

DIVINE
HEALING

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International Ministries

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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

Published by:

*Crossroads Publications
10681 Princes Highway
Warrnambool
Victoria 3280
Australia*

CONTENTS

DIVINE HEALING.....	1
JESUS' STRIPES.....	6
RECEIVING HEALING.....	11
THE HEALING PROCESS.....	16
FREEDOM FOR THE WEAK IN FAITH.....	18
THE PROCESS OF PRAYER.....	22
OBTAINING GOD'S GRACE.....	24
OUR FOCUS POINT WHEN PRAYING.....	26
MAJOR CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING.....	28
GOD'S DESIRE FOR US.....	29

DIVINE HEALING

Background Reading: Matthew 8:1-17, 28-34; 9:1-9, 18-35

Many people ask about Divine healing in relation to the Bible. The purpose of this section is therefore to help Christians gain a basic understanding of what the Bible has to say about healing, and to help Christians learn how God's principles of healing can be applied to their lives.

As Christians, the focus of our faith must always be the Cross - therefore who we are in Christ and what we have in Him. This must always be the object of our faith.

In regard to healing, many make the mistake of substituting a belief in healing for that which is really necessary, i.e. the receiving of God's grace. This can be compared to believing in food - that it exists - without consuming it, or believing that water exists without drinking it. We must do both with God's food which is the Word. We must both believe in it and eat it in order to digest it fully by His grace - if it is to bring about the healing we seek. To digest the food of God's Word means that we have both belief and trust firmly planted in the heart of our spirit man (for from the heart flow the issues of life: Prov.4:20-23). This means we will have the faith we require to meet the need - as we act upon it.

The power of God is ministered first to our spirit, then to our bodies: 3 John 2. Therefore the prosperity of the soul usually comes (especially in regard to older Christians) before the prosperity of the physical body - for this is God's Divine order.

So instead of wondering if you have enough faith to be healed, let your spirit digest the medicine of the Word of God. Then by faith let the power of God flow throughout your whole being - spirit, soul and body.

This may take time - not that God requires time, but for God's power to heal unto health, sometimes a trickle of His power precedes a flood. We can impede the flow of His power by our ideas and attitudes, but God always wants to heal a broken body.

As stated, it is God's Divine order that prosperity of the soul is more important than physical healing. A prosperous soul is gained through mind renewal that includes heart changes which are character building. Not only does God want us to know His Word, but more importantly, He wants us to know Him on an intimate level. God wants us to communicate (walk or abide) with Him "*in the cool of the day*" (as Adam did), talking to Him and most importantly listening for the Master's voice and seeking to understand His heart in all things. Christianity is meant on earth to be a relational walk at an experiential level, not just a legal position.

True Divine healing always begins in the heart of man by the grace of God: Matt. 12:34-35. Our wealth is in God, or should we say, "God in us" : John 14:23. The riches we seek should not be those belonging to the temporal world, but rather those of the heavenly kind. The desire of our heart should be to seek God and His will, not earthly riches, glory and the favour of man. The riches of Divine love will far outweigh and outlast the love of things. Let our focus be therefore, "Lord, heal my heart, soften it, so that I can know and respond to Your will and no other." This is the prayer of a humble Saint whom God will hear, and to whom He will respond: James 4:6. And this will result in true healing of the heart, which, before the Cross, was dead to the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Such a heart had no energy to do right, only evil - but the Cross changes everything. Only God can heal the heart, so that we become new creations in Christ, with a loving Father and a new heart: Jer.31:33-34; Heb.8:10.

Let's read Colossians 1:12-14:

COL 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, Who has (qualified and) made us meet (fit) to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light:

COL 1:13 Who has delivered us from the power (authority) of darkness (in every area), and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son (the Kingdom of Light):

COL 1:14 In Whom we have redemption through His Blood (the ransom price for our salvation was the Blood), even the forgiveness of sins

In Christ we have been redeemed - we have been delivered from the authority of darkness and placed into the Kingdom of God. This deliverance encompasses every area of our lives, spirit, soul and body, for this is our inheritance. The healing of our bodies is very much a part of this wonderful provision.

Claiming the inheritance we have in Christ can be likened to the Israelites in Old Testament times claiming the Promised Land.

Let's turn to Joshua Ch.1, to see what is required:

JOSH 1:1 No0w after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spoke unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

JOSH 1:2 "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you, and all this people, into the land which I do give to them, even to the Children of Israel. (Joshua begins his ministry at the banks of jordan, where Christ was baptized . . . Israel had dwelt in the wilderness for some forty years; it was now time for them to go into the Promised Land: E.S.B.)

JOSH 1:3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses" (it was not God's Will that one foot breadth was to rest in the hands of its former owners; likewise, the Holy Spirit intends presently for everything in our lives to be removed which hinders our progress with the Lord; it is God's Will that we possess the entirety of the Promise, which pertains to total victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil [James 4:5]). (E.S.B.)

God was instructing Joshua that even though He had already given the Promised Land to the Israelites, they still had to go in and take possession of it. If they had not done as directed, they would not have enjoyed the benefits of their inheritance. They had to go forth

and take possession of it by placing their feet on that legal, God-given ground. The same is true for us today. In order to partake fully of our inheritance in Christ at an experiential level, we must place our feet on the land that is promised to us. And this land for us is the will of God in our lives. Concerning healing we need, by God-given faith, to place our feet on that particular ground and stand firm in the power of the new Nature, not yielding to fear, doubt, circumstances or negative emotions, etc. Healing is promised to us in the Word of God - it is there for us to claim as part of our inheritance, for it is already legally ours.

