

VII. A BIBLICAL VIEW OF DELIVERANCE FROM SUFFERING IN THE PRESENT LIFE

On January 13, 1985, during his program on TV channel 17 (Philadelphia), Oral Roberts said: "I feel the anointing of the Spirit. I feel the gifts of healing working in me now. From the crown of your head to the sole of your feet, God wants you healed, and so do I."

Statements like this one could be duplicated many times, and by many television and radio preachers. But are such claims supportable from Scripture?

What about it? Is present deliverance from all physical sickness and suffering promised by God? Is such deliverance a promised blessing flowing from Christ's atonement?

Notice that the question is not "Is it God's will to deliver us from all physical suffering through Christ's atonement?" (The answer to this question is yes.)

Nor is the question "Does the Bible teach that Christ died, not only to deliver us from spiritual bondage to sin, but also to deliver us from physical bondage to disease, disablement, and deformity?" (The answer to this question is an emphatic yes.)

The question is rather, "Does Christ's atonement provide present deliverance from all physical suffering?"

It is clear that in the new heavens and the new earth there will no longer be any mourning or crying or pain, for these things will have passed away. There will be no more physical suffering then! And this everlasting deliverance is a benefit that Christ purchased for us with His own blood.

But there are some Christians who hold that it is God's will to deliver us from all present physical illness and suffering through Christ's atonement. They believe that healing from all causes of physical suffering is a present blessing that Christ has purchased for us by His death. And in support of their belief, these Christians quote several Scriptures.

A. Scriptures Quoted in Support of Present Deliverance from All Suffering

In Psalm 103:2-3 David exhorts believers, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits; who pardons all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases." (emphasis added)

In Isaiah 53:4 Isaiah says that the Messiah bore our sicknesses and carried our pains, and in verse 5 the author says that by the scourging that Christ received we are healed.

In Matthew 4:23 we read of Jesus going about in all Galilee, healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.