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Sermon

Forgiveness and Healing



Atonement
By Derek Prince

In our last session I pointed out to you that on the cross a divinely ordained exchange took place, something that was conceived in the heart and the mind of God from eternity, and acted out there at Calvary, predicted very clearly there in the Old Testament prophets. The nature of the exchange was this: All the evil due by justice to us came upon Jesus that all the good due to the sinless obedience of Jesus might be made available to us. We'll say it more shortly, all the evil came upon Jesus that all the good might be made available to us. Let's do that once with our hands. "All the evil came upon Jesus that all the good might be made available to us."

Then I pointed out that the essential central problem of the human race is rebellion. And that on the cross Jesus became identified with our rebellion. And all the evil consequences of rebellion came upon Him. This was depicted very vividly in two passages of Isaiah. First of all, in Isaiah 1 where God depicts rebellious Israel as a body that is marred and beaten and bruised and sick. He says from the crown of the head to the soles of their feet there's nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.

And then we saw in Isaiah 52 that description was transferred to Jesus. And that's how He was. Don't believe pretty, religious pictures. There was nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. They had not been closed up, they were septic. Why? That's rebellion. And when you and I attempt to rebel next time, may God give us a picture of the end of rebellion. That's it. But Jesus as the last Adam took that rebellion, died and was buried with it. And when He rose again He rose as the second man, the head of a new race.

Now in this session I want to look at the first two aspects of the exchange. You will recall that when I was testifying of how God gave me healing I received that word: Consider the work of Calvary. Perfect in ever respect, perfect in every aspect. So we're going to look now at two aspects of the exchange that took place. Both of them are stated in Isaiah 53:4–5. Maybe I should read them. I'm going to read the Prince version.

> "Surely he has borne our sicknesses, and carried our pains: yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he

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> was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement [or punishment] for our peace was upon him; and by his wounds we are healed."

So there is the first exchange. It's really in verse 5. The punishment for our peace was upon him. Jesus was punished that we might be—what's the opposite of punish? Forgiven, that's right. Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven. I would like you to say that, I want to impress it upon you. "Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven."

The result of being forgiven is that we have peace with God. See, as long as your sin is not forgiven you cannot have peace with God. God will not make peace with sin. It's significant that you remember that in each of the three nine chapter sections at the end of Isaiah, the final statement was God will not compromise with sin. It has to be dealt with. The message of mercy is that sin was dealt with in Jesus on the cross. That when He died He paid the penalty for our sins. The wages of sin is death, that's right. He paid that penalty for us on the cross.

Let's look in Romans 5:1:

> "Therefore, having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

So once we have had the sin issue dealt with God's way, the result is peace with God. The punishment for our peace came upon Him. Unless He had been punished we could never have peace. But His punishment made it possible for us to have peace with God.

And then a little more vividly or fully in Colossians 1:19–21. This is speaking about Jesus on the cross.

> "For it pleased the Father that in him all the fullness should dwell [all the fullness of God]; and by Him to reconcile all things to himself. By him were the things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of his cross. And you who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death [And then it goes on:] to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable in his sight."

That could never be achieved by any other way except the sacrifice of Jesus. Because He was totally identified with everything evil that we had ever done. It was possible for us to be totally forgiven and totally delivered from the power of evil.

Again, another scripture on this theme is Ephesians 1:7, speaking of Jesus:

> "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace."

So when we have forgiveness of sins we have redemption. The word redemption means to buy back or to ransom. So through the price of the blood of Jesus given on our behalf as a sacrifice, we have been bought back from Satan to God.

In Romans 7 Paul says something which isn't always very clear to people who don't know the cultural background. Paul says I am carnal, sold under sin. That phrase sold under sin relates to the Roman custom that when a person was being sold as a slave they were made to stand on a sort of block and from a post behind them a spear was stretched out over their head. And so when you saw a person standing on the block under the outstretched spear you knew that person was being sold as a slave. And Paul says I am carnal, sold under the spear of my sin which is stretched out over my head, and I have no options. I'm there for sale. You know when a person is bought as a slave they don't choose what they do. The owner chooses what they do. Two women may be sold in the same market. One will become a cook, the other a prostitute. They don't have the choice. That's true with us as sinners. You may be a good, respectable sinner and you can look down on the prostitutes and the addicts and people like that. But believe me, it's the slave owner who determines.