The Old Testament provides the proper background for a Biblical understanding of the concept of Divine healing. God reveals Himself throughout the Old Testament via His Names, and one of these Names, "*Jehovah-Rapha*," means that He is the Lord Who heals. This Name appears in Exodus 15:26 where the Lord assures Israel that He will not allow any of the diseases of Egypt to afflict His people. Indeed He declares in this scripture, "*I am the Lord Who heals you*," that is, Jehovah-Rapha. There are also many other Old Testament scriptures which declare that God is the healer of His people: e.g. Psalms 103:3; Psalm 107:20; Proverbs 4:22.

To receive healing we need to immerse ourselves in God's will concerning healing - so that the Holy Spirit can bring to us the hope needed, thereby creating the inner mould to hold the trust. In light of the Atonement and our understanding of it, the following scriptures leave no room for doubt in this regard, for they show us that Jesus paid the price for our healing, our wholeness and our forgiveness during the time of the crucifixion:

ISA 53:4 Surely He (Jesus) has borne our griefs (sicknesses), and carried our sorrows: yet we did (ignorantly) esteem (consider) Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

ISA 53:5 but He was wounded for our transgressions (rebellion), He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace (the punishment needed to obtain peace and well-being for us) was upon Him (and

him alone); and with (by) His stripes we are healed (and made whole).

This Atonement constitutes Christ's completed work, so that now we can be made whole, spirit, soul and body. Because of the Atonement we can pray in faith for the healing of our bodies saying "By His stripes I have been healed. Thank You Jesus. You are still the healer by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

From the New Bible Dictionary comes the meaning of "atonement":

"ATONEMENT. The word 'atonement' is one of the few theological terms which derive basically from Anglo-Saxon. It means 'a making at one,' and points to a process of bringing those who are estranged into a unity. The word occurs in the OT to translate words from the kpr word group, and it is found once in the NT (AV), rendering katallageu (which is better translated 'reconciliation' as RSV). Its use in theology is to denote the work of Christ in dealing with the problem posed by the sin of man, and in bringing sinners into right relation with God."¹

(underlines added)

ROM 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the atonement (reconciliation).

Our spirit has already been healed legally and conditionally, but **our mind and body** are only legally (positionally) saved. For our mind to be saved conditionally, we need, by faith, to bring it into line with God's Word in an experiential sense. If our body is sick, we need to know Jesus has provided us with the legal ground from which we are able to make proper demands on the promise that healing is already ours. The key is that we make proper demands on this promise. To do this will require the renewing of the mind. In this process the Holy Spirit will bring us, as we seek truth in regard to healing, to a condition of faith. It is then the grace of the Holy

Spirit at work within us which energizes our very nature to believe and then trust on Calvary's finished work for our healing:

3 JOHN 2 Beloved, I desire above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul (mind) prospers (through constant renewal).

JESUS' STRIPES

The healing power of God is available today because Jesus maintained His faith in His Father's Word during His time of terrible physical and mental suffering on and before the cross. He maintained His faith in the Father, having complete trust that He would not ask anything of His Son that wasn't necessary. This testing proved Him to be the perfect sacrifice to atone for our sin. Note that the word "*stripes*" in Isaiah 53:5 is properly translated from the original Hebrew as "wound."

JOHN 19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged (whipped) Him.

ISA 53:4 Surely He (Jesus) has borne (taken) our griefs (sicknesses), and carried our sorrows: yet we did (ignorantly) esteem (consider) Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

ISA 53:5 But He was wounded (pierced) for our transgressions (rebellion), He was crushed for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace (the punishment that brought us peace) was upon Him (and Him alone); and with (by) His stripes (wounds) we are healed (and made whole).

Wuest writes concerning the "*stripes*" of 1 Peter 2:24, which Peter wrote about in reference to Isaiah 53:5:

*"The word "**stripes**" in the Greek presents a picture of our Lord's lacerated back after the scourging He endured at the hands of the Roman soldier. The Romans used a scourge of cords or thongs to*

which latter were attached pieces of lead or brass, or small, sharp-pointed bones. Criminals condemned to crucifixion were ordinarily scourged before being executed. The victim was stripped to the waist and bound in a stooping position, with the hands behind the back, to a post or pillar. The suffering under the lash was intense. The body was frightfully lacerated. The Christian martyrs at Smyrna about A.D. 155 were so torn by the scourges that their veins were laid bare, and the inner muscles and sinews and even the bowels were exposed. The Greek word translated "stripes" refers to a bloody wale trickling with blood that arises under a blow. The word is singular; not plural. Peter remembered the body of our Lord after the scourging, the flesh so dreadfully mangled that the disfigured form appeared in his eyes as one single bruise.

Thus we have the portrait of the suffering Servant of Jehovah, His blessed face so pummeled by the hard fists of the mob that it did not look like a human face anymore, His back lacerated by the Roman scourge so that it was one mass of open, raw, quivering flesh trickling with blood, His heart torn with anguish because of the bitter, caustic, malevolent words hurled at Him. On that bleeding, lacerated back was laid the Cross. Unsaved reader; this was all for you, just as if you were the only lost person in the universe. The Lord Jesus died for you, in your stead, took your place on the Cross, paid your penalty, so that God could offer a salvation from sin based upon a justice satisfied. Will you not right now appropriate the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour; trust Him to save you? And saint, does not all this make you love the Lord Jesus more, soften and make more tender your heart? Does not all this make you say, "I can see the blood drops, red 'neath His thorny crown, from the cruel nail-wounds, now they are falling down; Lord, when I would wander from thy love away, let me see those blooddrops shed for me that day?" The blood of Christ heals our sin in that He by one offering put away sin forever."²

(underlines added)

In this physical state, our Lord would have suffered incredible physical pain that would also have produced enormous mental suffering. The stripes, mentioned in Isaiah 53:5, caused much pain and suffering to our Saviour. The injustice, betrayal and

abandonment He experienced were added to increase His soulful suffering (mental anguish) so that we may have peace and wholeness in our minds. In the suffering and ultimate death of the Lamb of God on the cross, holy justice was satisfied, the curse upon man (spirit, soul and body) being taken care of through the Atonement.

