

THE CASE FOR DIVINE HEALING

(Complete Sermon as Delivered by Pastor S.K. Anso, FCG Church, Accra, Ghana)

1. Health is a matter of life and death; and death is the most feared enemy of man. In the words of the Bible, the fear of death has made slaves of all men slaves to all sorts of foolish ideas and practices. (Men now drink their own urine, often urine that has been left to ferment for days, urine that stinks abominably.) The medical industry is built on that fear.

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Hebrews 2:14-15 - King James Bible)

2. As Christians, we believe that God created man - along with the rest of the universe. It follows, then, in simple logic, that no one can repair the human body better than God. Indeed, no one can do it even as well as God. Naturally, therefore, true Christianity has always taught that divine healing is the only legitimate form of healing for Christians. But this has not been without opposition, and never more so than in this advanced twenty-first century.

“And said, 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.” (Exodus 15:26)

“Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: ¹⁵And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. ¹⁶Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:13-16)

“And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.” (2 Chronicles 16:12 - KJB)

3. In the first century, the most irritating doctrine of the Church was the resurrection. Natural man, overwhelmed by the finality of death, could simply not endure the notion that man could rise from the dead. Therefore they refused to accept any testimony to that effect, even eye-witness testimony.
4. In Athens, Paul was mocked for asserting that a resurrection had taken place in the case of Jesus

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: ³¹Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. ³²And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.” (Acts 17:30-32).

So strong was the opposition to the doctrine that later, in his defence before King Agrippa, Paul asked in wonder: "Why do any of you people think it is impossible for God to raise people from the dead?" (Acts 26:8).

5. Today, the prime offensive Christian doctrine is no longer the resurrection; it is Divine Healing. The idea of depending on God alone for health and healing is utterly obnoxious to natural man, especially in an era where man is able virtually to perform miracles.
6. We need to understand that there is a deep spiritual under-current to this opposition. Right, from the beginning, in Eden, Satan taught man to repudiate God and become a god to himself

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" ²And the woman said unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, ³but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, `Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'" ⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die; ⁵for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." ⁶And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and ate, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he ate." (Genesis 3:1-6 - KJB)

Having failed to unseat God from His throne in heaven, Satan sought to avenge his defeat by unseating God from His true position in the lives and affairs of men. According to the Book of Romans chapter 1:19-28, Satan has succeeded.

7. Men have always known about God. The whole of creation is a deafening testimony to the existence of God, His Eternal Power, His Deity (Psalm 19:1): "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork." Yet under Satan's instigation, men have consistently refused to acknowledge Him, to honour Him and to give Him the credit due to Him; instead they have given that honour to the things God has created and things they themselves have made with their hands

Romans 1:19-28: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. ²⁰For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: ²¹Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²²Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ²³And changed the Glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. ²⁴Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: ²⁵Who changed the Truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. ²⁶For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: ²⁷And likewise also the

men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. ²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” (Romans 1:19-28)

8. God has always wanted a dependent relationship between His creatures and Himself

Psalm 37:5-6: “Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass; ⁶And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday”

Psalm 50:15: “And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me”

Psalm 55:22: “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved”

1 Peter 5:7: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”

Philippians 4:6-7: “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Instead, under Satan's influence, man has chosen to be independent of God, to solve His own problems, to be his own god.

9. Today that spirit of independence and godlessness has matured beyond description. We are surrounded everywhere by the miraculous products of man's mind and hand. Inevitably, God has never been considered more irrelevant than in this day. Throughout the month of June 2003, the world's leading broadcaster, the BBC, repeatedly broadcast the following proclamation of man's triumph over God: **"Where many once turned to religion for healing, now they place their faith in science."** Incidentally, that statement is an acknowledgement that from the beginning, a person's deity was his source of healing. According to “CRUDEN'S COMPLETE CONCORDANCE to the Old and New Testaments”, the original people of God, “The ancient Hebrews ... were very little versed in the study of natural philosophy, and not much accustomed to consulting physicians when they were sick.”
10. Satan's goal has been achieved; science has replaced God; men are finally rid of Him; they have no needs whatever of Him. Accordingly, whoever still believes in God is considered primitive. Whoever believes in Him to the extent of trusting Him for his welfare, and especially for health and healing is considered to be absolutely sick in the mind and deserving appropriate treatment.
11. But God remains God; He is the Creator. Man can manipulate matter with amazing results, but he can never create matter; he is forever God's “workmanship.”

Ephesians 2:10: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

We can never get rid of God or hide from Him.

Acts 17:28: "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also His offspring."

