

**JEHOVA RAPHA**  
**GOD WHO HEALS**  
**Mrs. SUSAMMA CHACKO**

Translated By  
ASHA SARAH CHACKO

PUBLISHED BY  
SMILE  
PRAYER MOUNTAIN, VATTAPPARA,  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM – 28

## **JEHOVA RAPHA**

“I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Exodus: 15 : 26 KJV)

*I am preparing myself to think about this scripture deeply. This scripture is confessed by people who believe in miracles and is refuted by people who don't believe in miracles. Let us not base our faith on what people think or what they have experienced. Let us put our faith only on what God's Word says. I would like to share my thoughts with my readers with a heart that is throbbing but determined and full of gratitude to the Lord.*

## **Preface**

### **(Malayalam Edition)**

Let me explain how I was led to write this book.

I am an ordinary person who was leading a normal life, with a good job with Government of India and a family comprising of a loving husband and two daughters. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1997, I met with an accident and I had a major fracture with bones of my right leg broken. I spent the next six months in bed as an invalid, undergoing treatment and surgery. I spent the whole of that time in reading, studying and meditating on the Word of God. When that period was over, and I was back on my feet, I had developed an even more serious eye disease, which threatened my future and my job. For deliverance from this serious eye disease, I visited many doctors. Nobody was willing to take up my case, as nobody wanted to take a risk. I gradually reached a stage where I could not go forward for even a second without healing.

When all the doctors washed their hands off me, I had no other way but to put my complete hope in the Word of God. I had to receive healing somehow. I memorized and meditated on all scriptures which talk about healing. With great difficulty, I managed to read all the books I got which dealt with healing. I asked my doubts to the children of God. Many people strengthened me in the Word of God. I put down on paper all these things which I treasured in my heart, and the deep thoughts of my heart. This book is a result of that. Thoughts from great men of God like Kenneth. E. Hagin and John Osteen have crept into this book from my memory. Especially for the thoughts in Chapter 5 – Seven Ways to receive God’s Healing, I am indebted to Kenneth. E. Hagin.

By God’s grace, the very week I finished writing this book, to be exact on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1999, God opened the way for me to receive complete healing. From that day, by God’s grace I am enjoying complete healing.

I would like to express my gratitude to Rev. Samuel. T. Varghese who read the manuscript of this book (in Malayalam) and wrote the foreword.

I remember those days when I was heartbroken and craving for deliverance. I am humbly submitting this book on the hope that this book will be a tremendous blessing to such souls who are broken in heart and crushed in spirit for want of deliverance. Let the name of our Lord be abundantly magnified.

Susamma Chacko

## **Preface**

### **(English Edition)**

I am surprised at myself when I contemplate on how Lord led me to the English translation or “Jehova Raphah”. I express my gratitude to Smt. C. Gomathi, Supervisor, A.G.’s Office who constantly encouraged me to translate “Jehovah Rapha” into English. “This is the Lord’s doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.” (Psalms. 118:23)

I have added one more chapter in this book, (Viz. The Greatest Decision). I feel the message of the book is incomplete without that vital point.

My daughter Asha Chacko has done the work of translation. I thank her for all her efforts in presenting a beautiful translation.

I convey my sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mr. Mathews Philip, KOC, Kuwait who sponsored the printing of this book.

All glory and honour be to our gracious and merciful Lord who is the Author, Finisher and Perfector of our faith.

Thank You,

Susamma Chacko

## Foreword

The love of Jesus was experienced the most by the sick people who came to Him for healing in those days. The Lord said that only the sick need the physician and lovingly healed the spiritual and physical diseases of the people. The love of the Lord is overflowing even today. This book speaks about this truth.

When I read this book, I understand why the Lord allows some people to go through sickness to strengthen them. I believe that the message in this book is like a well, dug to reach a big underground spring and like rocks which are broken. It is possible to think so deeply only after being broken physically and mentally. Faith that is not tested cannot be trusted.

When unbelief and doubt fights with faith on the sickbed, we need God's grace to survive. Throughout this book we can see evidence that the Lord has poured out His Spirit abundantly upon the sister who has authored this book. We can see the depth of the author's knowledge of the Word of God in the way she has interpreted the scriptures. The book is more than a testimony and can be called a study book.

I pray that the author who has experienced the glory of trusting God completely, directly from God's presence will receive the power of the word to pour out abundantly to the readers. I present this book to all, in the hope that it will be useful to the spiritual growth of many.

In His Service,

Rev. Samuel. T. Varghese,

Secretary, Kerala Auxillary,

Biblw Society of India

## **Contents**

1. Is Healing God's Will?
2. Spiritual Healing
3. The Established Fact
4. Does God Heal In The New Testament?
5. Ways To Receive God's Healing
6. Some Questions
7. How To Keep Your Healing
8. Suppose You Lose Your Healing
9. The Greatest Decision

## 1. Is Healing God's Will?

"God gave this to me", I have heard many people say when they become ill. Let us listen to what the Word of God has to say.

John. 10:10 says, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"(NIV). The thief or the devil comes to steal our health, joy, peace, relationships and everything else. But Lord Jesus has come so that we can have life and that too in full. God has a plan for each person. We see that in Psalms 128. God desires that we fear the Lord, walk in His ways and become blessed. Such a blessed man has the Lord's blessing that his wife will be like a fruitful wine, and his children will be like olive shoots. God also desires that we should enjoy the fruit of our labour. That means that the Lord's will about us is that we should be healthy, should labour and care for our family and enjoy the blessings of the God.

Let us listen to what Apostle John says in 3. John verse 2. "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well" (NIV). It is not God who steals what we have, it is Satan. God is the one who restores to us what Satan has stolen.

Psalms. 23: 2 says, "He restores my soul" (NIV).The Lord restores all the blessing, peace and joy which we have lost. He restores the consolation which we have lost. He restores the lost fellowship and joy. Along with all He gives us healing and restores our health. Look at Jeremiah 33: 6. "Nevertheless I will bring health and healing to it. I will heal my people and let them enjoy abundant peace and security" (NIV). Along with abundant peace and security, God gives us health and healing.

Our God has only peace and blessing in His hand. Curse and trouble are Satan's tools. God has only deliverance, no bondage. He has only light, no darkness. He has got only joy and happiness. He does not have sadness and sighing.

Then a question may arise. "What about Job?" Satan asked God's permission twice, and tested Job only to the extent which God permitted. Satan took away wealth and riches and along with it destroyed his children. God did not do any of this though it is true that God allowed it to happen. The second time Satan destroyed his health. . Job did not understand that it was Satan who had stolen all that he had. His intellect could not grasp it. He kept his heart in God's presence with complete integrity and joy. He said, "God gave and God took back". Like many of us today though he lifted his heart to God's presence, his intellect had not received that knowledge that Satan was behind all this. Also remember that God restored everything Job lost, in double.

## 2. Spiritual Healing

Some say that the Lord gives spiritual healing and not physical healing. When a person accepts Lord he or she becomes a new creation. When a sinner comes to God's presence, his spirit is not getting healed, but is getting a new birth. Look at Ezekiel 11: 39. "I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them. I will remove from them a their heart of stone and will give them a heart of flesh". Nowhere in the Bible does it speak of spiritual healing. The Bible talks about new birth. But when somebody receives healing their illness is removed but organs of their body do not become new.