The “*stripes*” (wound) relates to the physical suffering Jesus endured - so that we may be healed. As we have said, the Atonement consists of the suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus. The suffering aspect of the Atonement included the physical suffering of Jesus, the mental suffering of Jesus and the spiritual suffering of Jesus - throughout the crucifixion and the lead-up to it. After this time of terrible testing was finished, Jesus’ death and then His Resurrection completed the Atonement process.

However it is not just by the stripes which Jesus bore that we are able to be healed. It is because He maintained His faith through this whole time of testing that we, today, can obtain the healing power of God when we need it. It was by His shed Blood that the promise was then sealed, and healing became available to us.

Our debt for salvation, as well as the debt for the healing of our soul and body, have been “paid in full” through the Atonement. Let us never forget that Jesus bore the punishment due to us through this whole process.

1 PET 2:24 Who His own self bore our sins in His own Body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes you were (past tense) healed (body and soul).

HEB 5:9 And (through His completed experience) being made perfect He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them who obey Him

Our Saviour’s sufferings in relation to the Atonement were vicarious, “borne” by Him on behalf of man to save him from the consequences of sin: Rom.8:17. We could then see Isaiah 53:4 in this same light, “*Surely He has borne* (paid the price through vicarious suffering for) *our griefs* (sicknesses).”

Yes sin was “borne” by Christ, but so was all sickness and disease that sin had brought into the world. However, He did not bear our sins and sicknesses in His Body as such. He bore the penalty for our sins and our sicknesses, the penalty being the debt we could never pay. He bore the penalty for the curse of sickness to be lifted.

MATT 8:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying, “Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses.”

“The word “infirmities” in this 17th verse speaks of feebleness of mind and body, malady, frailty, disease, sickness and weakness. All this Christ bore on the Cross fulfilling Isaiah 53.”³

Therefore we can see that Jesus has already paid the price for us to obtain healing and wholeness in every area of our lives. Our healing was paid for approximately 2,000 years ago. God waits for us to meet the conditions so that His power can make this truth a reality in each of our lives, for we can know from the promises in scripture that God wants His people to be fit and well, and to live in good health.

“HEALING, DIVINE, THE MINISTRY OF: The dynamic ministry of Jesus not only revealed God’s heart of love for mankind’s need of a Redeemer, but unveiled God’s compassionate heart of mercy for mankind’s need of a Healer. The will of God was perfectly disclosed in His Son; we are to seek ways to fully convey that perfect revelation. Just as the Fall of man introduced sickness as a part of the curse, the Cross of Christ has opened a door to healing as part of salvation’s provision. Healing encompasses God’s power to restore broken hearts, broken homes, broken lives, and broken bodies. Suffering assumes a multiplicity of forms, but Christ’s blood not only covers our sin with redemptive love; His stripes release a resource of healing at every dimension of our need.”⁴

(underlines added)

Jesus Himself, spirit, soul and body, had to receive the punishment due to us for sin. He had to suffer in these three areas of

man's makeup in order to pay the price for man to be made whole in each of these areas. Therefore He suffered mental torment so that we can have peace ("the chastisement of our peace was upon Him" : Isa.53:5. See also Luke 22:44). He suffered physical torment so that we can be healed in our body ("and with His stripes we are healed" : Isa.53:5. See also Isa.52:14, Luke 22:63-64). His spirit suffered in that the Father turned away from Jesus as He became the "sin bearer": Matt.27:46. Ultimately the price paid for wholeness in our spirit was death - for without the shedding of Christ's Blood (bringing about death) there can be no forgiveness.

In suffering in His righteous spirit, soul and body, Jesus became a complete sacrifice for our spirit, soul and body. He suffered to the full extent, spiritually, mentally and physically. This suffering constituted, before death, as much pain and suffering as any man could endure while remaining alive and sinless. This mental and physical suffering was necessary for the healing of our mind and body. Then for our spirit, He shed His Blood and laid His life down so that He could die in our place. He took this, our penalty, so that we could be cleansed (healed) in our spirit, and brought back into proper relationship with the Father.

ISA 53:10 Yet it pleased the Lord (Jehovah) to bruise Him (Jesus); He has put Him to grief: when You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed (spiritual offspring = born-again Christians), He shall prolong His days (this refers to the Resurrection), and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper (all shall be restored as it was before the Fall) in His hand (by His rule).

ISA 53:11 He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied (the redemptive price having been paid): by His knowledge (the knowledge of Him being imparted to men's hearts) shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities (through the Atonement).

As Dake wrote concerning Isaiah 53:10:

“Complete sacrifice (Isa.53:10). Himself - His entire self, not His personal soul only. It took His body, soul, and spirit to make a complete offering for sin and sickness. He was a complete substitute for man. Since the body, soul, and spirit of man had sinned and were under the sentence of death, it took the whole being of the Messiah to take man’s place. The word soul is sometimes used of an individual (Gen.12:5; 41:26). There is no such thing as sinning with the flesh and not with the soul and the spirit, as taught by some. The flesh cannot be filthy and the soul and spirit holy. The body became sinful, depraved and diseased by sin in the fall, and the body must be redeemed from these things if redemption is to be complete.”

“Why God was pleased with the death of Christ (Isaiah 53 verse 10). The only reason it pleased Jehovah to permit Him to be crucified was to bring about the redemption of the whole creation so that His eternal program could be carried out with man on earth (v10). He could not have been pleased with the mutilation of His beloved Son because He punished men for this (Acts 2:22-24; 1 Th 2:16). Both the Father and the Son volunteered to suffer such indignities for the salvation of men (Jn 3:16; 10:18). Such a sacrifice on the part of God showed His divine perfection, justice, mercy, and boundless benevolence. The law was upheld, sin was judged, and a basis of pardon and eternal reconciliation was made possible.”⁵

The Atonement has completely addressed all of man’s problems both in a legal sense and a conditional sense. It has not only dealt with sin and satisfied justice but has made the way for the grace of God to empower us to live in God’s abundant blessings. Indeed the Atonement has opened heaven’s gates so that now in Christ we are blessed with “*all spiritual blessings*” : Eph.1:3. Because Jesus suffered on our behalf in His body, soul and spirit, the Atonement is complete in addressing the entire need of man, body, soul and spirit.