Psalms 139:1-12: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. ²Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. ³Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. ⁴For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. ⁵Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine Hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

⁷Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? ⁸If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. ⁹If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; ¹⁰Even there shall Thy Hand lead me, and Thy Right Hand shall hold me. ¹¹If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. ¹²Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

12. And we can never be a satisfactory god to ourselves. Only a few years back, the World Health Organization was proudly trumpeting its achievement of having eliminated the scourge of malaria. Today, their own testimony is that malaria of a more virulent kind is back with a vengeance. They are currently desperate to develop a new vaccine against it.
13. And then there is what has become the most fashionable disease ever: **AIDS** - the result of man's own depraved behaviour. 'So far the general declaration' by the new scientific gods is that there is no cure for AIDS. Accordingly, it is claiming lives by the hundreds of thousands daily.
14. Compare that with the Bible's testimony of the healing exploits of Jesus; "**God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with Power; ... He went about doing good and healing ALL that were oppressed by the devil, FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM. And we are witnesses to all that He did**" (Acts 10:38-39).
15. In the face of this testimony, we can very well echo to the opponents of Divine Healing the question Paul asked before King Agrippa: "Why do any of you people think it is impossible for God to heal the sick or prevent sickness?" Curiously enough, most of them claim to be Christians, even preachers!
16. **Jesus healed leprosy, paralysis, fever, madness, hemorrhage, a withered hand, blindness, dumbness, stammering, deafness, epilepsy** and many more. **He raised several people from the dead, including a man who had been dead four days!**

"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: **for he hath been dead four days.** ⁴⁰Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? ⁴³And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. ⁴⁴And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them,

Loose him, and let him go. ⁴⁵Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him." (John 11:39-40,43-45)

17. Those are His credentials. With Him the word "incurable" did not exist; it still does not exist, because He "*is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" (Hebrews 13:8). It makes sense to trust in such a One, to accept His Healing Services. It makes more sense than to trust in those whose best testimony to their own performance is that they have no answer to the simplest of human ailments, the common cold.
18. More than that, Divine Healing has incomparable spiritual value. The consciousness that God is our source of health and healing motivates us to strive to do His Will. It is the ultimate test of our love for God, our faith in God, our obedience to God. How can we claim to love God and to believe in Him if we are not willing to trust Him with our lives, in the face of His express command to go to Him for healing?

"And said, 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." (Exodus 15:26)

"Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: ¹⁵And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. ¹⁶Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:13-16)

"And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. ¹³And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign." (2 Chronicles 16:12-13 – KJB)

19. The eighth chapter of Romans begins with a triumphant shout: "*There is therefore now **NO CONDEMNATION** for those who are in Christ Jesus*" (verse 1). Verse ²tells us why: "*For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus **HAS SET ME FREE** from the law of sin and death.*"
20. Every Christian believes this and is happy to claim it. The basis of the declaration and of our conviction of its truth is that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3). In simple words, Jesus took our place and paid the penalty for our sins, making us free from condemnation.
21. Yet few Christians understand, or are even willing to accept, that we are EQUALLY free from sickness, on account of the same substitutionary work of Christ. The clear teaching of scripture is that Jesus took our place not only in respect of sins but also in respect of "*all things that pertain to life and godliness.*" Isaiah says so in chapter 53:5: "*... the chastisement of our peace was upon Him....*" This can only mean that Jesus paid the price for EVERYTHING that affects our peace.
22. From the human point of view, is there anything that affects our peace more than our health? The ancient Romans had a proverb in Latin that has come down to us across

the centuries. In English it says, "sound mind in a sound body." The meaning is perfectly clear: good health is absolutely basic to peace of mind.