The Word of God says that by the testimony of two or three witnesses any matter can be established. In three different portions, Isaiah: 53: 4, Mathew: 8: 17 and 1.Peter: 2: 24, it says that Lord Jesus took up our infirmities and healed us.

Isiah 53: 4-5 says, "Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows. But He was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him and by His wounds we are healed". (NIV)

Mathew 8:17 says, "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases" (NIV)

1Peter 2: 24 says, "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness, by His wounds you have been healed." (NIV)

I do not intend to refute or put down medical science by sharing these thoughts. Let us praise God for the achievements and progress of medical science. Many people are not able to receive God's healing which He meant to be received by faith. I believe that the merciful God in His mercy to his creations has progressed medical science so that people can be cured from their diseases. Though medical science has achieved remarkable progress, we see that it has many limitations. We can buy medicine with money. But healing cannot be bought. We can receive healing only from God. There are various kinds of diseases. Not all can be cured by medical treatment.

We can see in the Bible that Lord Jesus healed everyone who came to Him. The Word of God says that all who touched Him were healed. If we look carefully we can see that the Lord did not deal the same way with all diseases.

Before healing the paralytic man who has brought by four people, the Lord specifically says that his sins are forgiven. The Lord dealt with the problem of sin before healing him. Because of sin many people become sick. The Lord touched and healed the leper who came to Him. He touched Peter's mother in law and healed her of her fever. He healed the blind Berthimaeus with a word. While healing people possessed by evil spirits, we can see that He rebuked the evil spirits. When they brought a dumb person to Jesus, we can see that the Lord cast out the demon and healed him. (Mathew. 9: 32-34, Luke. 4: 31-36, Mathew. 12: 22-24) We see that then the dumb man opened his mouth and spoke. So we can assume that this man was not dumb from birth.

If we break the laws of nature, we will become ill. Lord Jesus touched and healed diseases caused due to physical reasons. For diseases which were caused due to satanic bondages, he first

rebuked and cast out the evil spirit and then gave the healing. The same disease can be caused by both reasons. Treatment will not work for diseases caused by satanic bondages. We can see many people around us who are suffering from various kinds of illness and not getting cured in spite of best treatment. Don't we think of this as a mystery, a question without an answer?

Acts. 10; 38 specifically states two things God did. (1) God anointed Jesus with Holy Ghost and power. (2) Healed all that were oppressed of the devil. (KJV) The one who oppresses, crushes, persecutes and discourages people is Satan and not God. God enlarges or broadens constricted lives. (Psalms. 18; 36) He is a God who enlarges boundaries. Narrowness does not exist in God's presence. Similarly there is no death in God's presence. There is only life. Hebrews. 2: 14 says that the devil had power of death. Jesus now holds the keys of Death and Hades. (Revelation.1: 18 NIV) But the Lord is the source of life and death. God raised Lord Jesus so that all who dwell on earth can look to him and receive life.

God called Moses to be the deliverer of the people. He sent him to Pharaoh in Egypt. But when Pharaoh hardened his heart, God withdrew his hand of protection from the people of Egypt. So the people of Egypt suffered from continuous plagues and disasters. But because the Lord's protecting arm was around Israel all these plagues and disasters did not affect them.

When we see the injustice and violence in today's world we might wonder why God allows this. This is a mystery to which we have no answer. It is a fact that all this is happening because God has allowed it. But that does not mean that God has sent it. There is a whole lot of difference between God "sending" and God "allowing". The law of sin and death belong to Satan. But the law of Spirit of in Christ Jesus has made us free from this. (Romans 8:2)

### 3. The Established Fact

1 Peter. 2: 24 and Mathew. 8:17 use the past tense. "By His stripes you were healed." This means you are already healed. God has already delivered you. This is an established fact which is already done. Nobody can question this. When God called and separated Abraham, his body was weak. Sarah's womb was dead. But God says, "I have made you the father of many nations." God said about Sarah, "She will be the mother of nations." (Genesis. 17:5, 17:16). This promise was fulfilled after many years. But before it was fulfilled, God decided it and commanded it. God saw them like that and called them by name. Similarly look at Joshua 1: 1-3(KJV) "Arise, go over this Jordan"(Present Tense) Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you." (Past Tense) God has already given them the whole land. But practically they have a responsibility. They have to arise and cross Jordan and possess what God has already given them. Unless they go there in faith and on authority in God's word, they would not be able to receive the land. They started off as God commanded them. God miraculously dried the water in the river Jordan. After that God miraculously destroyed the city of Jericho. Thereafter they fought and occupied the land. Looking at God's face and obeying His commandments, they occupied the land step by step. This is the way in which we must receive all the promises God has given us.

Look at 1 Corinthians.1:20. "For all the promises of God in Him are yea".(KJV) All the promises of God are Yea Yea in Christ Jesus. The following sentence says who has this privilege. For those who receive it with Amen for the Glory of God. Amen! With each promise which is Yea in Jesus you can possess the same only if you are willing to say "Yes Lord Amen".

If you expect a miracle in your life, that is, if you really desire a miracle you have to completely believe what the word of God says. Let us look at Psalms.119:89."Forever O Lord thy word is settled in heaven"(KJV). God's Word is settled for ever in heaven. God made the name of His Son higher than all other names in this world and all other worlds. He has exalted only one thing above that name. That is His Word or His Promise. Psalms138:2 says, "Thou has magnified thy name above all thy name". We need to take seriously what HIS Word is telling us.

1. "I am the Lord that healeth the".(Exodus. 15:26 KJV)
2. "If the Son therefore shall make you free you shall be free indeed" (John.8:36 KJV)
3. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement for our peace was upon him and with His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah. 53: 4-5 KJV)
4. "Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you." (Mathew 7:7 KJV)

All these promises are settled for ever in heaven. Are you ready to believe? Are you willing to accept these? If you are willing you will receive and glorify God. Dear child of God, your disease is bot from God. Whatever your disease is, God's desire is that you should receive deliverance.

To continue, to think and meditate, let us focus on what God's word says. James 1:17 says 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the father of lights.' (KJV)

I John 1:38 says that "The Son of God was manifested so that He might destroy the works of the devil."

IN Luke 13: 16, after healing the woman who was crippled and could not bend over, the Lord says that Satan had kept her bound for eighteen years.

## 4. Does God heal in the New Testament?

Almost everybody agree that in the Old Testament God was the healer of Israel. The verses given below are promises from the Old Testament.

1. Exodus 15: 26: I am the Lord who heals you. (NIV)
2. Exodus. 23: 25-26: Worship the Lord your God and His blessing will be on your food and water. I will take sickness from you and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span. (NIV)
3. Psalms 103:3 : He forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases. (NIV)
4. Psalms 107: 17-20: Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities. They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble and he saved them from their distress. He sent forth His word and healed them. He rescued them from the grave. (NIV)

The Bible is the Written Word. Lord Jesus is the Living Word which was sent from the Father, the Word which became flesh. It is a fact that many people became ill because they sin against the word of God and because they do not keep the Word of God. But God promises that he will send the same word and heal us. He promises us that He will forgive all our sins and heal all our diseases. (Psalms 103: 3)

There are several promises in the new Testament also. Look at the following verses.

