

# **“The Great Physician”**

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Do you know what an “object lesson” is? O yes, you say, for no doubt you often have them in school, when you are taught from some object, something put before you that you can see.

All the way from Egypt to Canaan, God was giving object lessons to His people in the wilderness. He did mighty and wonderful works right before their eyes, to teach them of His power and love that were doing there same things for them all the time.

We have already seen that the pillar of cloud revealed Him who “stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain.” The pillar of fire showed that it was He who has “set His glory upon the heavens,” that they may declare it in all the earth. The dividing of the sea showed the power of the Creator, who holds the waters in His hand,

“And set bars and doors,  
And said, Thus far shalt thou come, but no further;  
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed.”

And now the Lord had another precious lesson for them. He wanted them to learn that He, the Creator, is also the Redeemer,—the Healer and Restorer, the Great Physician who alone could heal all their diseases. And so He led them in the wilderness to a place where He could give them an object lesson that would teach them this.

But they did not like the way that He led them; they went on and on, and found no water. This was a great hardship in the hot, sandy desert. When they were very thirsty and hot, they forgot that God was with them and leading them, and they grumbled at Moses for bringing them into the wilderness. At last they found springs of water, and hastened with joy to quench their burning thirst. But when they had tasted the water, they found that they could not drink it, for it was bitter. This is why that place was called Marah, which means bitter.

In the earth as God first made it there was no bitter thing. It was filled with all things sweet and fair, “pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” But, the curse of sin has brought poison and bitterness, trials and tears, sickness, sorrow, pain and death. The Israelites knew something about this bitterness, for in the land of Egypt “their lives were made bitter with hard bondage.” Now God wanted them to see His power to make sweet every bitter thing, to turn sorrow and mourning into joy, sickness into health, and death into life.

“And Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree, and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet.” Then the Lord told the people that if they would listen to His voice and keep His commandments, He would keep all the

diseases of Egypt, from them, "for I am the Lord that healeth thee,"—"the Lord thy Physician."

There is a tree, we read about it in the beginning and the end of the Bible, that brings healing to all things. It is called "the Tree of Life." The leaves of this tree, we are told, "are for the healing of the nations."

The real Tree of Life is the Lord Jesus, for He is the source of life for all things. This is one of the lessons that the trees are to teach us, and you can think of it as you will soon see the life that is in them showing itself in bursting buds and fresh green leaves and bright blossoms. For just as the leaf, the stem, the branch, cannot live apart from the tree, so nothing can live apart from Christ. As the sap carries the life to all the branches of the tree, so the life of Jesus flows through the whole creation, and all the beauty and strength and sweetness that we see anywhere in nature are His alone.

All disease and decay are the working of death, and so the only thing that can heal is life. There could not be the healing of any disease, if life that is stronger than death were not given to take it away.

Think of this, for it is a sweet and solemn thought, which will make you love the Lord Jesus. Have you ever been ill? No matter how slight that illness, you could never have recovered from it, if Jesus had not given His life for you.

Do you ask how this can be? You know that He died for you upon the cross, but death had no power over Him, for He came forth from the grave a mighty Conqueror, having destroyed "him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

But in what Jesus did then He was showing what He had been doing from the beginning, taking the curse of death upon Himself, and swallowing it up by the power of His endless life. "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses," and Matthew tells us that this is why He could heal the people with a touch or a word.

Do you not see then that Jesus has really been bearing the cross from the beginning? But because His life overcame the death that it brought, He could still give out His life to all things. It is by the power of that life which has the victory over death, that anyone has ever recovered from any illness. So there can be the healing of disease only because of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Then if Jesus had not died for you, you could never have got better from any illness you have ever had. And the same powerful life that heals you when you are ill keeps you in health day by day, so long as you obey His laws of life and health. So you are kept well, kept alive, by the Cross of Jesus Christ.

In healing the bitter waters, God taught the people that all the sweet fresh, pure water that they had was through the gift of His life to them. He showed them that nothing could by any means hurt them so long as they trusted in Jesus for

everything, and that the life that He had given for them was stronger than anything that could do them harm.

We shall meet many bitter experiences in passing through this world, but Jesus can change all the bitterness into sweetness. He did not give the people other water, but He made the bitter water sweet. So if He lets troubles come to us, He can take away all their bitterness, and change the curse into a blessing.

“Here see the Bread of Life; see waters flowing  
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above.  
Come to the feast of love; come ever knowing  
Earth has no sorrow but heaven can remove.”