble will sustain you in all your struggles with sin, till you shall more sweetly and more loudly praise his blessed name.

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## **II. Let us now proceed a step further. As we have spoken of God's healing our circumstances, so now we have to think of The Lord's Healing Our Bodies.**

Why are diseases and pains left in the bodies of God's people? Our bodies are redeemed, for Christ has redeemed our entire manhood, but if Christ be in us the body is still dead because of sin, even though the spirit is alive because of righteousness. It is not till the resurrection that we shall enjoy the full result of the redemption of the body. Resurrection will accomplish for our bodies what regeneration has done for our souls. We were born again. Ay, but that divine work was exercised only upon our spiritual nature; our bodies were not born again: hence they still abide under the liability of disease, decay, and death, though even these evils have been turned into blessings. This frail, sensitive, and earthly frame, which Paul calls "this vile body," grows weary and worn, and by-and-by it will fade away and die, unless the Lord shall come; and even if he should come this feeble fabric must be totally changed, for flesh and blood as they now are cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption dwell with incorruption. Even unto this day the body is under death because of sin, and is left so on purpose to remind us of the effects of sin, that we may feel within ourselves what sin has done, and may the better guess at what sin would have done if we had remained under it, for the pains of hell would have been ours for ever. These griefs of body are meant, I say, to make us recollect what we owe to the redemption of our Lord Jesus, and so to keep us humble and grateful. Aches and pains are also sent to keep us on the wing for heaven, even as thorns in the nest drive the bird from its sloth. They make us long for the land where the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick.

Yet the Lord does heal our bodies. First he heals them by preventing sickness. A prevention is better than cure. The text says, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." It is concerning this selfsame healing Lord that we read, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Do we sufficiently praise God for guarding us from disease? I am afraid that his preserving care is often forgotten. Men will go thirty or forty years almost without an illness, and forget the Lord in consequence. That which should secure gratitude creates indifference. When we have been ill we come up to the house of the Lord and desire to return thanks because of our recovery; ought we not to give thanks when we are not ill, and do not need to be recovered? Should it not be to you healthy folk a daily cause of gratitude to God that he keeps away those pains which would keep you awake all night, and wards off those sicknesses which would cause your beauty to consume away like the moth?

But we see this healing hand of the Lord more conspicuously when, like Hezekiah we have been sick, and have been restored. Sometimes we lie helpless and hopeless like dust ready to return to its fellow dust; we are incapable of exertion, and ready to be dissolved. Then if the Lord renews our youth and takes away our sickness, we do praise his name; and so we ought, for it is not the doctor, it is not the medicine, - these are but the outward means; it is the Lord who is the true Physician, and unto Jehovah-Rophi be the praise. "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Let those of us that have been laid aside, and have been again allowed to walk abroad, lift up our hearts and our voices in thanksgiving to the Lord who forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases.

According to the analogy of the healing of Marah, the Lord does this by means: for he cast a tree into the water. Those who will use no medicine whatever certainly have no Scriptural warrant for their conduct. Even where cures are given to faith, yet the Apostle says, "Is any sick? Let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." The anointing with oil was the proper medicine of the day, and possibly a great deal better medicine than some of the drugs which are used nowadays. To the use of this anointing the promise is given, "and the prayer of faith shall raise the sick." Hezekiah was miraculously healed, but the Lord said, "take a lump of figs, and lay it upon the sore." God could have spoken a word and turned Marah sweet, but he did not choose to do so: he would exercise the faith and obedience of his people by bidding them cast a tree into the waters. The use of means is not to hinder faith, but to try it. Still, it is the Lord who works the cure, and this is the point which is so often forgotten. Oh, come let us sing unto Jehovah who hath said, - "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Do not attribute to secondary means that which ought to be ascribed to God alone. His fresh air, and warm sun, or bracing wind and refreshing showers do more for our healing than we dream of, or if medicine be used, it is he who gives virtue to the drugs, and so by his own Almighty hand works out our cure. As one who has felt his restoring hand, I will personally sing unto him who is the health of my countenance and my God.