RECEIVING HEALING

MATT 8:16 *When the evening was come (the Sabbath Day of rest ended at sunset), they brought unto Him*

*(Jesus) many who were possessed with devils (demons):
and He cast out the spirits with His Word, and healed all
who were sick*

This scripture reveals to us God's will concerning healing, for Jesus did not pick and choose who would be healed and who would not. Nor did He declare that God was testing those who were sick so that they might grow in faith or patience, etc. What does this verse say to us? It says that Jesus "*healed all who were sick.*" This is the wonderful message of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. God wants to bring all men to salvation, not only of spirit (1 Tim.2:4) but of mind and body also: 3 John 2.

We see Jesus' desire to heal in the following verses:

***MATT 8:2** And, behold, there came a leper who worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."*

***MATT 8:3** And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*

There is simply no question that He would do otherwise.

The term "to heal" means "to cure," "to repair," "to restore," "to make whole." It denotes soundness, completeness, restoration, wholeness, etc. Divine healing has been made available to us so that our physical bodies can be restored to complete health and wholeness.

The healing power of God is a spiritual force which was present in Jesus' earthly ministry. Acts 10:38 tells us :

ACTS 10:38** How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power (as a man, Christ laid aside His power and glory, and depended on the Holy Spirit to empower Him for service and ministry): **Who

went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.

So God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power, and Jesus travelled through the New Testament area of Palestine, healing “all who were oppressed of the devil.” This work of Jesus is still continuing today in the lives of Believers who are touched by the Gospel, for Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forevermore: Heb.13:8. From Acts 10:38 and Luke 13:16, we can also see that it is Satan who is the father and instigator of oppression.

LUKE 13:11 And, behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together (bent over permanently), and could in no wise lift up (straighten) herself.

LUKE 13:12 And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him (means this miracle was unsolicited), and said unto her, “Woman, you are loosed (delivered) from your infirmity.”

LUKE 13:13 And He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God (acknowledging the Source of her deliverance).

Jesus said:

LUKE 13:16 “And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham (this indicates Covenant relationship), whom Satan has bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath Day?”

Therefore if you are suffering from any form of disease or oppression, you need to acknowledge that this is not God’s doing. Sickness, disease and other forms of bondage are promoted by Satan to afflict man and cause him distress and torment. Indeed, other scriptures tell us that Satan seeks to kill, harm and destroy people, given any opportunity to do so. Sickness and disease are thus not

tests and trials sent by God to increase our faith. If people believe this, then there is no reason to ask God to heal them. If people desire healing, this sort of unbelief will cause doublemindedness, and this will block the release of God's power: James 1:5-8. Sickness and disease are not sent by God but are works of the enemy by which he would bind, dishearten and destroy humanity: 1 Pet.5:8.

It is God's will today that all be healed and live in good health. He can only fulfill His Word, however, as people open up and respond to it. We need therefore to meditate on the promises of God concerning healing - to help the Holy Spirit build hope on the inside of us. The living Word can then be placed in our hearts as illuminated revelation knowledge.

Psalm 103:1-3 tells us:

PSA 103:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

PSA 103:2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits (while Christ is the Source of all benefits, the Cross is the means): (E.S.B.)

PSA 103:3 Who forgives all your iniquities; Who heals all your diseases (the Lord Alone can forgive sin [1 Jn.1:9]; the Lord Alone can heal [1 Pet.2:24]); (E.S.B)

Also, Psalm 107:20 tells us:

PSA 107:20 He sent His Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions (the grave).

The Lord has sent His Word and has promised that it will not return to Him void, as we fulfill the conditions. The conditions are of course that we make proper demands on our Covenant from a proper perspective - that being, of course, having our faith firmly focused on the "finished work of the Cross." And remember that only holy faith, developed as our human nature is energized by the Divine Nature, can make these proper demands on heaven's power. God indeed is

faithful to His Word of deliverance, and is watching over it, desiring to bring it to fulfillment in our lives.

JER 1:12 Then said the Lord unto me. “. . . for I will hasten (watch over) My Word to perform it (to bring it to pass).”

ISA 55:11 So shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void (empty), but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it (achieve the purpose for which I send it).

Note: In order to have the Lord fulfill His Word in our lives, we, with the help of the Spirit's Divine energy, need to walk in humility, forgiving others who have wronged us and repenting of sin: Isa.55:7; 1 John 1:9. Scripture tells us that God will not respond to a man or woman who is walking in unforgiveness or pride - or harbouring blatant unconfessed sin: Psa.51:16-17; Isa.57:15; Isa.59:2; Mark 11:25-26; James 4:6. (This of course is dependent on the degree of sin being practised.)

We also need to understand that physical and emotional healing are just as much a part of the Gospel as the message of spiritual regeneration.

Many do not receive healing or the blessings of God because they do not know His will on the subject. As a starting point, therefore, we need to understand and acknowledge that sickness and disease resulted from the curse, and are promoted by Satan. To be liberated in the areas of sickness and disease a Christian needs to:

1. Testify and believe that they are not under the curse (because they have been baptized into Christ's death and raised with Christ into “*newness of life*”): Luke 10:19; Rom.6:3-5; Gal.3:13.

2. Repent of any known sin - in other words, nail it to the Cross: Rom.6:6-7; 1 John 1:9.

3. Bind and loose Satan's influence, as the promoter of all sickness and disease, from their body: Matt.18:18; James 4:7; 1 John 3:8.

