

Sunday Sermon Study Guide April 28, 2024 Lead Pastor Brian Bales

The Power of a Name: *Healer/Rapha* – Exodus 15:22-26

Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. ²⁴ And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵ And he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, ²⁶ saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer." Exodus 15:22-26(ESV)

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word.

COMMENTARY

- a. They could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: It must have seemed like a cruel joke after three waterless days, they finally came upon water and found that water undrinkable.
- b. So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree: By following God's direction, Moses made the waters drinkable and Israel found water in the wilderness.
- i. "I think, if I had been there, I should have suggested that Moses should use that rod of his. Did he not divide the Red Sea with it? Why not just put his rod into the water, and stir it up, and make it sweet? Oh, yes, you know, we are always for running to old methods! But God is a Sovereign, and he will work as he pleases." (Spurgeon)

- ii. In his work on the Exodus journey, Buckingham explains how this may have worked. The chemicals in the sap of the broken limb drew the mineral content down to the bottom of the pools and left only good water on top.
- iii. He further speculates that even though the waters were now drinkable, there was still a significant magnesium and calcium content in the water. The laxative effect of this would clean out the digestive systems of the children of Israel, cleansing them of common Egyptian ailments such as amoebic dysentery and bilharzia, a weakening disease common among Egyptian peasants. In addition, calcium and magnesium together form the basis of a drug called dolomite used by some athletes as a performance enhancer in hot weather conditions. At Marah, God provided the right medicine to both clean out their systems, and prepare them for a long, hot march to Sinai.
- iv. We can say that God was not only interested in getting the children of Israel out of Egypt, He also wanted to get Egypt out of the children of Israel both physically and spiritually.
- v. A tree: "Medieval commentators delighted to see here a reference to the cross, by which the bitterest of life's waters is sweetened." (Cole)

DISCUSSION POINTS

- 1. God reveals Himself as *Healer* for the first time in Exodus 15. Reading the commentary may provide you with a new perspective about God and His methods.
 - Moses had just led the Israelites through the Red Sea where the Egyptians drowned in pursuit and in this passage they experience the crisis of access to a safe water source. What stands out to you as you read the comments?

- Read verse 26 in Exodus 15 and process God's instructions and His promise to His people.
- 2. The activity of *Jehovah Rapha* is evident in the book of Psalm. Look closely at these passages and consider the implications of how and what God as healing. Describe and identify the healing.
 - The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18

- The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness you restore him to full health. Psalm 41:3
- Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. Psalm 103:2–3
- 3. In the N.T. we read about Jesus performing miracles more than once. He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11). He restored the eyesight of two blind men (Matthew 9) He healed a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Luke 8) and healed a man tormented mentally (Mark 5).
 - Brian asks us to consider what this means for us? How do we respond when we ask for healing, and it does not happen?

• Consider that God may have healed but not in the way that you expected it. What might that say about God?

• How has your faith been impacted in times when God did heal and in times when it seems as if He did not?

- 4. God cares for every part of our being, not just our physical body.
 - Consider a time when you or someone close to you experienced healing in one from one or more of these afflictions:
 - o Healing from mental affliction (Daniel 4, Jonah 2),

- o Spiritual Weariness (Psalm 23)
- o Emotional Difficulty (*Psalm 147*)
- o Anxiety/Worry (John 14)
- Finally, look back at the Israelites in Exodus 15. They only asked for water but commentary tells us that through that water they received protection and healing in a way that they had not anticipated. Ask God to reveal to you the times when He provided healing that you that you may have overlooked.

MAKING IT REAL

Spend time this week in conversation with The God of the Bible. Consider each of His attributes and He has revealed Himself to you as: *Yahweh*, *Jealous*, *Judge*, *Jireh* (provider), Redeemer, Peace, (shalom) Ezer (helper), Shepherd and your Rapha/healer.