Note this, that in every healing of which we are the subjects we have a pledge of the resurrection. Every time a man who is near the



gates of death rises up again he enjoys a kind of rehearsal of that grand rising when from beds of dust and silent clay the perfect saints shall rise at the trump of the archangel and the voice of God. We ought to gather from our restorations from serious and perilous sickness a proof that the God who brings us back from the gates of the grave can also bring us back from the grave itself whenever it shall be his time to do so.

This should also be a yet further proof to us that if he can heal our bodies the Lord can heal our souls. If this poor worm's meat, which so readily decays, can be revived, so can the soul which is united to Christ and quickened with his life; and if the Almighty Lord can cast out evils from this poor dust and ashes, which must ultimately be dissolved, much more can he cast out all manner of evils from that immaterial spirit which is yet to shine in the brightness of the glory of God. Wherefore both from his healing your woes and from his healing your bodies, gather power to believe in the fact that he will heal your mental, moral, and spiritual diseases, and already lift up your hearts with joy as you sing of Jehovah-Rophi, "The Lord that healeth THEE."

"Sinners of old thou didst receive,  
With comfortable words and kind,  
Their sorrows cheer, their wants relieve,  
Heal the diseased, and cure the blind,  
And art thou not the Savior still,  
In every place and age the same?  
Hast thou forgot thy gracious skill,  
Or lost the virtue of thy name?  
Faith in thy changeless name I have;  
The good, the kind Physician, thou  
Art able now our souls to save,  
Art willing to restore them now.  
Though eighteen hundred years are past  
Since thou didst in the flesh appear,  
Thy tender mercies ever last;  
And still thy healing power is here!  
Wouldst thou the body's health restore,  
And not regard the sin-sick soul?  
The sin-sick soul thou lov'st much more,  
And surely thou shalt make it whole."

The healing of Marah and the healing of the body are placed before the text, and they shed a light upon it. They place this name of the Lord in a golden frame, and cause us to look upon it with the greater interest.

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### III. Now we come to The Healing Of Our Souls.

The Lord our God will heal our spirits, and he will do it in somewhat the same manner as that in which he healed Marah. How was that? First, he made the people know how bitter Marah was. There was no healing for that water till they had tasted it, and discovered that it was too brackish to be endured; but after they knew its bitterness then the Lord made it sweet to them. So is it with your sin, my brother. It must become more and more bitter to you. You will have to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" You will have to feel that you cannot live upon anything that is within yourself. The creature must be made distasteful to you, and all trusts that come of it; for God's way is first to kill, and then to make alive; first to wound, and then to heal. He begins by making Marah to be Marah, and afterwards he makes it sweet.

What next? The next thing was there was prayer offered. I do not know whether any of the people possessed faith in God, but if so they had a prayerless faith, and God does not work in answer to prayerless faith. "Oh," says one, "I am perfectly sanctified." How do

you know? "Because I believe I am." That will never do. Is a man rich because he believes he is? Will sickness vanish if I believe myself to be well? Some even think it useless to pray because they feel sure of having the blessing. That putting aside of prayer is a dangerous piece of business altogether. If there is not the cry to God for the blessing, ay, and the daily cry for keeping and for sanctification, the mercy will not come. Again, I say, healing comes not to a prayerless faith. You may believe what you like, but God will only hear you when you pray. Faith must pour itself out in prayer before the blessing will be poured into the soul. Moses cried, and he obtained the blessing: the people did not cry, and they would have been in an evil case had it not been for Moses. We must come to crying and praying before we shall receive sanctification, which is the making whole of our spirits.

