



DHM
Divine Healing
MINISTRIES

The Healing Power of Scripture

*For those seeking peace, strength, healing, refreshment and renewal
through a closer walk with God*

By Brother David Jardine

THE HEALING POWER OF SCRIPTURE

When I was a boy, I lived in a town in Northern Ireland called Banbridge -- twenty-four miles from Belfast. During the 1940s and 1950s the country was very stable. It was a great place in which to be brought up.

One of my earlier memories was going to church as a family twice every Sunday. We attended the local Anglican Church, Holy Trinity, where the services were normally Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.

An integral part of those services were the canticles, which had Latin names like *Venite*, the *Benedictus*, the *Te Deum*, the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*.

Most of them were just taken straight from scripture and put to music. I don't think that the tunes would be lively enough for people today, but the words were wonderful.

A lifetime's influence

In one canticle, the *Urbs Fortitudinis*, taken straight from Isaiah 26, there was one phrase which made an impact on even a boy of nine or ten years of age. Little did he know how important this message would be at significant times later in life:

'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.'

But what does it mean 'to stay' our minds on God? It means keeping them focussed on him — not just taking an occasional glance. I knew a man who had to practise that, not out of virtue, but out of necessity — and it literally saved his sanity. His name was Jim Glennon, a priest in the Anglican Church of Australia, who later became a world figure in the ministry of divine healing.

Like so many others, Jim's involvement with the healing ministry began because he needed prayer himself. He had been ordained in the Anglican Church in the early 1960s but after a year or two he had to take time off when he had a nervous breakdown.

Jim's problem was fear, and specifically fear of people. One day during the time he was off work, Jim went to the cinema to see the film, *The Sound of Music*. He enjoyed it so much, and was so focussed on it, that for a couple of hours he forgot about his fear. However, when he came out of the cinema fear enveloped him once again.

That experience made him think — that if focussing on a secular film could restore his peace, what would happen if he learnt to focus on God all the time. Indeed, on one occasion during his period off work Jim had felt God say to him: “what can you learn from this whole experience” ?

Before he could answer, he felt God speak again. 'You are to learn to depend more on me.' Jim felt that the way to do this was to fill his mind, insofar as he could, all of his waking hours with verses of scripture and with praise. And so he started to practise this.

His need was so great that he said he did not even stop for a comma. At first, he found that the best he could manage was that he was no worse at the end of the day than he had been at the beginning.

But gradually, as he kept on filling his mind with scripture, fear began to ease and depression was lifted. Eventually, the fear which had brought Jim to the point of breakdown disappeared completely.

Jim lived until he was 84. That fear never came back again, because he made it his practice every day until the end of his life to keep his mind filled with scripture and praise.

Taking practical steps

I had to practise this myself at a significant time in my life. I had been ordained a couple of years when I broke out in a skin complaint. It was very unpleasant and brought an itch all over my body and blotchiness on my skin.

I found it really embarrassing. My doctor was able to control it to a certain extent, but not able to cure it. What saved me at that time was practising what Jim Glennon had to do. To fill my mind with scriptural verses. I started to keep a list of quotations which were relevant to my situation:

- 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'
(Psalm 46:1)
- 'God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.'
- (2 Timothy 1:7)
- 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'
(Philippians 4:13)
- 'The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid?' (Psalm 27:1)

These are only a few samples. The list of good verses is endless. I took time in the morning to choose my verse for the day. I spent ten minutes meditating on it, allowing the message of the verse to percolate into my spirit.

Then I carried the verse with me throughout the day, feeding it into my mind and into my spirit as often as possible. When I was driving the car, walking down the road, in the bathroom in the morning, getting dressed and during my 'quiet time'.

Every day there were dozens of opportunities. And very quickly this made a difference. Anxiety was calmed, peace was restored, a new strength came into my life and my skin was greatly improved. There was also a very pleasant spin off.

An unexpected benefit

The two sports which I played most successfully as an adult were squash and cricket. As I look back on my sporting career, the year when I was feeding scripture non-stop into my mind was my most successful season in both sports.

I remember playing one cricket match when the opposition fast-bowler was the opening bowler for Ireland. He was bowling at more than 80 miles an hour on a wicket which was not very even. The ball was regularly coming up around me at an alarming rate. But not once did I step back a single centimetre.

I batted for a long time that day and what the bowler did not know was that as he was running up, I was feeding into my mind a verse like 'God is our refuge and strength'! That gave me a strength and courage which I could never have found in my own resources.

During the course of the Pandemic I read a number of articles giving us tips on how to keep our mental health strong. One thing that all the articles had in common was that none of them ever mentioned God.

What a weakness that was. It would be like sending a boxer out to fight with one arm tied behind his back. When I am in a tight corner, it is the Lord whom I turn to for all the resources I need in that situation.

What I am trying to do in this article, especially if we suffer from anxiety or depression, is to recommend us to keep our eyes on Jesus as much as we can during the day.

'Let us run with resolution the race that is set before us, our eyes fixed on Jesus on whom faith depends from start to finish.' (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Verse for the day

So, what would I recommend that we practise? Learn scriptural promises off by heart. Make a verse your verse for the day — feed it into your mind many times during the day, constantly if necessary. Whatever fear or anxiety you have, focus on God and not on the anxiety.

And if you start to worry, replace the worry by feeding the verse into your mind. If you are alone, maybe in the car, then speak the verse out loud. Insofar as you can, believe that that promise is for you. When my mother died in 2004 I discovered that the place of safety and security is by staying as close to God as we possibly can.

I have always been impressed by the encouragement God gave to Joshua at a challenging time in his life. He had just taken over from Moses as leader of the people of Israel and was about to lead them into the promised land. During the years in the wilderness those same people had given Moses plenty of problems and heartache.

So, I have no doubt that Joshua was feeling apprehensive and maybe even fearful at that moment when God spoke to him words which must have been a real confidence booster.

Words which, incidentally, He still speaks to us today. 'Be strong and of good courage, be not afraid, for I the Lord your God am with you wherever you go.'

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