1. James 5:14: Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him.....And the prayer of faith shall save the sick (KJV)
2. Galatians 3: 13-14; Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.....He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham may come to the gentiles through Christ Jesus so that by faith we might receive the promise of the spirit.(NIV)

We can see the curse of the law listed in the verses starting from Deuteronomy 28:15. If we look carefully we can see that there is almost nobody who is not suffering from at least one of these curses. Let me give a word to those who are suffering from these curses. The promise of deliverance from curse is given only in Galatians 3: 13. When you accept that Christ became a curse for you are actually exchanging your curse with Him and receiving Abraham's blessings in Christ.

What is Abraham's blessing? Complete health even at the age of hundred! He caught a leaping calf and gave it to a young man. (Genesis 18:7) He took three hundred and eighteen trained servants born in his own house and defeated a big army, an army of four kings.(Genesis 14:14) Besides Abraham was very rich in all ways. (Genesis 24:1) We read that the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

We read that the blessings of Abraham are given not only to the Jews but also to the gentiles in Christ Jesus. Just like Abraham we are also called and separated. 1 Peter 2:9 says, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare

the praises of he who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (NIV) God has given us the privilege of hearing God’s voice like Abraham. Abraham had completely realized the difficulty of the circumstances.(Romans 4: 19) “Without weakening in his faith he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead – since he was about a hundred years old – and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.”(Romans.4: 19-21) God expects us to wait patiently and to go through adverse circumstances trusting in God’s promises and glorify God without doubting His promises.

There is only one difference between us and the Old Testament saints represented by Abraham. The Old Testament saints were servants of God. We of New Testament are children of God. Through Jesus Christ, we received the privilege of calling God the Father, “Abba Father”. The biggest status that could be achieved by the Old Testament saints was to become friends of God. Both Abraham (James 2: 23) and Moses (Numbers 12:2, Deuteronomy 34:12 and Exodus 33: 11) acquired this status. If God promised complete health to His servants just think about the confidence we, His children should have. Look at Mathew 7:11. “Which of you if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for fish will give him a snake? If you then though you are evil know to give good gifts to your children how much more will your father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”(NIV) Note the word “how much more”. If God promised healing to His servants in the Old Testament, will he command in New Testament that his children should suffer with diseases?

When the woman from Syrophenicia came to Jesus and cried for her daughter’s deliverance, the Lord said that it is not good to give the children’s bread to dogs. Healing is the children’s bread. No father on earth will give his child a heavy stone when he hungrily asks bread. The stone is heavy and hard. If a child asks for fish no father will give a poisonous destroying snake instead of a nutritious fish. If a child asks for an egg, no father will give him a crab which will hurt him. We struggle to give our children better living conditions and better education than we ourselves had. Is our heavenly father a worse parent than us?

The New Testament is a better covenant based on better promises. (Hebrews 8:6) Here it says that the New Testament has better promises and better commandments than the Old Testament. The basis of the promise of healing in the Old Testament is, “If you will carefully obey my commandments and laws”. The provision in the New Testament is to receive freedom through Christ who took up our curses and diseases in our place. On the cross God handled each of man’s physical, mental and spiritual issues. Jesus took up all our sins and curses and gave new birth to our spirits. That is restoration in the spiritual sense. Also He restored confidence, courage, happiness and peace which man lost through sin. That is restoration in the mental realm. Physically through His stripes He gave us healing. So like Psalmist we can say, “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.” (Psalms 16:9 KJV)

Complete security is the result of the exceptional provision through Christ Jesus.

## 5. Ways to Receive God's Healing

God's Word talks about several ways to receive God's healing. Everybody's faith is not of the same magnitude and level. So God Almighty comes down to our level and meets us. Let us look at seven of the important ways.

### 1. Use the name of Jesus against the devil (John 14; 13-14)

"And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father"(NIV) In the original language in which the Bible was written the word "Demand" is used in place of "Ask". Use the name of Jesus against the enemy. Command the sickness and disease to be gone in Jesus' name. It is not talking about prayer here. If we read the Acts of the apostles, we can see that the apostles always commanded diseases to leave. They used to rebuke the spirit of sickness in the name of Jesus. That is one of the most important ways.

The name of Jesus has the same power today which it had in the first century. The name of Jesus is the key to open impossible and godly things. Remember what was said when the crippled man at the temple gate called Beautiful was healed. "By faith in the name of Jesus this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him"(NIV) In KJV we read the man got "perfect soundness".

### 2. Pray to the Father in the name of Jesus (John 16: 23)

"That day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."(NIV) This verse is similar to John 14: 13-14. This scripture says, "That day you will no longer ask me anything." Which day? The time when we ask the Father in Jesus' name. That time is today! The time in which we live - the time when Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father and interceded for us, the age of the new covenant! Look at John 16: 24. "Until now, you have not asked anything in my name".(NIV) Asking in Jesus' name is relevant only after Jesus has ascended to heaven. It further says, 'Ask and you shall receive, and your joy shall be complete.'" Our physical healing is definitely included in this promise.

### 3. Unite in Prayer (Mathew 18: 19)

Mathew 18: 19 says, "Again I tell you that if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven"(NIV). God's Word is settled in heaven for ever. If we confess that Word in faith, it will definitely come to pass. This scripture says "about anything you ask for". Doesn't this include the united prayer of two people for their dear one's healing? Too many people are not required for this. Just two people are sufficient. Jesus did not mention this as a possibility. He did not say "It might be done". He says, "it will be done". We might think that if we can get thousand people to pray together, it will be a mighty prayer. But Jesus says, if two of you agree, it will be done. Will you believe this? Will you take it up?

#### **4. Anoint with Oil and Pray (James 5: 14)**

“Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church, to pray over him anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well” (James 5: 14NIV)

In a group everyone may not have the strong faith to understand the Word of God completely. There are children of God who are in their spiritual infancy. The measure of their faith might be very low. They might not have the spiritual maturity or passion to take up the promises in God’s Word. Some of them might go to a state of backsliding. James exhorts the elders of the church, who are strong in their faith to pray for such people by anointing them with oil. When prayer is offered in faith they receive deliverance and forgiveness for their sins. See the wonderful ways God has provided for all who are in different levels of faith.

#### **5. Healing by the Laying of Hands (Mark. 16: 18)**

“If you lay your hands on the sick, they will be healed.” Who should lay hands? Those who believe! God has not asked us to heal people. We should lay our hands on them. Then we should believe God. Anyone can do this. Parents should lay their hands on their children and pray. A mother can do it herself. We don’t have to wait for anyone. We can lay hands on each other and pray. God leads different people in different situations and in different ways.

Mark. 11: 24 says,“.....believe that you have received it.” Look at the order. First believe and then receive. There is no need to believe after receiving. It is a fact. But God’s plan is that we should believe first and then receive. When Abraham (Romans 4: 18-19) believed, he was very old. With each passing day his body became weaker. Sarah’s womb had already become dead. In spite of all this, not only did Abraham believe but also gave glory to God each day without weakening in faith. Then one day it happened. Through laying of hands we actually release our faith. It does not mean that everyone who walks touching Jesus receive healing. For example When Jesus travelled to Jairus’s house, many people in the crowd might have touched him. Lord Jesus was anointed with power to heal. But the power of healing flowed only into the body of sick woman who touched him in faith.

#### **6. Receive Healing through Gift of Healing (1 Corinthians 12: 9)**

1 Corinthians 12:9 talks about the Gift of Healing. This is the gift of power of Healing which flows from one person to another person’s body. Many times we see many miracles happening in the midst of unbelievers. God can work in any way. Many people get healed by the prayer of the servants of God who have the gift of healing (even sometimes when they don’t believe). Many times we have seen the Spirit of the Lord sending God’s servants to specific people. Deliverance always happens in such cases.