Marah became sweet through the introduction of something outside of itself—a tree, I know not of what kind. The rabbis say that it was a bitter tree, and naturally tended to make the water more bitter still. However that may be, I cannot imagine any tree in all the world, bitter or sweet, which could have power to sweeten such a quantity of water as must have been at Marah. The transaction was miraculous, and the tree was used merely as the instrument, and no further. But I do know a tree which, if put into the soul, will sweeten all its thoughts and desires: and Jesus knew that tree, that tree whereon he died and shed his blood as a victim for our sin. If the merit of the cross be imputed to us, and the spirit of the cross be introduced into our nature; if we trust the Lord Jesus, and rest upon him; ay, if we become cross-bearers, and our soul is crucified to the world, then we shall find a marvellous change of our entire nature. Whereas we were full of vice, the Crucified One will make us full of virtue; and whereas we were bitter towards God, we shall be sweet to him, and even Christ will be refreshed as he drinks of our love, as he drinks of our trust, as he drinks of our joy in him. Where all was acrid, sharp, and poisonous, everything shall become pure, delicious, and refreshing. We must first experience a sense of bitterness, then cry out to the Lord in prayer, and then yield an obedient faith which puts the unlikely tree into the stream, and then the divine power shall be put forth upon us by him who saith, "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

The inner healing is set forth as in a picture in the sweetening of the bitter pools of Marah. I know I am right in saying so, because we are told of Moses, "There he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them."

Again the task of turning Marah sweet was a very difficult one. No human power could have achieved it: and even so the task of changing our nature is not only difficult, but impossible to us. We must be born again, not of the will of man, nor of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. There was no turning Marah sweet by any means within the reach of Moses or the myriads that came up with him out of Egypt. This wonder must come from Jehovah's hand. So is the change of our nature a thing beyond all human might. Who can make his own heart clean? God must work this marvel. We must be born again from above, or else we shall remain in the gall of bitterness even unto the end.

But yet the work was very easy to God. How simple a thing it was just to take a tree and cast it into the bitter water and find it sweet at once. Even so it is an easy thing to God to make us a new heart and a right spirit, and so to incline us to everything that is right and good. What a blessing is this! If I had to make myself holy I must despair; and if I had to make myself perfect and keep myself so it would never be done; but the Lord Jehovah can do it, and has already begun to do it. Things which I once hated I now love: all things have become new. Simple faith in Jesus Christ, the putting of the cross into the stream, does it all, and does it at once, too, and does it so effectually that there is no return of the bitterness, but the heart remains sweet and pure before the living God.

The task was completely accomplished. The people came and drank of Marah just as freely as they afterwards drank of Elim or of the water that leaped from the smitten rock. So God can and will complete in us the change of our nature. Paul saith, "I am persuaded that he that hath begun a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ." The Lord has not begun to sweeten us a little with the intent of leaving us in a half-healed condition, but he will continue the process till we are without trace of defilement, made pure and right in his sight.

This work is one which greatly glorifies God. If the change of Marah's water made the people praise God, much more will the change of nature make us adore him for ever and ever. We are going to be exalted, brethren, by-and-by, to the highest place in the universe next to God. Man, poor, sinful man, is to be so changed as to be able to stand side by side with Christ, who has for that very purpose taken upon himself human nature. We are to be above the angels. The highest seraphim shall be less privileged than the heirs of salvation. Now, the tendency to pride would be very strong upon us, only that we shall always recollect what we used to be, and what power it was that has made us what we are. This will make it safe for God to glorify his people. There will be no fear of our sully God's honor, or setting ourselves up in opposition to him, as did Lucifer of old. It shall never be said of any spirit washed in the precious blood of Jesus, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O son of the morning!" for the process through which we shall pass in turning our bitterness to sweetness will fill us with perpetual adoration, and with constant reverence of the unspeakably mighty grace of God. Will it not be so, brethren? Do not your impulses even now lead you to feel that, when you gain your promised crowns, the first thing you will joyfully do will be to cast them at the feet of Jesus, and say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory for ever and ever." That sweetened Marah was all of God; our renewed nature shall be all of God. We shall not be able to take the slightest particle of credit to ourselves, nor shall we wish to do so. Brethren, the Lord will do it; he will be sure to do it because it will glorify his name. Let us draw comfort from this fact: there will be no interfering with the Lord by a rival claimant to honor, no idolatry in us taking away part of his praises; therefore he will do it, and change our bitterness into perfect sweetness. Blessed be his name,

he can do it: nothing will baffle the skill of "the Lord that healeth thee." Whenever I am cast down under a sense of corruption, I always like to get a hold of this divine name, "The Lord that healeth thee." "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it," says the Apostle. He has not undertaken what he will fail to perform. Jehovah that made heaven and earth has undertaken to make us perfect, and effectually to heal us: therefore let us be confident that it will assuredly be accomplished, and we shall be presented without spot before God.

