

# Healing: Divine and Satanic

By Charles Fry

**D**IVINE HEALING is one of a group of spiritual gifts, such as faith, knowledge, wisdom, miracles, prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, discerning of spirits, and revelation, which God has placed in his church. These operate according to his will and by the administration of his Spirit. They are accompaniments of the gospel, being a part of it, and are administered only in conjunction with the administrations of other phases of the gospel—that is, they are not exercised without the gospel, nor independently of the church of Jesus Christ, except in very rare instances where appeal is made to Christ by some distressed soul having faith in him and where contact with the church is impossible. In such a case the Spirit might act independently.

These gifts and blessings, constituting a series or group under the gospel, are all equally necessary. Each meets a specific need of the human soul, and where one is operative, all will be operative, for if part be omitted the purpose of the whole is thereby destroyed, the same as where portions of the doctrine are discarded or changed the whole doctrine of Christ is rendered void.

Again, the gifts are not the principal and primary parts of the gospel and church; they are secondary and incidental, yet important and necessary. A study of Christ's teaching shows his emphasis upon the foundational points: "Have faith in God"; "Believe also in me"; "He who believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." These are the important things that have to do with eternal life. Healing responds to bodily needs more than those of the soul. The gifts are helps in spiritual living.

The ministration of healing is not denied nonmembers. As Jesus healed many who were not his followers, so his authorized servants may min-

ister to those without where faith is manifest.

The Lord said, "To every man [that is, in the church] is given a gift by the Spirit of God. . . . [The Spirit itself is a gift of God given only to his obedient believers, of which Christ said the world cannot receive (John 14: 17)] and unto the bishop of the church, and unto such as God shall appoint and ordain to watch over the church . . . [are] to have it given unto them to discern all those gifts, lest there shall be any among you professing, and yet be not of God."—Doctrine and Covenants 46: 5, 7.

Here is warning of possible false gifts coming from the adversary even to the church to deceive, but from which the church is safeguarded by the gift of discernment given to its officers.

It is further said, "All these gifts cometh from God, for the benefit of the children of God." Through them the Spirit feeds the church—the spiritual blessings and builds it up so that it "groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord," becoming the "habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2: 21, 22). It is not the Spirit's mission to build up the institutions of the world by these means. They are promised to the church, never to the world. (See Mark 16: 16-18; Mormon 4: 87, 88; Doctrine and Covenants 58: 15.)

## Satan Imitates and Seeks to Substitute

The Scriptures reveal the presence of "magicians" who worked wonders by their occult signs from earliest ages. Satan introduced himself to the children of Adam, saying, "Worship me." Through his emissaries he imitated the sign given by Moses of causing his rod to become a living serpent before Pharaoh; they made their rods to become serpents. The effect of their wonder-working was to cheapen divine gifts and to harden Pharaoh's heart against God. This was just what Satan wanted—and

still wants. Clairvoyants, called witches, were present in Israel and contributed to the destroying of the faith of the people and leading them to destruction. They were among the Jews in New Testament times. Magicians and wonder-workers were among all the ancient nations of the Gentiles; they are among the nations today, even in heathen tribes.

Jesus warned of the rising of false christs and false prophets who would show "great signs and wonders," and John saw that there would be "spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world" (Revelation 16: 14). One deceiver was to make fire come down from heaven.

## The Lord Warns Against False Gifts

The Lord has said to this church:

I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations; wherefore he that prayeth whose spirit is contrite, the same is accepted of me, if he obey mine ordinances. He that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek, and edifieth, the same is of God, if he obey mine ordinances. . . . He that is overcome and bringeth not forth fruits, even according to this pattern, is not of me; wherefore by this pattern ye shall know the spirits in all cases under the whole heavens.—Doctrine and Covenants 52: 4, 5.

. . . Doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils. . . . Wherefore beware, lest ye be deceived, and that ye may not be deceived, seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given; for verily I say unto you, They are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do, that all may be benefited, that seeketh or asketh of me.—Doctrine and Covenants 46: 3, 4.

There are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world: and also

Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you.—Doctrine and Covenants 50: 1.