#### **7. Believe that Healing Is for You and Receive Your Healing.**

The best way for you is to understand God’s Word, believe it, get convinced of God’s plan of redemption for you and then receive your healing. Cast away in faith all your curses on the Lord

who took up all your curses in your place and receive your blessing. Put your sickness on the Lord who took up stripes for your healing and receive your healing. You don't have to bear them as the Lord has already borne them. Believe everything that the Word of God says and receive your healing.

You know it. You believe it. Thank God with a grateful heart. Praise Him. Thank God for your complete healing. It is not enough to understand with your intellect, believe it completely with your spirit. That will be the end of your diseases. Not everybody has the ability or understanding or readiness to understand this. That is why God has provided these seven ways for a child of God to receive healing.

The healing God gives is through the Spirit, not through the mind or body. Accepting the Word of God wholeheartedly in your spirit, supporting it unconditionally and realizing the healing perfectly in your body is God's way of healing.

## 6. Some Questions

### A. Why did Hezekiah put a poultice of figs on his boils? (Isiah 38: 21-22)

When Hezekiah became ill, God sent prophet Isaiah to him to remind him that he was going to die. But when Hezekiah wept and prayed God heard his prayer and added fifteen years to his life. God also gave him a sign. Once God commanded healing, it will definitely happen. Yet Isaiah asked him to put a poultice of fig on his boil. A poultice of figs does not have the healing power. It must have been put for relief from pain or for a cooling effect. We can think that God asked him to do this as an act of obedience. Will anybody put a fruit on a raw boil? I doubt it. Similarly Elisha asked Naaman to go and wash himself seven times in the river Jordan. The water of Jordan does not have any healing power. Then why did Elisha command that? He asked him to do it which appears to be a very small thing as an act of obedience. Naaman did it though he was very reluctant. And he received his healing. We can see this also as a similar incident.

### B. Didn't Paul leave Trophimus sick in Miletus? (2. Timothy 4:20)

There are some people who take this scripture and argue that healing is not God's will. We have to remember one thing. The gift of healing is not a skill that a man of God carries with him all the time. The faith of the sick person plays a great role here. The faith of the person who is being prayed for is more relevant than the faith of the person who prays. So we can presume that there could be two possible reasons due to which Trophimus was not healed. The first is that we do not know the level of Trophimus's faith. The second is that miracles and healing are two different topics. A miraculous healing is a miracle that happens in an instant. There is also another kind of healing that happens gradually. That is also God's healing. From experience we can see that in such cases, along with the healing the person's faith also increases. In John 4, we read about how Jesus healed the royal official's son. John 4.52 says "the hour when he began to amend"(KJV). We understand that healing began from the moment Jesus commanded healing. So we can assume that Trophimus started getting healed when Paul left him.

### C. Didn't Paul have a thorn in the flesh? (2 Corinthians 12:7)

In 2 Corinthians 12: 7-10, Paul talks about a thorn he had in the flesh. Some people interpret this as a disease and try to prove that healing is 'god's will. This kind of thought process will only serve to deny and even to delay the deliverance God has provided for us.

There are some people who say that Paul's eyesight was not good. ".....Lord has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit" said Ananias whom the Lord sent to Saul. God's work is always complete. Look at Acts. 9: 12-17. It is a fact beyond doubt that Paul received complete eyesight.

In 2 Corinthians 12:7, Paul says that he was given a thorn in the flesh, "lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations"(KJV). Those who claim to have a thorn in the flesh like Paul need to examine themselves to see if they have an abundance of revelations like Paul.

The expression "thorn in the flesh" is used seven times in the context of the nation of Israel. The Lord repeatedly warns the people of Israel that if they do not drive out the inhabitants of Canaan,

according to Lord's commandment they will become thorns in their sides.(Numbers 33:55) In none of these references, does the thorn mean a disease. It refers to a circumstance which pricks and pains like a thorn. Wherever Paul went, there was a demonic activity which would cause quarrel and strife and tried to hinder his work. Paul asked for deliverance from this. Look at this scripture carefully. When Paul asked for deliverance, the Lord answered him, "My grace is sufficient for you." We should not start off by asking grace to face the devil's attack in the beginning of a problem itself! God has given us the privilege to ask deliverance. It was the Lord's answer that "MY grace is sufficient for you". I would like to remind you that if you ask only for grace in your sickness instead of asking for healing, you will have to go through life bearing your sickness with grace! If you ask for healing and also for grace to face the disease, you may have to bear your sickness with grace for days altogether.

The best evidence for the fact that Paul's thorn was not a disease is seen in 2 Corinthians 11: 23-28. Here Paul gives a long list of the hardships he had to face while serving the Lord. Let us count the hardships which are elaborated here.

#### 2 Corinthians 11: 23-28

- (1) I have worked much harder.
- (2) Been in prison more frequently.
- (3) Been flogged more severely.
- (4) Been exposed to death again and again.
- (5) To (9) Received from Jews five times- forty lashes minus one
  
- (10) To (12) Beaten with rods three times.
  
- (13) Stoned
  
- (14) To (16) Shipwrecked three times
  
- (17) Spent a day and night in the open sea
  
- (18) Been constantly on the move
  
- (19) Been in danger from the rivers
  
- (20) *In danger from bandits*
  
- (21) In danger from own countrymen
  
- (22) In danger from gentiles
  
- (23) In danger in the city
  
- (24) In danger in the country
  
- (25) In danger in the sea

(26) In danger from false brothers

(27) Laboured

(28) Toiled

(29) Gone without sleep

(30) Hunger and thirst

(31) Often gone without food

(32) Cold

(33) Naked

(34) Concerned for all churches

Here we see a list of thirty four things. Is any of these a disease? Think about it. All who follow Christ Jesus have suffering. All who wish to live a godly life will have persecution. But remember that it is not blood pressure, diabetes or heart disease. So if you are suffering from a disease instead of consoling yourself that you have a thorn like Paul, remember that healing is your right as a child of God.

God allowed Paul to have a problem so that he would always trust in God's presence without being conceited. Whenever the problem became more acute, the Lord's presence and the Lord's grace consoled him. When he was put in prison at Philippi, God miraculously sent deliverance. (Acts 16) When he was put in the prison in Jerusalem, the Lord came to him and encouraged him. (Acts: 23: 11) Why did not the Lord open the doors of the prison this time and take him out? That was the Lord's will about Paul at that time.

#### D. What about Job?

The Lord himself said about Job that he is blameless and upright and that there is no one on earth like him and that he is a man who fears God and shuns evil.(Job 1:8) In the midst of disasters, not knowing what to do, Job first fell down and worshipped God(Job 1:20). After some days, he started weeping. In between from time to time, it is found that he strengthened himself in the Lord. "Even now my witness is in heaven and my advocate is on high."(Job 16:9) "Though he slay me yet will I hope in Him". (Job 13: 15) ".....yet in my flesh will I see God" (Job 19:26)

Though he says all this, the accusation of his close friends, loneliness and pain of suffering push him to self pity and depression at times. But God Almighty who understood him in his situation, appeared to him. We see that the Lord asks him ninety questions in chapters 38, 39, 40 and 41. God could have explained everything to him. He could have explained all that happened to him. But he did not. Neither did he console him saying "It is OK". He said only one thing. "Have you completely understood who God is?" God asked him many questions about His glory, greatness of His power, the variety of His creation and the depth of His wisdom. Job had one weakness. He looked only at the magnitude of His suffering. That took him to self pity and fear. When God asked

him questions, one by one, we can assume that Job forgot himself and meditated on the glory of God. When Job heard, saw, understood and meditated on the glory of God he forgot his suffering. And his situation changed. Even today this is the path that is set before us. When we meditate on God's Word, His promises and His glory and go ahead with His praise, we will not have time to listen to the opinions, experiences and discouraging words from those around us. Then the Word of God on which we meditate will give us healing. The Lord who sends His Word and will heal us (Psalms 107:20) and will perform a miracle through His Word.