4. Pray for healing, as needed: Matt.18:19; 1 Cor.12:9.

5. Pray for a miracle, if needed: Mark 11:22-26; 1 Cor.12:10.

Also, some people do not receive because after praying, there may be no obvious results and so doubt and unbelief flood their minds and their faith becomes depleted. It is important, however, to continue to believe for one's healing, even though, if after prayer, there may seem to be no immediate changes. For "*the just shall live by faith*" (Hab.2:4), not walk by sight.

We will now go on to look at the healing process and to provide further information which may be helpful for those seeking healing or good health.

THE HEALING PROCESS

Healing may take place immediately or may occur over a period of time, for the Word states, "*They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover*" : Mark 16:18. The prayer of healing may help speed up the body's natural healing processes and also help kill or expel any foreign substance, e.g. a virus. So instead of it taking six weeks to recover from an illness, it may take, for example, two weeks or less, or healing may even occur immediately.

Generally a sickness or disease comes upon a person gradually. It usually begins in one area, then seeks to spread itself throughout the body in a destructive manner, causing its victim pain and/or distress. Knowing this to be the case, it is quite understandable that healing may sometimes occur in a similar way. For example, the healing process (God's healing power) may begin working in a particular area and then move gradually throughout the body, displacing the sickness or disease with health and wholeness.

Once the prayer for healing is prayed and believed upon, we must continue daily to take the spiritual medicine of God's Word in a balanced way. We need to begin of course with our attitude towards

man (having love, compassion and forgiveness) and God (having humility and reverence), and then to progress on to faith in our Covenant in relation to healing. We need to swallow and digest each dose of scripture so that God can perform His work in us, little by little, until we actually digest it in our hearts.

After a person receives prayer for healing, the results may be immediate or gradual. Sometimes healing is immediate, but if it is not, do not think that the healing process has not begun. Knowing that healing is taking place, we need to stand in faith, as the Book of Ephesians tells us:

EPH 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day (of danger or trouble), and having done all (that is our responsibility as Christians to do), to stand (not giving ground to the forces of darkness).

EPH 6:14 Stand therefore (in faith), having your loins girt about with truth (God's truth which is His Word and will), and having on the breastplate of righteousness (Christ's imputed righteousness which is ours through the Blood of the Cross);

After praying in faith for healing, we need to continue standing on the Word and not yield to our senses or circumstances. Believe you received your healing when you prayed, and continue to thank God for it - He will honour His Word. However, if you are not, at this point, in a position to receive, you need to acknowledge this and seek medical assistance. You can then determine to search the scriptures and build up your faith with the help and empowerment of the Holy Spirit - in order to become stronger in this area. Or you may need to find out from the Lord the reason why you were not healed. As we have said, sometimes blockages exist which may need to be dealt with before healing can take place, e.g. attitudes of unforgiveness, resentment or hatred, not having done what the Lord has told us to do, or just lacking a proper spiritual focus in regard to healing for ourselves.

As we have learned, healing is provided to restore our physical bodies and to make them whole. Divine healing fastens up the healing process. In some instances, however, a miracle may be needed to bring about complete wholeness.

A miracle is different to a healing, although they are closely related, for both are manifestations of God's supernatural power. Miracles, however, are creative in nature and, in regard to a person's body, are manifested in situations such as: the restoration of lost limbs, fingers and toes; the filling of tooth cavities, etc. Miracles thus encompass the bringing into existence of bodily parts which did not previously exist or are no longer present. Miracles also serve to restore functions or organs of the body which were not restorable by medicine or the natural healing process e.g. a blind eye, withered limb or a diseased organ.

Remember that, concerning healing or any other promise, as we allow the power of God into our lives, we are exalting His Word, and through our living witness, the Father is truly glorified: John 15:7-8.

FREEDOM FOR THE WEAK IN FAITH

In cases where people require healing or another need to be met and their faith level is low, they can call upon the elders of the church or other mature Christians of faith to pray for them:

***JAMES 5:14** Is any sick among you? (This refers to physical or emotional illness of any nature.) **let him call for the Elders (Pastors) of the Church; and let them pray over him** (refers to asking the Lord for healing regarding the need), **anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord** (the "oil" has no medicinal purpose, but is rather meant to symbolize the Holy Spirit, and is used as a point of contact concerning our Faith; prayer is to be offered in the Name of Jesus [Jn. 16:23]) : (E.S.B.)*

***JAMES 5:15** And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him (The conditional clause, "if he has sinned," makes it clear that*

not all sickness is the result of sin, but some definitely is. That being the case, the Lord will both heal and forgive upon believing Faith : E.S.B.)

Mature Christians who are strong in faith (and when led by the Spirit of God) can pray effectively for people who are in need: James 5:16. If the people being prayed for have to repent of any known sin, they must follow up with actions of true repentance - by turning around from any wrong they had been doing - so that the bondages concerned have no legal ground to return: John 5:14; Luke 5:20. This is because sin is the devil's legal ground to enter a person's life, and it is like cancer - if left unchecked it will spread, and gradually cause destruction.

God tells us, however, that if we come to a position of faith, He will give us the power and the strength to resist the devil - if we do things His way. We need to believe and reckon we are dead to sin, count the sin nature as being disengaged, and yield to the Holy Spirit so that we may be partakers of the Divine Nature at a conditional level: Rom.6:4-6; 2 Peter 1:4. As we yield to the Holy Spirit, we will then gain the empowerment we need to walk in righteousness - God's will. Indeed God will empower us to defeat any evil in our lives if we will to do things His way, by submitting to Him and His Word and relying on His grace to empower us to believe and trust. Therefore:

1 PET 5:6 Humble yourselves (allow yourselves to be humbled) therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time:

EPH 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another (caring for other's needs) in the fear of God (walking daily in the Spirit).