But the good news is this. One day Jesus walked into that slave market and he said, "I'll buy her. I'll buy him. Satan, you can't have him, I've paid the price. From now on he's not your slave, he's my son or she's my daughter." That's redemption, so vivid.

It only comes through the forgiveness of sins. How can we be forgiven? Because Jesus was punished with the punishment due to us. Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven.

Now going back to Isaiah 53, these marvelous verses also contain what I call the physical aspect of the atonement. Isaiah 53:4:

> "Surely he has borne our sicknesses, and carried our pains..."

There are two different words used in Hebrew. When it says he has borne our sicknesses, the word means he carried it away. When it says he has carried our sorrows, the word is endured our pains, he has endured our pains. He has carried our sicknesses away and He has endured our pains. What's the result? Look at the end of verse 5:

> "By his wounds we are healed."

See how logical that is? Because He has dealt with our sicknesses and our pains in His own body, healing is provided for us. If I can render the Hebrew, it says it was healed for us. So perhaps the best way to express it would be healing was obtained for us.

It's very interesting when it speaks about the atonement the Bible never puts healing in the future. It's finished. As far as God's concerned it's there. Healing was obtained. We are healed. Christians sometimes ask me how can I know if it's God's will to heal me? I reply if I rightly understand the Bible —and there are things that none of us understand—you've asked the wrong question. If you are a committed born again Christian sincerely seeking to serve God and do His will, your question should be this: Not how can I know if it's God's will to heal me but how can I receive the healing which God has already provided for me? Now that's a very important question. Hopefully before we finish this series I will be able to deal at least in part with the question of how to appropriate what God has provided. But if you don't believe in the first place that God has provided it, you're not likely to appropriate it. So the basis is discovering what God has provided through Jesus on the cross.

I want to give you two passages in the New Testament, both of which quote Isaiah 53:4–5. And both of them were quoted by Jews—one was Matthew, the other was Peter—who were also inspired by the Holy Spirit. So you might say, "Well, Brother Prince, I'm not sure that I accept your rendering of Isaiah 53." All right. But you can't argue with Matthew, Peter and the Holy Spirit. Turn to Matthew 8:16–17. This is the beginning of the public healing ministry of Jesus.

> "When evening had come..."

Why did they wait till evening? Because it was the sabbath and they weren't allowed to do anything until the sabbath was over in the evening.

> "When evening had come, they brought to Jesus many who were demon possessed, and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick."

One thing I would comment on is in the healing ministry of Jesus there's really no hard and fast distinction between healing the sick and casting out evil spirits. They go hand in hand all the way through His ministry. Why did He do that? Verse 17 tells us:

> "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, 'He himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.'"

Where is he quoting, from what passage? Isaiah 53:4–5. And notice its meaning is totally physical. He says infirmities and sicknesses. Furthermore, its outworking is totally physical. What was the evidence? The fact that He healed all who came to him. Not some but all. Every one. So there's no question that Matthew gives Isaiah 53:4–5 a totally physical application.

Also, notice he himself. You remember what I said about that word? Surely he, that all the emphasis is designed to go on the he? Well, here it is in the Greek. He himself. See, when you're struggling with sin or sickness or depression or rejection or fear, what the Bible says is look away from yourself. The answer is not in you. Turn your eyes to Jesus. He Himself is the answer.

Let's turn to 1 Peter 2:24. This is just part of a complete sentence but we don't need the rest. Speaking about Jesus it says:

> "Who himself..."

You notice that? Notice where the emphasis is? On Himself.

> "Who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness..."

That's the center, the basis is dealing with sin. When sin is dealt with then the other consequences can flow. And then

it goes on:

> "...by whose wounds you were healed."

Not will be healed, not even are healed but were healed. As far as God's concerned it is already done. When Jesus said it is finished, it was finished. As far as God's concerned nothing is ever going to change it, nothing will have to be added to it and nothing can be taken from it. It is a perfect work, perfect in every respect, perfect in every aspect. And the physical aspect is just as perfect as any other.