Let us look at Proverbs 4:20-22. We see a good advice here. "My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body." (NIV) God's Word has power to give healing to a man's whole body. But we need to pay attention to it, listen closely and keep them in our sight and within our heart. Then we will receive our healing.

E. That man was such a great man of God. Still he suffered so much. That sister was so faithful. Still it happened to her. Didn't Brother Dhinakaran's daughter die? Didn't Brother Job's son die at young age?

I have seen many people who ask such questions and push themselves out of their faith. Let me say one thing. I do not know why it happened to Brother Dhinakaran and other people of God. God has not sent me to judge and make judgments. I am in my current state because of God's grace alone. I have nothing to be proud of. There are many mysteries in the world which God alone knows. Let us look at Deuteronomy 29:29. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever that we may follow all the words of this law" (NIV). The secret and hidden things are for God alone. God has not permitted us to peep into these and try to find out about those. We should not base our faith on anybody's experience. We will progress in our life of faith only if we base our faith on the Word of God which is settled for ever in heaven. God has commanded us to live not by sight but by faith. So prepare yourself to meditate on God's glory and promises without looking at others' experiences, no matter how great they are. You will definitely experience God's glory.

F. Am I not suffering for God's glory?

There are some people who think that they are suffering for God's glory. They refer to John 9:3 to support this thinking. Jesus talks about the man who was blind from birth. "Neither this man nor his parents sinned but this happened so that the work of God may be displayed in his life." (NIV) When was the work of God displayed in his life? It was only when Lord Jesus healed him.

Similarly we read in John 11:4 what Jesus says about sickness of Lazurus. "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it". (NIV) When was the Son glorified? Not when Lazurus died, but when he was raised from the dead. It is not through sickness and suffering that God's name is glorified. But it is through deliverance and healing.

The context in which God gives the promise, "I am the Lord that healeth thee" is given in Exodus 15:26. It was when the people came to the waters of Marah and were weary and exhausted.

Let us look at the plan God made to remove the bitterness of the water. The Lord showed them a young and strong tree. He commanded them to cut it and put it into the water. We can compare the cutting of the good tree to the body of Lord Jesus who was broken in his youth. His life was broken for many. Such a tree was God's plan. It was not an idea that came up in Moses' or anybody else's mind. When that unknown tree was broken and put in water, not only did it take out all bitterness out of water it also poured out its sweetness to the water. The well known bible teacher Derek Prince says that the same word is used for that tree and for the cross in original language in which Bible was written. Do you think that this is quite accidental?

I have written down everything I have learnt and meditated on the topic "The Lord who heals", when I faced my urgent need for healing. I would like to make it clear that I am not against treatment or doctors or medicine.

I hope I have succeeded in introducing the Lord who heals through the preceding pages to my reader. If your situation is the most discouraging – if everyone has judged that there is no hope for you – I would like to encourage you. God has prepared a miracle for you. Meditate on God's Word. Praise the Lord who gives healing. Take up your healing in faith. God has already healed you. God worked in my life in this way. I enjoy full healing today. I submit all these thoughts to you in this confidence for your blessing.

## 7. How to keep your healing?

Keeping your healing is a topic as important as receiving your healing. My efforts will not be complete unless I write this too.

Everyone might have a question, "Isn't the healing given by God complete?" Yes, it is complete. It is full of joy. All the blessings we receive from God are also like that. When we receive God's blessings, we receive them by God's grace and mercy. But we have the responsibility to guard them and keep them without losing them. Revelation 3: 11 says, "Hold on to what you have so that no one will take your crown"(NIV). The KJV translation says "Hold fast". Our enemy who comes to steal, kill and destroy has not yet repented nor become afraid. He sows fear in our hearts. He tries different traps one after the other in the confidence that he can catch us some way or other. When he prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8) who is a better prey than people who are not vigilant?

When we receive our healing, we will have great joy in our hearts and praise and thanksgiving on our lips. Those who have cultivated the habit of praying will have praise and testimony. I am not sure whether others who don't have the habit of praying will be able to express so much. After some time the intensity of the praise dies down. The tears dry up. When we get involved in other things, the interest to study God's word goes down. Just like, how our physical body weakens if we don't take proper food, our spiritual man within us will become weak if we don't feed on spiritual food. This is enemy's biggest trap. The seriousness of the commitment is lost. The days in which we went ahead with spiritual strength having only Word of God to cling on are forgotten. We start to doubt our healing. Fear takes birth within us. When this happens, we give place to the devil. We lose our healing little by little. Listen, this happens only because of our carelessness. This is not God's plan at all.

Remember that our experience of deliverance is precious only to us. Though our dear and near ones will rejoice earnestly with us, the joy and praise within us cannot be shared by them in the same measure. Without looking at others' cooperation, always give thanks. Always be in an atmosphere of praise. When you witness to others pray and say only what you should say. Remember that the majority of unbelievers and also the so called believers will trample our pearls under their feet and turn and tear us into pieces. So choose your words of testimony with wisdom and prudence. God is great. Cover yourself with the precious blood of Jesus always.

The symptoms to the old disease might surface at times. Others might tell you about people whose state had worsened after receiving a divine healing. Remember that all these are the arrows of Satan aimed at you. You can face these attacks only with the shield of faith. When doubt comes, rebuke it loudly in the name of Jesus, "Leave me Satan. I refuse to doubt in Jesus' name." 2 Corinthians 10: 4-6 says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (KJV). This scripture is a good weapon. The weapons of our warfare are not of this world. They are mighty in God's presence to break the fortresses of doubt. Use this Scripture as

a weapon and whenever fear or doubt comes meditate on the blood of Jesus in that instant. I know from experience that those thoughts will leave immediately. After receiving your healing always lift your hearts to Christ. Dedicate your healed life, lips and organs of your body to the Lord. Say loudly "I dedicate to you Lord". Let Satan the enemy hear you. Resist the symptoms of the disease in Jesus' name with praise and thanksgiving. When we resist the devil he is the one who should flee and not us.

Listen to what the Word of God promises in 2 Timothy 1:12. "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I committed unto him against that day"(KJV). He is powerful and faithful and unchanging and unlimited and able to guard and keep whatever I have entrusted him in my life that day. So completely commit your life, healing, desires, dreams and ambitions to Lord Jesus. Those who have looked unto the Lord and waited for Him have never been put to shame to this day (Psalms.34:5). Then, are you going to be the first person since the creation of the earth to be put to shame? He is faithful all through the past centuries not to put to shame anyone who has put his or her trust completely in Him. If you put your complete trust in Him with a sincere heart, the great God who sets a table for you in front of your enemies, will surely raise you up in front of them. He will uphold you and not forsake you. Walk before Him in humility and humbleness of mind.

