



June 28, 2024

We can't demand anything of our Creator

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Several years ago, back in 2013, I wrote and talked about my continuing struggle with pulmonary issues, challenged even more after obtaining some kind of "super" bug on a pastoral visit to Cartagena, Colombia. Today, over a decade later, I sometimes still cough a bit more than usual during Bible Studies and/or sermon messages. Those listening will sometimes ask if I am ill. Recently again while waiting in a checkout line while shopping, when I started to cough, someone quickly responded "you should not be out in public!" They followed up with "at least wear a mask!"

With all the information after the "virus" still floating around, whether accurate or misleading, I am very cognizant of those with breathing difficulties, regardless of how they have come to have such issues.

As time marches on, folks seem to be freer with sharing their thoughts and opinions. After my recent bicycle accident someone mentioned "I could simply demand that God completely heal me!" A question was once posed to me as to whether we can obligate God to respond the way we desire because we have exhibited obedience and/or service to Him. I personally have never felt comfortable in stating that we can say or do anything to put God under any automatic obligation to do or not to do something.

Scripture reminds us, that as humans we can never achieve a level of righteousness that earns or deserves God's blessings. Isaiah tells us, "*all our righteousness are like filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6) The apostle Paul quotes from

Psalm 14:1-3, *“As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one”* (Romans 3:10) We are saved by grace and received God’s blessings because of His grace and mercy. We don’t earn it.

So yes, we can make requests, but always must place it under the proviso of *“God’s will be done.”* As long as I can remember, when I anoint someone, at some point during the prayer I state *“and of course we ask this according to Your will”*. God’s ways and determination is above and supersedes ours. Even Jesus when He prayed during the night when He was arrested ended His request with *“Your will be done”* (Matthew 26:42)

It is the all-wise and all-powerful God who obligates Himself to fulfill what He has promised and covenanted. Scripture declares that a nation and its people will be blessed for obeying and following God’s laws and commandments. God obligates Himself to send these blessings and favors. *“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God”* (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

The rest of Leviticus 26 and also Deuteronomy 28, (called the blessing and cursing chapters), attest to the blessing that a nation can receive as God wills when they follow the instructions of the true God. On the other hand, when these laws are broken there is a penalty, negative consequence, or even a curse that comes upon those who disregard or disobey them and rebel against God. God in His mercy can choose to suspend or postpone the curse or punishment and give the individual or nation a chance to repent and change. (Jeremiah 36:3; Ezekiel 33:11)

Moses addressed the children of those who left Egypt and who had survived the tests and challenges of the 40 years in the wilderness. *“And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would*

keep His commandments or not.” (Deuteronomy 8:2) God also can decide to send or allow tests or challenges to befall His children for reasons determined by Him irrespective of the conduct of those involved.

Supernatural healing is a blessing that only God alone can grant. Moses transmitted the following words of the Lord to the Israelites after the healing of the bitter waters of Marah in the wilderness. *“If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.”* (Exodus 15:26)

It is the Lord who will make a decision to keep diseases away or not impose them. He alone will determine the best course of action. Remember He is God, we are not.

My friends, the bottom line is that we can't demand anything of our Creator. We can only make a humble and at times fervent request. Healing has always been one of God's blessings for mankind. When we are ill, we are instructed to first, of course, to pray to God, and then ask the elders of the Church to pray for us, anointing us with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:14). We are then told that *“the prayer of faith shall save the sick”* (verse 15).

However, it is still God's prerogative to choose to heal or not to heal the person who makes the request. Even the apostle Paul had some kind of physical ailment or *“thorn in the flesh”* that he was not delivered from (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Galatians 4:13-14) What it was we honestly do not know. We also read of the young evangelist Timothy who had some kind of ongoing health problems as well (1 Timothy 5:23).

It is up to God to choose when to inspire such manifestations for reasons He must determine. God uses human instruments to do His work, and that work sometimes involves miraculous healings and deliverance from diseases and other

maladies. But we of ourselves cannot work these things up or demand that these events will take place when we choose. We must humbly yield to God's timing and how He will work.

Some boldly claim "they can heal others!", or God is working through them specifically because they understand Him or His Word better. Some even claim "that if we use the correct name of God He will respond accordingly."

It is our Father who will decide to raise a person up and provide healing. Again, we cannot demand this of God. Which name we use for Him does not make Him respond differently. We ask it and in faith wait for His choice of timing and circumstances. Healing is one of the benefits He offers to those who put their trust in Him. The ultimate healing and raising up will occur at the resurrection of the dead in Christ. God's decision is paramount and we must humbly accept His will and timing regarding His promises.

The greater emphasis should be that the spiritual healing of mankind is sorely needed...and we daily pray "*Thy will be done!*"

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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