He who healeth us is a God so glorious that he will certainly perform the work. There is none like unto the Omnipotent One! He is able to subdue all things unto himself. His wisdom, power, and grace can so work upon us that where sin abounded grace shall much more abound.

"Thou canst o'ercome this heart of mine;  
Thou wilt victorious prove;  
For everlasting strength is thine,  
And everlasting love.  
Thy powerful Spirit shall subdue  
Unconquerable sin;  
Cleanse this foul heart, and make it new,  
And write thy law within."

He is a God who loves us so, and makes us so precious in his sight, that he gave Egypt for our ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for us. A God so loving will surely perfect that which concerneth us. Moreover, a God so fond of purity, a God who hates sin so intensely, and who loves righteousness so fervently will surely cleanse the blood of his own children. He must and will make his own family pure. "This people have I formed for myself: they shall show forth my praise." The devil cannot hinder that decree. "They shall," says God, and they shall, too, whatever shall stand in their way. They must and they shall show forth God's praise.

Now, as you have believed in God for your justification and found it in Christ, so believe in God for your sanctification, that he will work in you to will and to do according to his good pleasure; that he will exterminate in you the very roots of sin; that he will make you like himself, without taint or speck, and that, as surely as you are trusting in Christ, you shall be whiter than snow, pure as the infinite Jehovah, and you shall stand with his Firstborn, accepted in the Beloved. My soul seems to grasp this, and to hold it all the more firmly because the Lord has turned my bitter circumstances into sweetness, and he has healed the sickness of my body. Because of these former mercies I know that he will heal the sickness of my spirit, and I shall be whole, that is to say holy, without spot or trace of sin, and so shall I be for ever with the Lord. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Brethren, if the Lord has taken you into his hospital and healed you, do not forget other sick folk. Freely ye have received, freely give. Give to-day to the hospitals in which so many of the poor are cared for and succored. Do it for Jesus' sake, and may the Lord accept your offerings.

### Notes on Application of the truth in Exodus 15 by Bob Deffinbaugh

From [Exodus: The Birth of a Nation: Lesson 8: The Song of the Sea](#)

"While this chapter appears to have two very distinct accounts, there is good reason for the fact that Moses has placed them side by side. The "Song of the Sea" and the "bitter waters of Marah" are contrasting accounts, but accounts which have a direct relationship to each other. Two observations are crucial to our understanding the relationship between the praises of Israel in the "Song of the Sea" (Ex 15:1-21) and the protests of Israel at Marah (Ex 15:22, 23, 24, 25, 26).

**(1) The Israelites failed to see the relationship between the affirmation of their faith in their worship (Ex 15:1-21) and the application of their faith in their daily walk (Ex 15:22-26).** Israel had just proclaimed her faith in God as her warrior (Ex 15:3), but she was unable to trust in God as her "Waterer" (Ex 15:22, 23, 24, 25, 26). That God could handle a problem with the water at Marah should not come as any surprise. After all, God had delivered Israel and destroyed the Egyptians by means of His control of the water in the Red Sea. The winds (which the song describes as coming from the breath of God, v8,10) caused the waters to part.

God was able to make the waters congeal, so that there were walls of water on both sides of the Israelites (cf. Ex 15:8). God caused the waters to close in upon the Egyptian army, drowning them all. If God could deal with the waters of the Red Sea, surely He could be trusted to deal with the waters of Marah. Israel should have been able to apply the faith she affirmed in the “Song of the Sea” to her dilemma at the waters of Marah, but she did not.