Remember the mistake made by Hezekiah. We don't see that he shared his testimony before his enemies for the glory of God. Instead he proudly displayed all his material wealth and treasures to them. What would have happened if he has showed them his spiritual wealth instead? Remember that pride is a great danger.

Remember that the healing we have received is precious to us but it is not so for others. They have been enjoying it for years without knowing the difficulty of not having it and thereby not knowing its value. So exalt the great God. Don't exalt your healing. God did not act because of the magnitude of our prayer or faith. God is responsible and faithful to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to him. Let His name be glorified. (2 Chronicles 16:9)

If you think that the symptoms of the old disease are coming up again, don't look at them. The enemy is trying to destroy your witness. Look only at Jesus. The devil tries to put you to shame because you have witnessed in the Lord's name. But the Lord has the responsibility to make sure that your face is not ashamed. And He will do it.

When we have a small injury on our body, we put a Band Aid over it. Then we don't give it any more attention. We go about doing our daily work without any difference. Don't receive the healing given by God with the same trivial attitude. The healing we have received was bought at a great price. To give us this healing, God gave up His precious Son to receive stripes all over His body. When you take up that there has to be a significant difference in your life, testimony, attitude and prayer life. Only a person who has thus renewed his life can keep his healing.

## 8. Suppose You Lose Your Healing

After writing the last chapter on how to keep your healing, I had completed writing down my thoughts under the title "Jehovah Rapha". But I am compelled to write this chapter also due to certain circumstances.

We are treasuring the healing which we have received after a lot of yearning and craving. We are going on with our routine life praising God each day. Then suddenly it happens! You have become ill again. A thousand bees are humming through your mind. A flood of doubts and questions to which you can find no answer, is running through your mind. Where did I go wrong? Did I break my commitment? Some of the so called "spiritual" people might pronounce their opinions and judgments on you which will sink you further in despair. These opinions and judgments might seem to haunt you more in your current mental state than your physical disease. Are they correct? We may ask ourselves whether this happened because of that. I am going to handle this topic authoritatively because I have gone through all these experiences I have listed above. Let me share my thoughts with you. Please read further.

What does the Word of God say? Let us look at Psalms 11:3. "When the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do?" (NIV) When did the foundations get destroyed? The second verse says, "For look, the wicked bend their ways, they set their arrows against the strings to shoot from the shadows at the upright in heart." Even though you are upright in heart, you may have to go through the experience of a shadow. Psalm 64: 3-4 says, "They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim their words like deadly arrows. They shoot from ambush at the innocent man, they shoot at the innocent man; they shoot at him suddenly without fear."(NIV) There is only one remedy for a situation like this. We read that in Psalms 11:4. "The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord is on His throne. He observes the sons of men, his eyes examine all them."(NIV) God is examining how we are reacting to all this. Our only hope is that we have a God who is enthroned in heaven. We have a great and faithful God who weighs our heart (Proverbs 11: 4), our motives (Proverbs 16:2) and works (Daniel 5: 27). That is our hope.

Though we had witnessed God when we have received our healing, our present condition is more painful than we can comprehend. Only the people who have gone through the pain of being ill before the same people to whom they had witnessed their healing can understand the pain of it. God will never put us to shame. His great name is glorious. For His name's sake God will restore us in His mercy and grace.

Our God still lives, who promised us that he will repay us for the years the locust, the cankerworm and the caterpillar and the palmerworm have eaten. (Joel 2: 25 KJV) If a plant is attacked together by locusts, cankerworm, caterpillar and palmerworm, will anything be left of the plant? God promises that he will take and this people out of such a situation and give them abundant prosperity. (Joel.2: 23-24) And the Word of God adds, "My people shall never be ashamed." (Joel 2: 27 KJV) He is a God of restoration. He has prepared for us an overflowing of blessings.

Let us correct our part. Frightening thoughts are weapons of Satan. Satan was waiting for an opportunity like this. Without losing the opportunity he has got, Satan is shooting hundreds of fearful thoughts into your mind. Cover and hide yourself in the blood of Jesus and resist him with courage. He will flee from us. Let us repair any gaps in our fortress of prayer. Let us renew our commitment. Examine our lives. Correct whatever the Holy Spirit is showing us. Let us spend time with God alone. Let us return to the Lord with a broken heart. (Hosea 6: 1-2) Let us look at the promise given in that scripture. (1) He will heal us. (2) He will bind up our wounds. (3) He will revive us. (4) He will restore us. (5) We will live in His presence. The same scripture reminds us that he will appear in our lives as surely as the sun rises. (Hosea 6: 3 NIV) Even when we are groping in the darkness of midnight, one thing is sure for the children of God. We have the promise of a wonderfully prepared morning. What a wonderful promise has He given us! He restores us step by step. Raises up and makes us walk in His presence with life. It will never be enough even if we give praises to our God our whole life. Let us look at Psalms 91: 14-15. "Because he has set His love upon me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high because he has known my name. He shall call upon me and I will answer. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honour him"(NIV) All these are promises of him who "dwells in the secret place of the most high and abides under the shadow of the Almighty." Even though he was in such a secure place he had to go through severe test. But God promises that He will deliver him, set him up and honour him. In Acts 11: 22 we see Barnabas exhorting the people that "with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord". (KJV) Many people cleaved to God and received a wonderful blessing. Ruth cleaved. God blessed her beyond her imagination. Caleb was able to enter the promised land because he cleaved to God. (Joshua 14:9) So he was able to drive out the Anakims at the age of eighty five and occupy Hebron. Though David had many shortcomings he cleaved unto God. It is written about him that "he was a man after God's own heart who will do all My will" (Acts 13: 27 NKJV) and that "David served his own generation by the will of God". (Acts 13: 36 NKJV) Because Jonathan cleaved unto David Mephiboseth was exalted to the table of the king. In short, God plans not only to deliver those who cleave unto him, but also to honour and raise them up. In the day of your trouble look unto Lord's face alone. Close your ears to the opinions and advices of men. The faithful God who said He will answer us when we call unto Him will definitely answer us. The arm of the Lord has not become too short to save even today. That arm is still stretched out and open. The same arm spreads out, heals and blesses unconditionally. Praise the Lord!

The Word of God teaches us that if our heart do not condemn us we have confidence before God. (1 John 3: 21) Then why did this happen? Let me encourage you from the Word of God.

Think about how Jesus was put into the prison. He had been leading a life full of God's grace and presence. Even when the temptation to sin was acute, he said ".....How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"(NIV) The severe suffering he went through is portrayed in Psalms. 105: 18-19. They bruised his feet with shackles; his neck was put in irons". But God had kept a time limit as we see in the following verse "till what he foretold came to pass, till the word of the Lord proved him through" (NIV). We know that after that period was over God exalted him in such a way that all his sufferings seemed like a dream. When he was in the midst of the suffering, he must have agonized and anguished a lot. It was not because of his own mistake or sin that he fell into that circumstance.

If we look at the context in which Moses was forced to run away into the desert, we can see that it happened when he had committed himself totally for God's will. We see this in Hebrews 11: 24-26. When Moses grew up he was in the midst of all kinds of pleasures and comfort in the king's palace. But he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin. He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. This was not an accidental happening. He chose it with his complete understanding. As a result of that he spent long forty years in the desert tending the sheep. Many thoughts might have tormented him. He must have thought in his human intellect that he who had received the greatest education and training of the day to become a king had reached this situation because of his commitment. God who was watching him intently throughout those forty years called him at the right time and lifted him up. He became a great man of God privileged to be called "God's friend".