JAMES 5:16 Confess your faults one to another (refers to being quick to admit fault, if such be the case : E.S.B.), and pray one for another, that you may be healed (The Holy Spirit, through James, broadens the aspect of prayer for the sick as applicable to any Believer : E.S.B.). **The**

effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (refers to both positional and conditional righteousness) avails much.

In some instances when people are in need of God's power (e.g. when healing is required), God, in His wisdom, may require that they submit themselves in the Lord to other members of the Body of Christ for prayer - before healing can take place.

Some reasons for this may be:

1. So that pride can be removed (for any sin of pride can block God's healing power) and humility developed in the person seeking help.

2. So that people do not become islands unto themselves - independent of other Christians.

3. So that others may be taught the importance of humility - even though the person concerned may already be humble and in faith.

4. So that people who are present may learn from the example and put into practice and teach the scriptural principles which have been demonstrated.

5. So that God can use another's faith because of the immaturity or lack of faith in the one needing healing.

In a service, when an altar-call is given to those requiring healing, God may tell an individual not to join the prayer-line but rather to simply believe and receive. Yet He may tell another person to join the prayer-line and receive healing through this means. It is God's desire to heal each person by the power of His Word, but He will use different methods with different people in order to achieve this result. Remember that God knows what is best for each individual and what is needed to bring each person to a position where they can receive. Therefore we should listen to God and let

Him choose the method He desires to use so that the best results can be obtained.

In Christian circles, many people have become regimented concerning praying for the sick. This is seen in the fact that they will only use a singular method which has been tried and proven. Although this method may still produce results, such a practice can block the Spirit from utilizing other methods which would be more effective with different individuals. Consequently a regimented approach can hinder and limit the overall benefit to the Body of Christ. The rule is that in all things, we should be led by the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to tell us what is right.

The methods which Jesus used to bring God's healing power to people were varied (e.g. Matt.9:27-30; Mark 8:22-25; Luke 5:12-14, 6:6-10, 7:2-10; John 5:2-9, 9:1-7). Let us then also remember to seek the leading of the Spirit so that we may know God's will in each situation. In doing this, we will not become dependent on any one method, but rather, we will be placing our reliance upon the Spirit's leading. It is not the method which produces the healing virtue - but the Spirit of God Who uses different means to give the Believer an opportunity to act on his or her faith. Each method provides the Believer (being prayed for) with a platform from which they can either release their faith, or open up to God's power.

Also, Christian experience will tell us that some seeking healing need to first attend a service and listen to the preaching of the Word under the Anointing of the Spirit. This can bring them to a position of being able to receive through responding to the Spirit's direction, whether it be to believe and receive for themselves, or to be prayed for by another in faith as this person feels led by the Spirit to do so.

All of this shows the importance of being sensitive to the Spirit's promptings and acting accordingly, the end result being that each individual's need will be met and God will be glorified.

THE PROCESS OF PRAYER

God's Word states that He wants to heal and make whole the spirit of man, the mind of man and the body of man - in that order. In seeking healing, however, some Christians may need to be prayed for more than once to help bring them to a position of complete openness to God's power.

To come to this position, the influence of unbelief in this area of healing must be removed. This can be likened to breaking a rope which has a one thousand pound breaking strain. One end is connected to unbelief and the other to the heart. In order to break this rope, certain pressure is required. Sometimes the rope can be cut immediately by the power of God - if the person concerned has the required faith and has met the conditions relevant to that situation. However if the person does not have the required faith to allow God to cut the rope that is anchored to the unbelief (the fear or whatever the case may be), they can call for the elders of the church to pray for them. Before that day, most will need to be built up on the Word of God. This takes place as they seek the Lord and His Word, and hear the preaching and teaching of the Word. Most will need to be readied in this way before Holy Spirit surgery can take place.

Then even if this action does not cut the rope, they should allow the prayer, whether their own or that of another, to be the process starter that begins to apply tension to the rope. Then by faith, the person concerned should allow the tension to increase and increase, whether it be minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, or even month by month. In this way the strands of the rope gradually break until finally the rope snaps, freeing the former victim that Satan had ensnared. They then become free to receive God's healing power as they believe for it. The increasing tension on the rope comes as a result of one digesting the Word of truth given by the Holy Spirit.

The way to add further tension to the rope can be as follows. As has been stated, a person may need to be prayed for more than once in order to build up the required resistance. Prayer which invites God to divinely touch, fill and change will add tension to the rope. Also, as the person holds fast in faith to their confession of God's promises concerning healing (with a focus on Calvary, the

Atonement), then in Christ further tension will be added. The spiritual rope will eventually break, leaving the person free from unbelief and open to receiving God's healing power.

So if there is a rope holding you back from receiving God's healing or miraculous power, this is one way to snap that rope that would keep you from God's promises.

Therefore do not give up if there are no immediate results. Just remind yourself of God's promises and remember that He wants us to be healed and made whole in every area.

It is man who must change, not God - for Jesus is the same "*yesterday, and today and forever*" : Heb.13:8. So let us change through the renewing of our minds, by the washing of God's Word. Let us read it, hear it, confess it and live it until we become one with it, and appropriate its promises.

Note: In cases where faith is either at a low level or non-existent, and the person is not able to receive healing through a mature Christian's faith, the person should acknowledge this fact and then go to a doctor for the necessary help. People in this situation should not allow condemnation to attack them. They should acknowledge their weakness - their lack of faith in that area - and then search out and study the scriptures in order to hear the voice of the Spirit, gain faith and become strong in the power of God's Word.

Also, as we have stated, people may take a short time to be completely healed or healing may occur immediately - for God has to deal with the complexities of each individual person. Whatever method God chooses or is allowed to use does not alter His promise to the sick. The Word states clearly that whatever we ask of the Father, in faith, in Jesus' Name (according to the Word), He will give to us.

