

# SPIRITUAL HEALING

*“... if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.” —EXODUS 15:26*

The Israelites had just crossed the Red Sea and celebrated their deliverance from Egypt. For three days they walked in the desert of Shur without water. When they came to Marah, they finally found some, but it was bitter and undrinkable. The people grumbled against Moses, and when Moses cried out to the Lord, God showed him a tree. After Moses had thrown it into the water, it became sweet and palatable. It was here the Lord made a decree with the people to keep His commands and He would cleanse them from all the diseases they had carried out of Egypt. “For I am the LORD, who heals you,” God said. The Hebrew translation - “Jehovah-rapha”.

There is a much deeper work of God depicted in this story than appears on the surface. The word ‘tree’ comes up in the New Testament in relationship to healing in this way: “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” (1 Peter 2:24). The incident at the bitter waters of Marah isn’t so much about making sure their bodies were okay, but that their spirits were right with God. It can legitimately be seen as a foreshadowing of the cross of Christ.

Jamie Buckingham, a writer who has visited the Sinai Desert many times, states that the water of Marah contained magnesium, a powerful laxative for cleansing. Calcium and magnesium also form the basis for a drug called dolomite, which is commonly used by athletes under a hot

sun to prevent fibrillation. He writes, “Thus the first stop in the wilderness journey was not a place of despair, but a place where God provided medicinal water. Over and over we are reminded that the reason for wilderness experiences is purification and preparation.”

The Israelites having been delivered from captivity in Egypt and brought into Canaan is re-told several times in the New Testament as a story that illustrates salvation from sin and being brought into the fullness of Christ. The bitter waters of Marah is a picture of sanctification where we bring all our diseased, broken experiences, which can be likened to the diseases the Israelites brought out of Egypt, to the cross of Christ, and a healing takes place, a deep cleansing that purifies, and turns the bitter waters sweet and palatable. All the wreckage and sin of our lives, Christ has already dealt with on the cross, and when we come to the cross with humble, repentant hearts, God begins the process of ‘Jehovah-rapha’ - “I Am the LORD Who Heals You”.

***PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the cross of Jesus. Because of it, I am not only given spiritual healing, but new life, and I pray for everyone to experience that.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Have I placed myself at the foot of the cross, bringing all that I am to Jesus?***