Lest we become unnecessarily perturbed at the Israelites for their lack of faith, and become a little proud of ourselves, let me suggest that the problem which Israel illustrates is also one of the greatest problems of Christians in every age, including our own. We often fail to apply our faith in God, resulting from one event, to another event which is virtually identical. For example, the feeding of the 5,000 (Mk 6:30-44) should have taught the disciples to trust in the Lord Jesus to feed the multitudes, and yet shortly after this great miracle, the disciples failed to apply their faith to the matter of feeding the 4,000 (Mk 8:1-10).

When we gather to worship God, we do not sing the “Song of the Sea” but we do sing many hymns and choruses which express our faith in God. We sing, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” and then go our ways fretting and worrying about the petty details of our lives, as though God was not faithful at all. We sing, “It Is Well With My Soul,” but when some little irritation comes along, our faith flounders. We sing, “O, for a Thousand Tongues,” and then, when someone makes fun of our faith, we are tongue-tied and cannot find any words to say concerning our faith.

**The point is simply this. It is a great deal easier to affirm our faith in public worship than it is to apply our faith in our daily walk.\*** Here is the real crunch. Here is where the rubber meets the road. It is not that we need to worship less, it is that we must apply in our daily walk those truths which we affirm in our worship. Just as God led the Israelites to the waters of Marah, so He leads us in such a way as to give us ample opportunity to apply our faith, or at least to reveal our lack of faith.

One of the contributing factors to our failure to apply our faith in our daily walk is that we tend to create false distinctions between those areas which are sacred (church, public worship) and those which are secular (work, daily living). The result is that we think of our faith as relevant to our “devotional” activities, but not to our daily activities. It is my contention that God distinguishes between those matters which are holy and those which are profane, but not between those matters which are sacred and those which are secular. A more careful look at the Law of Moses will reveal that Israel’s faith was to govern and guide them in the minute details of their (secular) lives.

**(2) Not only did Israel fail to apply their faith to their situation at Marah, they failed to even see the problem as being spiritual.** In the text we read that the Israelites protested against Moses, not against God (v24). They demanded that Moses produce water for them, they did not cry to God for water. It is my contention that they did not see their circumstances as demanding a “spiritual” solution, but only as demanding a “secular” solution. At least when the Israelites were trapped between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea they cried out to God for help (before they began to grumble against Moses, cf. Ex 14:10, 11, 12). Here, at Marah, they immediately confronted Moses, and ignored God altogether.

Ironically, the Israelites forgot that the pillar of cloud was still guiding them (cf. Ex 13:21, 22), and that God Himself was present with them in the cloud. **If they were wrongly led, God led them wrongly by the cloud.\*** Imagine the protests of the Israelites, while the cloud hovered over the waters of Marah. The Israelites failed to understand that if God promised to bring them safely out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan, any obstacle which would hinder or prevent them was one with which God was concerned, and which He could overcome. They failed to see bitter water as a matter about which God would be concerned, but He was concerned because water was necessary to preserve His people.

At the Red Sea, Israel should have learned that God was able to overcome **any obstacle\*** (such as the Red Sea, which He parted) or **any opponent\*** (such as the Egyptians, which He drowned in the Red Sea—the obstacle). Thus, while the Israelites sang that God was going to overcome their opponents (the Canaanites), they did not grasp the fact that He would also overcome all the obstacles to their entrance into Canaan (such as the bitter waters of Marah).

**How often we fall into the very same trap.\*** We view God as being concerned only with the big problems of life, those which appear to be spiritual. But anything which hinders our growth, our sanctification, or our ability to do what He has purposed is a matter about which He is concerned, and which He is able to overcome. Frequently, when we encounter a problem in our lives, we do not even consider that it is something about which God is intimately concerned. We immediately begin to turn to secular solutions, without seeking God’s solution.

One reason why we fail to view our problems as an occasion for faith is that we have become accustomed to living by scientific principles rather than spiritual principles. The scientific method is a good method—for matters of science. But it is incompatible when it comes to matters of faith. Here, the scientific method must be set aside (not scrapped, but set aside). Scientific principles are essential for scientific purposes. One does not, for example, design an airplane, load it full of people, and hope that it flies. It must pass a rigorous series of tests and be proven functional and reliable.