I'd like to direct your attention to a number of passages in the New Testament where the word for save is translated heal or make well. The Greek word for save is sotso. And I suppose it would be hard to count how many times that's translated save. All the other words for salvation come from it. A savior is soteer, from the same root. But, there are a significant number of passages in the New Testament where that verb is used for physical healing. The problem for English readers and maybe readers in other languages is the translators to fit in with English usage do not use the word save. So for people who merely read in English the fact is obscured that healing is part of salvation. That's exactly what it is.

I'll give you a whole series of passages, beginning in Matthew 9:21–22. Now you may have different translations so there will be a slight variation but it won't make any significant difference. Matthew 9:21–22. This is the story of the little woman with the issue of blood who came behind Jesus and touched His garment and then was afraid to disclose what she'd done. You know why she was afraid? Maybe you've never wondered. Because a woman who had an issue of blood was considered unclean and she was forbidden to touch anybody. And anybody she touched became unclean. So she transgressed by touching Jesus. That's why when she was asked what she had done she came trembling. But Jesus didn't get involved in that issue. Anyhow, here's the story. Matthew 9:21–22.

> "She said to herself, 'If only I may touch his garment I shall be made well.'"

What did she say? I shall be saved.

> "But Jesus turned around and when he saw her, said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter, your faith has made you well.'"

But what did He say? Your faith has saved you. That word.

Then in Mark 6:56, the last verse of a long chapter.

> "Wherever Jesus entered, into villages, cities or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might just touch the border of his garment. And as many as touched him were made well."

Guess what it says? Were saved, that's right. What were they saved from? Sickness. They were probably saved from sin, too, but the emphasis is sickness.

Luke 8:35–36. This is the record of the man who had the legion of demons. Jesus cast the demons out and the man became perfectly normal. This is what it says:

> "Then the people went out to see what had happened and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon possessed was healed."

What does it say? Was saved, that's right. Being delivered from demons is part of salvation. It has been provided by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. And dealing with people, and I've dealt with thousands who needed deliverance from evil spirits, I've learned by experience Satan only respects on thing. The cross. You can tell him you're a Baptist or an Episcopalian or a Presbyterian. He could care less. But when you come on the basis of what Jesus did on the cross, then he trembles.

Going on in Luke 8:47–50. It really gets better and better as you go on. Again, this is the woman with the issue of blood but we go further.

> "Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling and falling down before him, she declared to him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately."

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How she was what? Saved, that's right.

> "And he said to her, 'Daughter, be of good cheer. Your faith has made you well.'"

Your faith has saved you, that's right.

Going on there in the following verses:

> "While he was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, 'Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher.' When Jesus heard him he answered him, saying, 'Do not be afraid. Only believe and she will be made well.'"

She will be what? Saved. What was salvation there? Being brought back from the dead. So healing, resurrection from the dead and deliverance from evil spirits are all described by that one inclusive word "to save." Because salvation is everything that's been provided by the death of Jesus on the cross.

Then we look at Acts 4:8–10. This is the lame man at the Beautiful Gate. The apostles are being questioned why they did it.

> "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if this way we are judged for a good deed done to the helpless man, by what means he has been made well...'"

By what means he has been what? Saved.

> "...let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, this man stands here before you whole."

What produced wholeness? Salvation, that's right. And then he goes on to say:

> "Neither is there salvation in any other name."

And then finally in 2 Timothy 4:18. Paul says:

> "But the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me for his heavenly kingdom."

When he says preserve, what does he say? Save, that's right. He will save me and keep on saving me. So, the ongoing outworking of what Jesus did for us on the cross is salvation. It's from the moment you believe till the moment you pass out of time into eternity, you are moving in salvation provided by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

There's a scripture in Hebrews which I think maybe we should turn to. I feel somehow that God wants me to bring this one scripture out. Hebrews 2:3.

> "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"

You see, there are people who refuse salvation. They just turn it down, they don't want it. They don't believe. But there are, I think, multitudes of professing Christians who don't refuse salvation, they neglect salvation. They don't really find out what God has provided for them. They accept some traditional view, some, shall we say, denominational presentation. It doesn't pay. God drove me to the place in hospital where I had to find out, I had no other way out. Maybe God has brought some of you to that place. You can't afford to neglect this salvation. If you don't see it now I want to warn you somewhere down the road you're going to need it desperately. So may God help each one of us not to be neglectful of this so great salvation.

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