

## 9. Times of Loss (2Q 2019—Family Seasons)

**Biblical material:** Mark 5:22–24, 35–43; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7; Gen. 37:17–28; Luke 16:13; Rom. 6:16; 1 Cor. 15:26; Phil. 3:8.

### Quotes

- Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it. *Helen Keller*
- The victims of rape must carry their memories with them for the rest of their lives. They must not also carry the burden of silence and shame. *Nancy Venable Raine*
- There are moments when one cannot weep, nor speak, nor pray, -- only be quiet before God. *Belle Kearney*
- I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent. *Gandhi*
- Love is the only force capable of turning an enemy into a friend. *Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- This is the way of peace: Overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, and hatred with love. *Peace Pilgrim*

### Questions

How do we deal with the brokenhearted? How can we truly help to heal? While we may theoretically accept responsibility for helping one another in times of loss, how do we make this practical? Have we anything to say about rape and abuse? How can our actions match our words? What does all this say about the kind of God we believe in?

### Bible summary

Mark 5:22–24 and 35–43 is the story of Jesus healing Jairus' daughter. In 1 Pet. 5:6, 7 we're told to take our worries to Jesus, for he cares for us. Gen. 37:17–28 is the story of Joseph's betrayal by his brothers. In Luke 16:13 Jesus reminds us we can't serve two masters. We are slaves to whatever we choose to obey (Rom. 6:16). Jesus conquers all enemies (1 Cor. 15:26). Everything else is nothing compared with knowing Jesus (Phil. 3:8.).

### Comment

Every family experiences times of tragedy and loss. However much we try, we cannot avoid all the problems of this life. What did Jesus spend most of his ministry doing? Not Preaching. Not even teaching. Not even performing amazing signs like the feeding of the 5,000. But those truly meaningful miracles of healing. What does that say to us?

What did Jesus say he came for? To show us the Father. And by performing so many miracles of healing, what does that say about our loving heavenly Father? That he wants to heal. He wants to cure us. He wants to restore us to perfect health. When he says: "I am the Lord who heals you," what does he intend?

Salvation. We have an old English word that is rather similar. Salve. As Jesus tells in Revelation we're meant to put on eye salve. What for? To cure our spiritual blindness, so that we may see. To heal our eyes. So that we may see.

So what is salvation? It's healing. Not just being counted legally right before God. Christ's salvation is the healing process, beginning with our conversion and lasting until we meet the Lord face to face.

This is so important to realize. God is not checking off sins, forgiven or not. He's trying to be like a kind and loving doctor, trying to heal us from a deadly, fatal disease.

Over and over again Jesus re-emphasizes this point. How did Jesus announce his ministry? Luke 4:18 (a quote from Is. 61:1, 2—showing that the God of the OT just as keen on healing): “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ... he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.” What a promise! What a clear demonstration of what he wanted to do for the downtrodden, sick and spiritually diseased people around him. And what a promise for us too! Jesus doesn't just want to clear your bank account of the sin overdraft. He wants to free you from sin-sickness. That is true salvation—for in the end, you will be healed completely, and sin's disease will be gone; and you won't even want to sin any more.

God has always been like that. He has always been “the Lord who heals you.” He promises in Jer. 3:22 and Hosea 14:4: “I will heal their backslidings.” He says in Ps. 147:3 that “he heals the broken in heart.”

Imagine you're sick. Maybe you don't even know. But the doctor diagnoses some major problem. Do you ignore it and hope it goes away? Do you pretend nothing's wrong? Or do you go to the only one who can treat you and make you well again? Obvious, isn't it? Even our children can see that. Yet when it comes to our spiritual sickness we should listen to our children. They know more than we do, for we so often turn away from the God who promises to heal us.

Whose fault is it if we refuse to admit anything is wrong? Or if we tear up the prescription? Or if we secretly flush away the pills? Or if we refuse permission for a life-saving operation?

We need to take the advice of James 5:16 seriously: “pray for one another so you may be healed.” Remember that this is the true meaning of salvation. And we are to follow the Lord's example in never hurting or spreading sin's disease, but in loving and caring for each other.

These are not pious words, they are the absolute truth. We too are to heal the brokenhearted and the backslidden, the blind in spirit and the lame on the Christian way. Remember the God we serve, the Lord that heals us. And may there be true spiritual healing in our churches, in our lives, and in our sin-sick hearts.

### **Ellen White Comments**

Christian ministers, physicians, teachers, have a broader work than many have recognized. They are not only to minister to the people, but to teach them to minister. They should not only give instruction in right principles, but educate their hearers to impart these principles. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Its blessing can be retained only as it is shared. {CME 17.4}

And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. {DA 37.2}