

## HEALING ALL MANNER OF DISEASES

- MATTHEW 8:2-17. - MARCH 6. -

**Golden Text:** – "Himself took our infirmities and bare our weaknesses." – V. 17.

ALTHOUGH the Great Teacher healed all manner of diseases, it is a mistake to suppose that this constituted his mission as a whole or one of its most important features. His healings were performed with three ends in view:

(1) To draw attention to his message.

(2) To be illustrations of his great Work of the future when in Kingdom power and glory he shall heal all diseases, uplifting mankind out of sin and death conditions completely.

(3) They were tests of the Master's own faithfulness to his Consecration Vow. Throughout his healing ministry he laid down his life, so that after three and a half years of ministry, the Perfect One had so exhausted his vitality that he could not carry his own cross, as could the thieves who accompanied him. His great sacrifice was thus partially laid down before he reached Calvary, where it was "finished." Thus our Lord's miracles were performed, as the prophet declares, at his own expense, his own sacrifice – "Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases." Every healing performed, to a proportionate extent decreased the Lord's vitality. So we read, "Virtue (vitality) went out of him and healed them all." – Luke 6:19.

Leprosy, very prevalent in the East, is used in the Scriptures symbolically to represent sin, and the cleansing of it to represent purification from sin. It was classed as incurable and hence our Lord's curing it demonstrated his supernatural power. In the case

under consideration, as in others, Jesus directed that the miracle be not specially blazoned forth amongst the people; for so doing would tend to make him too popular, as in some cases it led to the demand that he should be recognized as King. But he did direct that the miracle be duly reported to the High Priest. This was the demand of the Law. And furthermore Jesus wished that his miracles should be "a testimony unto them" – unto those who sat in Moses' seat as the rulers of the people, and who would ultimately pass sentence upon him. They must at least know of his miracles.

Not much religion might be expected from Roman soldiers, yet our Lord testified of the one whose servant he healed that his faith was greater than any he had found amongst the Israelites. The Roman entreated favor for his servant, and when our Lord promised to go to his house to heal him, the centurion answered the Lord that a visit was entirely unnecessary, that he would be fully satisfied if he spoke the word of healing. Jesus dismissed the centurion saying, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." And his servant was healed.

There is a lesson for us in these words – our Lord's ability was unlimited. And his blessings to us are proportionate to our readiness to receive them by faith; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." And those who cannot exercise faith cannot have share in the blessings offered under the Gospel call, but must wait for the demonstrations of the Millennial Kingdom.

The circumstance served as a text, and prophetically the Lord declared what must have seemed peculiar to his hearers – that many would come from the East and West – Gentiles – to be associated with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom, while Israelites would be cast out of Divine favor into outer darkness of disfavor and there have distress. The "outer

darkness" of God's disfavor has been upon them especially since the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Jews fully expected the setting up of the Millennial Kingdom, but supposed none other than Jews would be in or of it. The nucleus of the Kingdom class was [R4577 : page 90] Jewish – from the day of Pentecost for three and a half years, to the time when Cornelius was received as the first Gentile accepted. Since then "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, which previously hindered the latter from a full share of God's favors, has been broken down. During the eighteen centuries the Lord has gathered or "called" disciples from all nations. The faithful of these will constitute the Kingdom class. In connection with these Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will have an honored place for the blessing of Israel regathered and through them the blessing of all the families of the earth during the Millennium, which, we believe, will shortly be in evidence.

While the faithful of the Jews will share that Kingdom, the nation as a whole was rejected from Divine favor and cast into "outer darkness" – the same darkness which covered the Gentiles, the world in general. They have had weeping and gnashing of teeth for eighteen centuries and, according to the Scriptures, will suffer further yet before the time shall come when God will graciously forgive their sin and save them from their national blindness and make them, in connection with the Millennial Kingdom, his instruments for blessing all the families of the earth.

No miracle of healing was ever wrought by the Savior upon any of his disciples. The same is true of the apostolic healing – the healing blessings were all wrought upon those outside of the discipleship. This was because the "call" of the disciples was not to human perfection, restitution and health; but to self-denial,

self-sacrifice, even unto death. Their blessings and privileges, above those of the world, were along spiritual lines. The awakening of Lazarus and of Dorcas were not in violation of this rule, neither was the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, for we have no evidence that she was a believer and a disciple.