Hagar was a foolish girl. When she became pregnant from her master Abraham, she forgot who she was. When Sarah mistreated Hagar, she fled to the desert. The merciful Lord sent his angel to her. He did not condemn her. Instead he encouraged her. He gave her good promises regarding the child to be born and sent her back to her mistress. According to God's leading she and her child spent years safely back with her mistress. It was then that Abraham sent her away empty handed again with God's leading. Hagar must have wept, "Why did my God send me back here that day?" Just think how beautifully that story progresses. Once God sent her to a secure place. The same God allowed her to be thrown out of the security. But God did not forsake her. God again sent his angel to her and opened a well of water in the desert just for that thirsty boy. God also gave her the promise that He will make Him a great nation. The rich Arabs we see in the Middle East today is the fulfillment of that promise Lord made to the poor Hagar. God's faithfulness remains the same even after centuries.

Look at Job. The Lord Himself said about Job that he is blameless and upright and that there is no one on the earth like him and that he is a man who fears God and shuns evil. Still he sorrowed a lot in his suffering. But God came down to him. God honoured him and lifted him up before all who despised him. We can find many instances like these in the Word of God. Though terrible things happened in the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, Abed Nego and Daniel, God miraculously helped them. Think about this and draw courage.

This God is great and unchanging. Listen to what the Word of God clearly says. Deuteronomy 33: 26 says, "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun who rides on the heavens to help you and on the clouds in His Majesty. The eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." That God will remove the disease which is breaking you apart and will lead you victoriously over every circumstance. Can you believe this? Can you take this up? Then you will definitely experience it.

In 2 Samuel 24, we see that during David's reign in Israel, he once committed the sin of counting the people. God sent Gad the prophet to him who gave him three options of punishment. All the three options were equally severe. David's reply is very beautiful. "Let us fall into the hands of the Lord for his mercy is great". Yes, that is the way which we have in front of us too. God performs great things in our lives because of grace and His mercy which never change.

His goodness endures continually (Psalm 52:1). His kindness is everlasting.(Isaiah 54:8) His mercy is as high as the heaven. (Psalm 103:11) His mercies are new every morning. (Lamentations 3:22) His loving kindness is better than life. (Psalm 63:3) The earth is full of His mercy. (Psalms.119:64) This big God in His mercy and kindness towards us made us His children and inheritors. Let us fall into the arms of this great grace. He has promised that He will never forsake those who come to him. Let us commit ourselves into those great arms. Our Lord will come down to help us. He will restore us. He will rebuild us as we were before. (Jeremiah 33: 7) He will make us prosperous again. (Job 42:10) Though He has made us see many bitter troubles He will restore our life again from the depths of the earth and will bring us up again. (Psalms 71:20) He will increase our honour and comfort us once again. (Psalms. 71:21) He will revive us again so that His people will rejoice in Him. (Psalms 85:6) Yes be courageous. Let your heart be strong.

To store a treasure, gold or silver vessels are used normally. But God has chosen jars of clay to store His excellent power. (2Corinthians4:7) Jars of clay which have no beauty or attractiveness to boast about! Jars of clay are baked in the furnace. God likes and uses jars of clay which become stronger and more beautiful when the heat of the furnace increases. Can we question His wisdom? Let us look at 2 Corinthians 4:8-10. We can see God's intensive care in the midst of suffering.

1. We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed
2. Perplexed but not in despair
3. Persecuted but not abandoned
4. Struck down but not destroyed.

How beautiful! Many times we fall into situations where we are hardpressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted and struck down. But God takes care of us and makes sure with His surpassing power that we are not crushed, in despair, abandoned and destroyed. Praise the Lord!

I think that the reason why God allows us to go through these situations is mystery known only to him. But if we read 2 Corinthians 4: 15, we see a purpose that ".....so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to the glory of God"(NIV). The KJV translation says "....that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God"

God should increase in many.

The name of the Lord should be glorified.

Thanksgiving should increase.

Let us gracefully praise the Lord that we got an opportunity to be part of this big plan of God. It is an undisputed fact that only those who go through suffering can understand the value of blessings of God. " Who satisfies thy mouth with good things so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's"(Psalms 103:5) Those who have experienced and known the Lord praise the Lord from the bottom of their hearts. God will do miracles for them.

Our creator can never make a mistake. He can never make a blunder. Believe that everything He “allows” in our lives is for our good. This God will surely bless us, keep us and strengthen us more and more.

## 9. The Greatest Decision

There is one decision in our life which determines our destiny. This is the most important decision we have to make in our lives. Unless one takes this decision wisely i.e. in the way Lord has ordained, his life is doomed for ever.

**HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN?** Answer this question honestly. If the answer is YES, well and good. You have confidence towards God. If not please don't go to sleep today without making this decision.

This “Being Born Again” is an event that makes Christianity a supreme way different from all other religions and philosophies existing in the world today. God has made a way for man to obtain eternal life through this way. Because of sin there came to exist a great gap between Man and God. God ordained a way to bridge that gap. The experience of being born again is the original plan of God which never originated in the intellect of man or any organization or any religion. The Almighty God who is the source of all wisdom and knowledge had prepared a way for all mankind to obtain eternal life.

If any man be in Christ he is a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17) To begin the fellowship with God and to continue in that fellowship man has to be a new creation. i.e. Man has to be a new personality casting away all fleshly habits. This cannot be obtained either by will power or by self effort. It is a process by which the Holy Spirit of God deals with each personality and transforms him/her into a new heavenly personality. Let us discuss about “Being Born again” under three titles.

1. What is the fact of being Born Again?
2. How does this experience of Being Born Again happen?
3. How can we possess this experience?

### 1. What is the fact of Being Born Again?

In this passage (John 3:1-14) Bible says about a very good and just man who was a Pharisee and leader of Jews. Being a Pharisee he knew the Law of Moses and observed it perfectly. He was a perfect man but he came to Jesus at night. He had the revelation that Jesus came from God. So he was a perfect man desiring to meet and have acquaintanceship of Jesus.

When Jesus met this man He had only one thing to say. “You must be born again”. When confronted with different people from different levels of society, Jesus dealt differently with them. With the woman who was caught in adultery He admonished her not to sin again. With Zachaeus , He dealt according to his heart's desire. He said to the paralysed man, “son, your sins are forgiven”.

He knew the circumstances and situations of each person and dealt accordingly. But with Nicodemus who was a perfect man he had only one thing to say. ie. "You must be born again". There are three reasons to establish that one person has to be born again.

A. Man is blind in sin so that he cannot see the kingdom of God. (Verse 3)

"Verily, Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."(KJV) Man has become blind in sin. He cannot see or understand anything about the kingdom of God and its joy. ".....whose minds the god of this world has blinded who do not believe lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:4 KJV). To see and understand what the Lord has prepared for His children that which no eye has seen or that which no eye has heard we have to get our eyes opened. Therefore unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

B. Bound in sin that he cannot enter (Verse 5)

"Verily, Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5 KJV). Being born again is a process brought about by the Holy Spirit and Word of God together working in one's life.