The scientific method requires that every scientific fact be proven, being performed under controlled conditions, having hard

empirical evidence, and being repeatable, time after time. In order for one to accept the account of the Red Sea on scientific grounds, the depth of the sea would have had to have been measured, the velocity of the winds calculated, and all other variables considered. In order to prove that this was something scientifically verifiable, the parting of the sea would have to be repeated time after time. And after being scientifically proven, one could only predict that the event would happen again if it were repeated under identical conditions. Any change in any variable would cause the scientist to question the possibility of repeating the phenomenon under different conditions.

**The spiritual method is different.\*** The spiritual method observes what God has done, accepting the event on face value, governed and qualified by the divine revelation which accompanies the phenomenon. The spiritual method then views the event as a manifestation of **the character of God.\*** On the basis of God's character (as consistent with biblical descriptions of His character elsewhere), the Christian then looks at any future circumstance as an **opportunity\*** for God to act in such a way as to achieve His purposes by overcoming both obstacles (like the Red Sea, or the hardness of men's hearts) and opponents (like Satan, the antichrist, or the armies of men who have been deceived and used by Satan) [Ed note: or even our indwelling sin nature, the old man or old Adam, the flesh]. Variations in conditions do not change the character of God, nor do they pose a problem to the God who is all-powerful.

The reason why we fail to see many circumstances as occasions that require a spiritual solution (and therefore require faith as well) is because we are using **the scientific method of reasoning\***, rather than the **spiritual method of reasoning\***, which reasons according to God's revealed will and in accordance with the character of God, as demonstrated in history.

As we come to the conclusion of the message, let me attempt to apply this text to a current problem, which I shall call the "charismatic problem." Many contemporary charismatics are inclined to think and to teach that life can and will be lived on the spiritual mountain tops. Thus, we should expect the Israelites to continually experience the euphoria and optimism of the "Song of the Sea." Such is not the case, however. God did not allow the Israelites to stay by the sea, singing their glorious song. He did not keep them on the mountain. Instead, God led the Israelites into the desert, allowed them to be thirsty, and gave them bitter water. This adverse situation tested the faith and endurance of the Israelites, and provided the occasion for God to teach His people an important lesson. Expecting to live the Christian life on a continuous high is not only unrealistic, it is unbiblical. Thank God for the times of victory and elation, but do not expect things to stay this way forever.

Now a word to my non-charismatic reader. While we often accuse our charismatic brethren of expecting the miraculous and the ecstatic to be the norm, we often have become content to expect that things will always happen according to natural laws and practices, so that we expect miracles not to happen. God is not obliged to work a miracle for our benefit, but He is able to do so, and He sometimes does so. The Israelites saw the miraculous hand of God at work in their passing through the Red Sea, and they expected His hand to work mightily and miraculously as they entered into the land of Canaan to possess it. We, on the other hand, have convinced ourselves that we ought not expect the miraculous.

The conversion of souls is a miracle. If we do not look for God to work in miraculous ways, we may as well stop witnessing and trying to evangelize the lost. The process of sanctification as well as the manifestation of the Spirit in the lives of the saints for ministry is a miracle, and we dare not seek to serve the Lord without asking for His miraculous power to do so.

Frankly, I do not know which is worse—thinking miracles should be the rule, or thinking that miracles have been ruled out—but there must be a balance [Ed note: "Amen"!]. The exodus event is a manifestation of God's miraculous might, employed to achieve His purposes and to fulfill His promises. The Israelites saw the miracle of God accomplished in the past as a guarantee of His intervention in the future. **May God give us the faith to look for (but not demand) the miraculous in our lives, when it is required to accomplish the purposes and promises of God.\***

If you have not personally come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then you have not experienced the miracle of being born again, of having your sins forgiven, your guilt removed, and of the joy of fellowship with God and the hope of heaven. It is only when you experience this miracle of conversion that you will look for the miraculous hand of God to work in your life in the future."

\* (Bolding added by me)