We need, however, to be balanced and realistic in our faith-walk. There are many Christians who try to operate in so-called "hyper-faith," otherwise known as presumption. They believe with their heads but not their hearts, and so are deceived into thinking they have strong faith when in fact they do not. All they usually have is mental assent to the truth, with a determination to "confess" their

healing into existence. Some of these people are so zealous, they do not see or perceive the blockages in their own lives.

If the illness is serious enough, such people, if they are seeking healing, can be putting their lives at risk. God's power can only be released as we have active faith in His Word and meet all the Word's conditions.

Remember - from whom much is given, much is required.

***LUKE 12:48** But he who knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required (demanded): and to whom men have committed (entrusted) much, of him they will ask (expect) the more.*

More is required of an adult than a child. Much more is required of an eighteen year old than a ten year old. And so it is with older Christians. God's principles do not change, but the responsibility to perform - to make use of the knowledge given - increases with time. For example, some people when first saved seem to receive healing very easily. However, a few years later on, God may not overlook their wrongs or their ignorance so easily, and when they seek healing or a promise, sometimes it does not seem to come as readily as it did in their early Christian walk.

OBTAINING GOD'S GRACE

Those who are in need, for example in need of healing or deliverance, or who lack spiritually or physically because they are ignorant of God's Word, do not need justice but rather extra (greater) grace. It is through God's mercy we obtain grace: Heb.4:16; Heb. 10:19. And the only way to obtain this grace is by clothing ourselves with humility. We can only enter the throneroom of grace when we are humble in heart - and even though a person may be ignorant of God's Word in certain areas, if they come to Him in humility, God's mercy may reach such a person who wants to be delivered and desires to do things God's way. Jesus said:

MATT 11:28 “Come unto Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (peace, rest from your own works).

MATT 11:29 Take My yoke (refers to the cross of self-denial: Matt.16:24, Luke 14:27) upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly (humble) in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls.

MATT 11:30 For My yoke is easy (when we carry it in His strength : John 15:5), and My burden is light.”

The condition for receiving this rest, however, is that we must take up Christ’s yoke of humility. Therefore:

JAMES 4:10 Humble yourselves (allow yourselves to be humbled) in the sight of the Lord (under God’s hand), and He shall lift you up.

1 PET 5:5 . . . Yes, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists (opposes, sets Himself against) the proud, and gives grace to the humble. (Prov.3:34)

1 PET 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you (lift you up) in due time

With this attitude of heart we are able to come into the throne room of grace in full confidence, expecting to be delivered in our time of need:

HEB 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace (the goodness of God that is required) to help in time of need.

Note: It is the work of the Spirit within us to bring us to this condition of humility. In other words, it is only when God’s hand is

allowed to mould us, and only under His direction and empowerment, that we become truly humble of heart.

So if you do not know the reason your need has not been met, repent of all known sin and even that which you may be unaware of. Come before the Lord with “*a contrite (repentant) and humble spirit*” : Isa.57:15. Repentance will eliminate any legal ground which the enemy may have. Then ask God for His help (power). After doing so, you will need to follow up with study and prayer in order to discover any area of wrong or ignorance, and to correct it accordingly by purposing to act on God’s Word in all humility. With this attitude of heart we can be empowered by the Spirit of Grace to receive all that God has for us.

If you, dear Saint, would allow the Holy Spirit to do so, He can take you on a journey which will give you enlightenment that would cause you to believe and not doubt. By His empowering grace that enables us to believe, we enter the realm of faith, causing heaven’s current to run through our very being. This current then flows outward to meet the need, whether it be our need or the need of another dear soul who has their hand stretched toward heaven, asking for salvation of spirit, soul or body.

In regard to power to live the saved life, the Cross is the fuse in the spiritual wiring which stretches from heaven to us. The moment we place our trust in anything else, including our good works, the fuse is blown and mighty as heaven’s power is, the Father cannot help His son or daughter. This is because every grace must come via the Cross. **Indeed the message of the Atonement must form the basis of our every prayer, for it is from this sure ground that every promise of the Bible stems.**

OUR FOCUS POINT WHEN PRAYING

When praying, many people have a wrong focus. They concentrate on the negatives and centre on the symptoms, the circumstances or themselves, instead of believing the promises in God’s Word. We should, however, always place the Word above everything that would come against the truth of God’s promises.

Those who allow circumstances to govern their actions and do not give God's Word pre-eminence in their lives, walk in unbelief. Because of this, they become ineligible to receive the fruit of God's promises. In fact, God cannot help them, for with this attitude they have willed Him not to do so through their unbelief.

Hebrews 11:6 states that we must activate faith in order to receive from God, for faith opens the door to God's blessings and provision.

HEB 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him (faith is heaven's currency): for he who comes to God must believe that He is (exists), and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

MARK 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire (one seeking to do the Will of God, will want only what God desires), when you pray (the value of prayer, without which these things cannot be done), believe (have faith) that you receive them, and you shall have them (as is obvious here, the receiving of these things, whatever they might be, requires relationship, and that is the key). (E.S.B.)

In order to pray effectively, we must believe that we already have the promise before we can receive it. To insist we must see before we can believe is to remain in the natural realm. Those who must see before they can believe will be limited in gaining help from God. As Christians, we must have faith before God can properly fulfill His promises to us.

For example, a Christian who needs to take hold of the promise of healing will first need to be healed on the inside before they can be healed on the outside. That is, they will need to allow God to fill them with His Word concerning the promises of healing so that they can be totally convinced and assured in their hearts that it is God's will for them. They will then be standing in a place where trust can be deposited in the inner mould of hope, thereby producing faith. When this faith is activated (the promise is believed and acted upon),

it will bring into existence the manifestation of God's healing power upon the flesh of man.

MAJOR CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING

We have been addressing the issue of Christians being prayed for in Jesus' Name and still not receiving from God (healing, deliverance, etc).