C. Born in sin so that he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6 NKJV) Also 1 Corinthians 15: 50 says that ".....flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does corruption inherit incorruption." (NKJV)

A man born in sin, blind sin and bound in sin needs to be born again if he is to have fellowship with Holy God. It is God's law that one who sins must die and that wages of sin is death. But at the same time love of God wants to bring back the sinner to God. God's love and God's justice meet together on the cross. God imputed all sin on Son of God and delivered Him to experience the punishment of sin. Anyone and everyone who accepts this fact by faith becomes a born again child of God.

When we are born into this world, we are born from a father into a family. We get brothers and sisters who love us. When we are born again we are born from a Heavenly Father into a Heavenly Family. (Ephesians: 13) where we have dear brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 3: 14 NKJV). We are very happy in this new spiritual family even as we are very happy in our own family.

Please see how Jesus explains this new experience. "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it but cannot tell where it comes and where it goes . So is everyone who is born of the Spirit"(John 3:8) The Almighty God asks Job a question in Job 38: 24. "By what way .....is the east wind scattered over the earth?" Again in Job 28:25 we see, "For He looks to the end of the earth.....to establish a weight for the wind." In Psalms 135: 7, Jeremiah 51:8 and Jeremiah 16:13 we read, "....He brings the wind out of His treasures." Thus the origin of the wind, the source (ie. From where it comes) and its destination (ie. To where it goes) are all deep mysteries known only to God. Jesus says anyone and everyone who is born again is like that. ie. We don't know how wind blows or from where it comes or to where it goes, but certainly we can know and feel the impact of wind when it blows. Such feeling is very clear and is a definite experience. Jesus says

everyone who is born again is like that. This is the resultant effect of Holy Spirit working in hearts opened to Him. Those who have this experience can know and experience the reality of it. Those who are in contact with such people can also understand the difference. Haven't we had so many experiences in our own lives which we are not able to experience so far?

## II. How does this experience of "Born Again" happen?

Though Jesus explained so much, Nicodemus could not grasp this truth. Nicodemus asked in Verse 9 "How can these things be?" Jesus continues, ".....We speak what we know and testify what we have seen.....". "Knowing and Seeing": Knowing is an intellectual experience and seeing is the practical experience. Conviction and experience join together in this great truth. Jesus again explains, "And as Moses lifted up serpent in the wilderness even so the Son of Man must be lifted up that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Jesus establishes this need clearly and firmly.

On one occasion when Israelites disobeyed God in the wilderness, God sent fiery serpents among them. Many people died because of poisonous snakes. People repented and cried to Moses. When Moses cried out to Lord He gave him a plan. That was to make a brazen serpent and to lift it high upon a pole in the centre of the camp so that millions of people anywhere in the camp can look at the brazen serpent. Lord promised that whoever is bitten by the snake will live provided he looks at the brazen serpent. How does it happen? Nobody knows. None can explain the logic behind the command that just one look will cure the deadly poison in the blood. Never mind. Don't try to argue or discuss how this happens. There is no alternative for one who is bitten by the snake. If he wants to live, there is only one way. Believe God's word that whoever looks at the serpent shall live. He has to take that word into his heart by faith and just look. Lo! He is healed! What a mystery! Looking is a very simple act which none else can do for the particular person bitten by the snake. To live one has to look himself at the brazen serpent according to the command of God.

Jesus Himself says in John 3:13 and 14, "No one has ascended to Heaven but He who came down from Heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness EVEN SO the Son of Man be lifted up." This has not happened at that time when Jesus said it. Later God lifted Jesus up on Golgotha on the cross hanging on three nails. This is the Name God has lifted up for anybody and everybody who looks at him in faith. In Acts 4: 12 Peter says, "Nor is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved."(NKJV) There is no barrier for this wonderful fact between people of different caste and colour, man and woman, rich and poor, wise and common, educated and ignorant etc. And we read the key verse in Bible in John 3: 16. "For God so loved te world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but has eternal life." God so loved the world that He gave the costliest price. God so loved the world that there was nothing else God could do to redeem man from Satan.

We see in Psalm 139 that each individual is a special personality "fearfully and wonderfully made" by God Himself with utmost care. See verses 13 to 16.

You made my inward parts.

You covered me....

My frame was not hidden from you.

When I was made in secret

And skillfully wrought ....

Your eyes saw my substance being yet unformed.

So we see that each of us has a special personality preplanned, moulded and specially designed by God. God only knows the agony when He feels that this personality has slipped out of His hands. God gave the costliest price to get him back somehow. He saw only one solution. Who am I or who are you to question God's way, wisdom or method? Let us believe without questioning. Let us take this privilege without questioning and enjoy the blessing abundantly.

III. How can we possess this experience?

Romans 10:9 clearly declares "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved". (NKJV) "For with heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Please listen to what Revelation 3:20 says. "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and open the door I will come into him and dine with him and he with Me".(NKJV) The option and choice completely rest with us. Lord has done all He could do. We ourselves have to take the decision whether to open our heart to Jesus or not. Nobody else can take this decision for you and me. Lord Jesus knocks at the door of our hearts even today. He longs eagerly to come into the lives of those who respond to His sweet voice. He is not bothered about your address, quality, past history, ability or perfection. All He requires is a room to share His blessed provisions and that room is your heart. The only thing you have to do is to open your heart and invite Him into your heart. That is, you have to exercise your own freewill which the Lord has given you. Will you do that today, now?

If you open your heart Lord Jesus will enter your heart in His full glory. Then you are not your former self. This is not a fantasy but a fact, not a myth but a reality. This is a definite practical clear experience. This is an experience executed in a willing heart by the Holy Spirit, the third person in Trinity. Experience it. Taste it. Tell me whether this is myth or fantasy.

If the heart is sound then the whole body will perform well. Once Jesus enters your heart you can enjoy each moment of your life. God will fulfill his plan concerning you no matter in whatever state, circumstance or condition you are. He has His own plan and program concerning each of us. He can fulfil that only if we let go of ourselves totally in His hands. Let Him be our Partner, nay our Owner.

Let us believe and confess. Confession of His Word brings possession of the Word. There is no other experience in our lives better than this experience. Let us surrender our lives totally in His hands. What do we exchange?

Peace that passes understanding in place of worry

Meekness in place of Anger

Thanksgiving in place of Discontent

Praise in place of Grumbling

Healing in place of Sickness

Blessing in place of Curse

What do we lose : NOTHING

What do we gain? : ETERNAL LIFE IN HEAVEN AND A PEACEFUL AND JOYFUL LIFE HERE ON EARTH

This wonderful experience helps us to be the best mother, wife, husband, father, son, daughter etc in whatever state we are.

One who is born only once dies twice viz. physical death and spiritual death. One who is born twice dies only once. Second death has no hold on him. (Revelation 20:6)

Once a baby is born, it has the need of milk to grow thereby. First it has to feed on pure milk and then on solid food. In the same way when a person is born again he has to drink the pure milk of the Word. (1 Peter 2: 1-2) Then he has to apply himself to the solid food of the Word to get strengthened. (Hebrews 5: 13)

The relationship between God and Man becomes Father – Son or Father – Daughter relationship with this experience. We become dear children of our dear Heavenly Father. At any time we can enter into His presence on the authority of this loving relationship. A river of love is running over to us from the heavenly throne and through us to others. Dear child of God, your life will never be the same once you enter into this relationship. Do you desire this experience? Please take a decision today itself, now itself. Thank You!!

GOD BLESS YOU!