

healing from all suffering, because it is not God's Plan to presently heal all believers from all diseases, disablements, and deformities!

A loving and merciful God has not chosen to make us entirely like Christ in this life, or give us new bodies the moment we trust in Him, or finally defeat and destroy Satan yet, or bring in universal, unending peace at this time.

And an infinitely great and powerful atonement provides many wonderful benefits once for all, but God has not chosen to apply those benefits all at once.

And even though God does not desire that we continue in sin and imperfection until we see Christ, and does not desire that we continue to exist in weak, corruptible, dying bodies until our transformation, and does not desire that Satan continue his work of tempting and trying to destroy human beings and to disrupt the work of God, and does not desire that strife and warfare between individuals and nations continue, and does not desire that believers continue to suffer, nevertheless for His own good reasons God permits these things to continue, the meanwhile working to alleviate and eliminate them in stages or phases, according to His Plan. There are many things that God desires but does not choose to bring about. There are many things that God does not desire but does not choose to prevent. But the things He does choose, he incorporates into His great Plan.

Therefore, when we are asked, "Is present deliverance from all physical suffering a promised benefit of Christ's saving work?" we must answer "No." When we are asked, "Is eventual deliverance from all suffering promised?" we must answer "Yes!" When we are asked, "Is present deliverance from some physical suffering a benefit of Christ's saving work?" we must emphatically answer "Yes!"

And when we reflect on God's mercy and love in Christ in giving us even partial relief from the suffering that we, as part of the human race that sinned and fell in Adam, have brought on ourselves, we are overwhelmed with a sense of our unworthiness and God's great grace; and we are moved to sing with the Psalmist:

Bless the Lord, O my soul;
And forget not all His benefits!

(Psalm 103:2)