



Silas Ministries (a Ministry of ECHM, Inc.)

The Prayer Beacon

VOL. XXXI, NO. 2, JULY 2014

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ROLLAND & HEIDI BAKER

The Bakers are missionaries in Pemba, Mozambique, Africa. We are in communication with them and have invited them for 2015. Visit their website at: www.irisglobal.org or at: stopfortheone.org Please remember this event in your prayers and in your giving to Silas Min. as it is expensive. Their ministry has really been expanding in the last several years. ***

ANDREW WOMMACK

We have invited Andrew Wommack for 2015 also. He said that he would consider it in the fall. He is the head of Charis Bible College in Colo. Springs, and has a very dynamic ministry. They have just finished a new building which you can see on their website which is: www.awmi.net Please remember this event in your prayers also. ***

SILAS MINISTRIES

We are continuing to help support missionaries in the following countries:

INDIA: (Santhosh Desabattula)

Orphans, both the younger children, and the older ones who can go on to Bible school.

Bible Schools, also for other students from the villages.

Lepers, help with food, shelter and medicine. Some are being healed.

KENYA: (Francis Macharia)

Orphans in Nakuru

Christian school in Nairobi

MALAWI: (Headson Makazinga)

Food because of the drought and flood not many crops were planted.

Bibles in their language

Bicycles for transportation for the pastors.

Lepers in India are especially in need (because of the cast system there), and there is a shortage of food in Malawi. Your gifts will help them a great deal.. Thank you in advance for your help.

Please remember these brothers and sisters in Christ & their families in your prayers. ***

ATONEMENT, Cont.

I began this article in the last issue. Following is a synopsis of that.

I. Day of atonement in the Old Covenant. Leviticus 16.

A. Two goats were used. One was killed as a sacrifice. The other had sins placed on him, symbolically, and was led outside the camp to die.

B. This meant that blood had been shed for forgiveness and that their sins had been taken away. They were free.

C. This was repeated every year. Obviously it pointed the future and a future event.

II. That future event was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the New Covenant. Hebrews 9 & 10.

A. Jesus, willingly, shed His blood and then was crucified outside the camp (Golgotha).

B. He provided for our freedom once and for all. John 8.

C. Will we receive it? This is the question each one of us has to answer.

III. What did this atonement provide for us?

A. Obviously salvation. But, anything else?

B. What about deliverance, healing, and miracles in general?

1. All are made available to us in Jesus Christ.

2. Jesus said, "Which is easier, to say to the Paralytic, 'your sins are forgiven' or to say, 'arise take up your bed and walk?'... He forgave him and healed him. Matthew 9.

C. The Apostle Paul says that we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. Romans 8:11. "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

1. The giving of life and the healing of life can certainly be tied together. And the Spirit teaches us to do what Jesus did and to follow His example.

2. According to John 5 the works which Jesus did were a testimony as to who He was. Is it not to be the same with us? John 14:12 says that the works which He did we shall do also.

We pick it up here. The power to heal was proof of the fact that He had power to forgive. We see this again the Mark 2:10, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins." Many in the church have interpreted this to mean that forgiveness was all Jesus wanted to show. And Luther's catechism doesn't help us a great deal in the explanation to the third article.

"I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith... in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers..." Senior Catechism by J. A. Dell, Augsburg Publishing House, 1939.

Forgiveness is the key. But it is hard to imagine being called, enlightened and sanctified and then be totally left to die of some disease. And what does it mean when it says "enlightened?" Webster says it means to give intellectual or spiritual light to; to instruct; impart knowledge to. It is the third article of the creed we are talking about – the Holy Spirit. He is, and has been, trying to instruct us concerning healing. It is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And if He daily forgives abundantly all of my sins, does it

not stand to reason to think that He would also heal all of our diseases? To say that God heals some of our diseases and at a time of His choosing, is to say that we as people have nothing to do with it. This is not true in relation to salvation. Even if we believe that all we can do is say no to God, He doesn't force us to believe. Both at baptism and communion we say that they are effective immediately as we believe and that Jesus has done all that is necessary. Someone has to manifest faith, either the sponsors or the person. Is it not the same with healing and deliverance? And why shouldn't it be? The problem is with us, not God. The reason being there is no physical evidence of salvation or renewal at either of the sacraments. We say, it all depends upon your faith. But physical evidence is required for healing.

If we want to make it God's fault then we should ask, when does God decide to heal? Is it at a different time for all? By Jesus stripes we are healed, so then does Jesus have to take those stripes at a different time for each one? But the scripture says "He died once for all." Is this not true? We believe that it is for our salvation. But then what about healing? In the flesh I admit that I have struggled with this.

I think it becomes obvious that healing and deliverance are made available to all people, along with salvation, at the cross and resurrection. Jesus said, "according to your faith let it be done unto you." Matt. 9:29. We can say "it is divine healing received by faith."

Someone once said, "It is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting, but that it has never been sufficiently tried." There are many who believe that divine healing is real but I wish there were many more.

It is fine that Floribeth Mora was healed by looking at an image of Pope John Paul II which spoke to her mind and told her not to be afraid. Apparently healed of a brain aneurysm, it was certified by the church as real and became a part of the late Pope John Paul II being declared a saint. (Floribeth Mora

and the Pope, Internet, June 2014.) It seems that this was a surprise to the world and even to the Roman Catholic Church. But what if every one in Christianity, or at least half, considered healing as a normal part of the Christian life, what then? Does not Mark 16:20 say, "And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs." I know, some will say "that verse is not a part of the original text." Then what about Hebrews 2:3-4. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken of by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him. God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will."

I believe that both healing and deliverance are real, but I believe that they also serve salvation, God's way of getting our attention. He provided it all in the atonement. In a time when Christians are being told to be quiet about their faith outside the church, how will people hear about salvation? When people are healed they talk about it, both to doctors and hospitals as well as their friends. It is the will of God that all people should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Salvation was confirmed by those who heard Jesus preach and secondly God Himself confirmed it by the signs, wonders and various miracles, including healing.

Galatians 1:3-4 says, "... Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God our Father..." When this verse is read in context it is very obvious that it refers to the here and now, not some time in heaven. Disease is certainly a part of this present evil age.

God has done His part in the atonement. Now it is up to us, will we receive it? How, you ask? By growing in our faith and study of the word of God. II Timothy 2:15 KJV, "Study to show thyself approved unto God..." ***