The following list gives some requirements which may need to be fulfilled before proper demands can be made on heaven's power. Of course all prayer must be conducted in the power of faith.

1. Humility: We must submit to God before we are able to resist the devil: James 4:6-7.

2. Honesty: We must acknowledge any sin which has not been dealt with: Psa.66:18.

3. Confession: We must confess all known sin: 1 John 1:9. There is no reason we cannot do this privately, but sometimes deliverance can be more effective if we confess our sins in front of another (who has our best interests at heart): James 5:16.

4. Renunciation: After acknowledgement and confession of sin, we need to renounce (forsake) any known sin: Prov.28:13. A sinner must be willing to forsake not only "*his way*" (his outward acts) but also "*his thoughts*" (any inward sinful leanings or desires): Isa.55:7. Having the willingness to forsake or abandon sin is essential in order to obtain God's mercy, forgiveness and empowerment to overcome. To forsake sin we will need to rely on God's empowerment. Remember that our focus must always centre on the finished work of the Cross, and the nailing of our sins to the Cross through repentance.

5. Forgiveness: Jesus showed us in Mark 11:25 that when we come to receive from God, we need, in the power of the new Nature of which we are now partakers, to forgive anyone who has wronged us, and to let go of all unforgiveness, hatred, resentment, etc. A

resentful and unforgiving spirit will block God's power from operating: Heb.12:15. In fact all traces of resentment and unforgiveness should be uprooted entirely.

After all this has been done, a prayer for deliverance or healing etc., can be prayed by:

1. The person concerned, or
2. Another who has the faith to do so.

In either case, the person who needs God's help can claim the promise contained in God's Word:

JOHN 14:13 And whatsoever you shall ask in My Name, that will I do (the Christian is given the Power of Attorney to use the Name of Christ . . .), that the Father may be glorified in the Son (is accomplished through the great Work of Christ being extended through all Believers) (E.S.B).

JOHN 14:14 If you shall ask any thing in My Name, I will do it (refers to that which is in harmony with His Character and Will). (E.S.B.)

This promise is based on the finished work of Christ at Calvary - which gives us the faith and the power to be delivered from any bondage.

GOD'S DESIRE FOR US

God is always willing and able to forgive, forget and heal, for God is a God of truth, Who always fulfills His Word. So in every situation, we can always trust Him and rely on Him unreservedly.

God has placed so much importance on His Word that He has magnified it above His very own Name. He does this by submitting to His Word, and the evidence of this is seen in His works throughout

history. In other words, whatever God has said He will do, He will do: Num.23:19; Isa.55:11.

We too should magnify the Word of God above all else, and hold it in absolute esteem.

Note: Even though the Lord exalts His Word above His Name, the Word of God brings integrity to His Name because He fulfills it.

PSA 138:2 I will worship toward Your holy temple (Oh Lord), and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and for Your truth and faithfulness: for You have exalted above all Your name and word and You have magnified Your word above all Your name. (Amp.)

The Word of God, if properly studied, shows us clearly that He desires to heal us, spirit, soul and body. Some Christians still struggle in this area because of erroneous doctrine which claims that God afflicts us with sickness in order to test us. However we see in the Old Testament that God told His people, *“I will put (allow) none of these diseases (to come) upon you . . . for I am the Lord Who heals you”* : Exo.15:26. And in the New Testament, Jesus healed all the sick who came to Him, none being excluded: Matt.4:23-24; Matt.8:16. Scripture also reveals that it is Satan himself who would afflict and torment man:

ACTS 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.

We also find Satan to be identified as *“the thief (who) comes to steal, and to kill, and to destroy”* : John 10:10. However Jesus says in this same verse, *“I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

So immerse yourself in the Word of God - for it reveals to us our Heavenly Father’s desire, character and nature. Know that He loves you and would have you well in every area of your life, beginning with spiritual health and ending with physical health, yes

perfect health. Understanding this, we can then seek the victory we need in our lives, basing our faith on the Word of God and following its instruction, digesting the Word as medicine for our souls. When we do this we are indeed esteeming God's Word and giving Him glory.

The Bible reveals that God desires to fellowship with us and manifest Himself to us:

REV 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

JOHN 14:21 He who has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is who loves Me (the measure to which we obey the Lord's commands in His strength is here defined as the measure of our love for Him): and he who loves Me shall be loved of My Father (John 14:6), and I will love him, and will manifest (reveal) Myself to him (means to fully disclose His Person, Nature, and Goodness to the Believer : E.S.B.).

Jesus said to knock (at the door of truth) and the door will be opened - but we need to knock with a sincere, unbiased heart, really desiring to know.

MATT 7:7 Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it (the door) shall be opened unto you.

MATT 7:8 For everyone who asks (believing) receives; he who seeks (truth) finds; and to him who knocks, the door (of truth) will be opened.

God communicates with us primarily through His Word and personal fellowship. This is why it is so important to have a daily study program. We also need to hear the preaching of the Word under the Anointing of the Spirit, and to join in corporate fellowship

in the Lord with fellow Believers. Through all these avenues, God will speak to us - but we must ready ourselves to hear His voice of direction and correction.

As we spend time in His Word, and in meeting together with our Heavenly Father on a daily basis, we can allow God to share more of Himself with us. Indeed the Lord desires to fellowship with each of His children, and to share His love with us - and He will reveal Himself to us as we seek Him, day by day, again with a true, sincere and open heart.

JER 29:13 And you shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart.

Let us therefore live in the love of Christ and experience the joy of fellowshipping with the Lord in the way that this scripture promises.

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

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- 1 Wood, D. R. W., New Bible Dictionary, 3rd Ed., page 102.
- 2 Wuest, K. S., Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, 1
Pet.2:24.
- 3 S.B.C. Matthew, pg. 136.
- 4 Hayford, J. W., Hayford's Bible Handbook.
- 5 F.J.Dake., Dake's Annotated Reference Bible.

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