Here is the Lord's warning to us today. We are not free from danger, for Satan is still as active as ever. The Lord has said, "The Devil shall have power over his own dominion."

In the early days of our church an elder, Hiram Page, received a revelation through an occult stone, which a number of Saints accepted as divine. This started a movement to undermine the Prophet and depreciate the revelations given through him. But the Lord spoke and sent one of his servants to Hiram Page to tell him,

... those things which he hath written from that stone are not of me, and that Satan deceiveth him; for, behold, these things have not been appointed unto him; neither shall anything be appointed unto any of this church contrary to the church covenants.—Doctrine and Covenants 27: 4.

Page's revelation sounded logical—a splendid imitation of one of the Lord's revelations—but it was of the Devil. Satan makes all his works appear good and acceptable, often offering some desirable thing like healing, but under and behind which is hidden a satanic design to destroy faith or turn people away from God. They are like the tasty bit of food which men place upon snares to catch unwary creatures.

### How to Distinguish Between Good and Evil Works

Moroni draws a line of distinction between the things that are of God and those that are of Satan. He allows for no mixing of the two and warns against "judging that which is evil to be of God, and that which is good to be of the Devil," for men may err either way. Satan likes for them to do this since he and his agents seek to smear divine truth and goodness to make them appear evil, thus causing people to turn away. On the other hand he varnishes the false and vile things with outward beauty to make them look good and desirable. Christ expressed the same fact regarding "the

wolf in sheep's clothing." Satan is adept at this art.

That which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, everything which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and serve him, is inspired of God. . . . Whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the Devil, for after this manner doth the Devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no not one: neither doth his angels; neither they who subject themselves unto him.—Moroni 7: 11, 15, 16.

Such judgment must not be superficial but deep and searching. Samuel saw Eliab the eldest son of Jesse and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before me." But the Lord reproved him for judging only by outward appearances, telling him that "the Lord looketh on the heart." By failing to look beneath the surface men are often deceived and suffer loss in temporal things as well as spiritual. Healing of dread disease or painful affliction is highly desirable, but to accept it from treacherous and evil designing sources is to sell the eternal soul for a morsel of earthly relief. Better suffer affliction and even death under divine favor to the gaining of eternal life, than to yield to the deceptive offers which separate man from God. Healing should be sought through the means the Lord has provided, and if for some wise reason it is not granted, then another counsel of God should be observed: "Be patient in affliction" (Doctrine and Covenants 66: 5. Read Doctrine and Covenants 42: 13).

Modern healings performed sometimes under church and sometimes under nonchurch auspices, without proper regard to Christ and his lawful provisions, have the effect of belittling and destroying faith in the true gospel, and in the true church and its works, since they do have the effect of confirming the people in their present attitudes and beliefs though they may be in conflict with the truth. The gifts and signs Christ placed in the church were to confirm

the believer in the gospel, but where people have believed a different gospel, any miraculous healing that comes to them only confirms them in that. Here is the great danger.

Healing by the laying on of hands is an ordinance of the gospel, and ordinances are inseparably associated with the church. God established the church as his institution through which all the blessings coming from him may flow. For this reason the Lord cannot dispense his gifts and blessings pertaining to the church and gospel through a number of conflicting institutions and in confirmation of various doctrines and theories of human origin. The Holy Spirit is given "to bear record of the truth . . . to testify of Christ." It is the "Spirit of truth."

The gifts of the Spirit, including healing, are a group, every one of which is necessary to make the whole effectual. Healing alone belongs to the body alone. A people with great knowledge but no wisdom could easily be wrecked. Christ's concern in man is to save the whole man—body and spirit. Search as we may, we find no institution, church or society, apart from the one true church of Christ, where all these gifts are found. Healing is the most popular, and few societies claim anything beyond that. Several make it so prominent that doctrine, organization, and other more major features are incidental to it. This is not Christ's way. Belief must be in the truth and not in mere signs, and faith must be in God rather than in inexplicable wonders.

Faith in and loyalty to the truth may impose upon us a need for patient endurance, but we may be assured that in the end there will be no disappointment. Even affliction has its part to do in the perfecting of the soul. Christ suffered under it, and has counseled us to be patient. Paul has said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."