23. Isaiah 53:5 says more than what we have just quoted. It states specifically that the atonement of Jesus paid for our health. Listen: "*But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.*"
24. WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED. What else does this mean but that Jesus took our place, suffered physical pain, so that we might be healed?
25. The average Christian thinks and believes otherwise. The orthodox belief is that this scripture is speaking of healing of our spirits. But that is clearly untrue if we consider the plain statement in verse 4: "SURELY He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains ..."
26. The gospel of Matthew has this record in chapter 8 verse 16: "*That evening they brought to Him many who were possessed with demons,' and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.*"
27. No Christian disputes this. Everyone understands that this was necessary to prove that He was truly sent by God. That is correct. As Nicodemus said, "*Rabbi, we KNOW that you are a teacher come from God; FOR no one can do these SIGNS that you do, unless God is with him*" (John 3:2).
28. But according to the gospel of Matthew, the healing ministry of Jesus was meant to be more than just a sign of His Deity. Says verse 17: ***THIS WAS TO FULFIL WHAT WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."***
29. The healing work of Jesus was in fulfillment of prophecy; the prophecy (Isaiah 53:4) was that His Mission on earth would include bearing our sicknesses and carrying our pains in order to provide healing for all the sicknesses of all men!
30. The Blood of Jesus was shed on the Cross for our sins. The Body of Jesus was subjected to severe bruising, from the time He was seized in the garden up until He was nailed to the Cross at Calvary. What was the purpose? The Bible clearly says that it was to provide for our healing: "*With His stripes we are healed.*"
31. Shortly before His arrest, during the Last Supper, Jesus *took bread, and when He had given thanks, He **BROKE** it, and said, "This is My Body which is **BROKEN** for you. Do this in remembrance of Me"* (1 Corinthians 11:23-24). Jesus' body was broken - He was subjected to severe physical bruising and pain - so that our bodies might enjoy perfect health. When we eat the bread at the communion table, it is a declaration that we believe this. And yet millions of Christians don't believe it, even though they eat the bread!
32. The effect of the shed blood and the effect of the broken body are tied together in Psalm 103:2-3, to show that both result from the one atonement work: "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His Benefits, who **FORGIVES ALL** your iniquity, who **HEALS ALL** your diseases.*"
33. The same results are recorded side by side in Psalm 105:37, in reference to the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb in Egypt: "*He brought Israel forth*" - that meant freedom

from bondage - "*and there was not one feeble person among their tribes*" - that meant total healing for **ALL** the millions of Israel.

34. What that means is that Divine Healing, provided by the Atonement of Christ, is not a special privilege for a few fortunate Christians with extraordinary faith. Divine Healing is God's prescribed form of healing for every single Christian, just as forgiveness of sins, justification, sanctification and eternal life are the rights of every single Christian. The divine instruction in James 5:13-16 applies to every believer. The Good News Bible rendering of James 1:1, makes it clear that that epistle was addressed to "*ALL God's people scattered over the whole world.*"
35. It is equally important to note that this provision in the Atonement is not just for our healing but also, and primarily, for perfect exemption or freedom from sickness. God will heal us when we are sick, but more than that, He does not want us to be sick at all! The scriptures say so in specific words: *And **NO INHABITANT** will say, "I am sick"; the people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity* (Isaiah 33:24).
36. It is a sad fact that we do get sick. The reason is simple: the right to perfect health, to freedom from sickness, is conditional:

*"IF you will OBEY ME **COMPLETELY** by doing what I consider right and by keeping My Commands, I will not punish you with any of the diseases that I brought on the Egyptians, I am the **LORD**, the One Who heals you" (Exodus 15:26).*

37. IF YOU WILL OBEY ME COMPLETELY. That is a declaration of how God wants us to worship Him. God is to be worshipped as He requires, not as the worshipper likes.

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." (Hebrews 8:5)

"For I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine Own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me." (John 6:38)

"Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My Will, but Thine, be done." (Luke 22:42)

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. ⁴And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: ⁵But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. ⁶And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? ⁷If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." (Genesis 4:3-7).

This means that the worshipper is to OBEY EVERY COMMAND OF GOD, WITHOUT ADDITION OR SUBTRACTION.

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." (Deuteronomy 12:32).

38. What is the command of God regarding the healing of His servants? Listen:

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects." (James 5:13-16).

"And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." (Psalm 50: 15).

39. What about protection from disease, from contracting it in the first place? The human method is immunizations, inoculations, vaccinations. What is the scriptural position? Has God made any provision for this? Has He given any commands about it? The Bible's testimony is that God has, in several places. We will consider only one, the most famous: Psalm 91, the entire piece; but we will highlight only a few verses:

40. *"He will keep you safe from ALL hidden dangers and from ALL DEADLY DISEASES. ⁴He will cover you with His Wings; YOU WILL BE SAFE IN HIS CARE; His faithfulness will PROTECT and defend you. ⁵You will not fear any dangers at night or sudden attacks during the day ⁶or the PLAGUES that strike in the dark or the EVILS that kill in daylight. ⁷A thousand may fall dead beside you, ten thousand all round you, but you will not be harmed."* (Psalm 91:3-7)

41. These commands and promises are consistent with God's declaration in Exodus 15:26 previously quoted: "And said, 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." In accordance with the obligation to obey EVERY command of God without addition or subtraction, Christians have NO CHOICE but to obey God's instructions for their healing and protection from sickness.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

42. In the light of these stupendous' promises, failure to seek God in times of sickness or for protection from sickness is an expression of UNBELIEF, an atrocious lack of faith in God. This is an exceedingly serious sin, because it implies that God is a liar! Listen: *"If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is GREATER; ... He who does not believe God has made Him a liar"* (1 John 5:9-10).

43. Faith is central to the Christian life. The Bible says:

"My righteous one shall live by faith" (Hebrews 10:38)

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6)

"Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin" (Romans 14:23)

44. The Amplified Bible gives a definition of faith under Hebrews 10:22 as follows: the "leaning of the ENTIRE human personality on God in ABSOLUTE TRUST and CONFIDENCE in His power, wisdom, and goodness." This is the faith the righteous are required to live by; the faith without which it is impossible to please God; the faith apart from which everything is sin! What kind of Christians are we if we reject such faith?
45. Refusal to obey ANY command of God amounts to REBELLION against Him. Rebellion against authority in any society is treason. How can we possibly imagine that rebellion against God is a trivial matter? By His own declaration it is a grievous sin

"Then came the Word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, ¹¹It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My Commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night. ¹²And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal. ¹³And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

¹⁴And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? ¹⁵And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. ¹⁶Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. ¹⁷And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

¹⁸And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. ¹⁹Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD? ²⁰And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites." (1 Samuel 15:10-23).

46. The Bible records an occasion when a king of Judah (King Asa) consulted physicians instead of God. God was clearly displeased.

"In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ²Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, ³There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. ⁴And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the

store cities of Naphtali. ⁵And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.

⁶Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah. ⁷And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. ⁸Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand. ⁹For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

¹⁰Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time. ¹¹And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ¹²And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. ¹³And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign. (2 Chronicles 16:1-13).

Elsewhere the Bible declares the seriousness of rejecting God and seeking other sources of help:

"Skies, be shocked at the things that have happened and shake with great fear!" says the LORD. My people have done two evils: They have TURNED AWAY FROM ME, the spring of living water. And they have DUG THEIR OWN WELLS, which are broken wells that cannot hold water." (Jeremiah 2:12-13 - NCV).

"The Lord says: CURSED is the man who puts his trust in mortal man and turns his heart away from God. He is like a stunted shrub in the desert, with no hope for the future; he lives on the salt-encrusted plains in the barren wilderness; good times pass him forever." (Jeremiah 17:5-6 - TLB).

Remember what we quoted from the BBC a while ago: "Where many once turned to religion for healing, now they place their faith in science."

47. If we would be the kind of Christians God wants, we must realize that we have NO CHOICE but to BELIEVE God's promises of protection and healing, and to OBEY His commands in that regard

"And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. ⁴⁷For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." (Deuteronomy 32:46-47).

The average person is apprehensive that such a position would put his life at risk. But if we believe that God is ABLE and WILLING to do WHATEVER He promises, if we have leaned our entire personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His

POWER, WISDOM, and GOODNESS (as we are commanded to do), risk is the last thing we would think of.

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My Lips. ³⁵Once have I sworn by My Holiness that I will not lie unto David." (Psalm 89:34-35)

"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Number 23:19)

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?" (Jeremiah 32:27)

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S Hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether My Word shall come to pass unto thee or not." (Numbers 11:23)

48. It has been asserted that adult Christians are free to take this stand, but that they have no right to impose it on their children when they are not old enough to exercise their own will. The assertion is completely mystifying. It is very common to see children being dragged to school against their will, or being forced to drink bitter medicine against their will - because parents know better than their children, and they know what is good for them. In the face of the express commands of God, is it being suggested that parents have no right to bring up their children to practice their faith - to OBEY and BELIEVE God the way they do? Listen to the commands of God:

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is One LORD; and you shalt love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these Words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).

'And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, he said to them, "Lay to heart all the words which I enjoin upon you this day, that you may COMMAND THEM TO YOUR CHILDREN, THAT THEY MAY BE CAREFUL TO DO ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LAW. For it is no trifle for you, but it is your life, and thereby you shall live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess". (Deuteronomy 32:45-47).

"TRAIN up A CHILD in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6).

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but BRING THEM UP IN THE DISCIPLINE AND INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD." (Ephesians 6:4).

"... I have chosen him, that he may CHARGE HIS CHILDREN and HIS HOUSEHOLD after him TO KEEP THE WAY OF THE LORD by doing righteousness and justice" (Genesis 18:19).

49. The simple fact is that all the commands and promises of God to believers, including the commands and promises of healing and protection, apply equally to their children.

“But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His Righteousness unto children’s children; (Psalm 103:17-18)

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: ²⁰That thou mayest love the LORD Thy God, and that thou mayest obey His Voice, and that Thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is Thy Life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

“And I will establish My Covenant between Me and Thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” (Genesis 17:7)

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.”(Acts 2:39).

HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES!

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