

HEALING PLUNGE

An In-Depth Analysis of Healing in the Bible

ED MELICK

Healing Plunge: An In-Depth Analysis of Healing in the Bible

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Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
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THE DATA

Methodology.....	7
Bird's-Eye View.....	9
What Actions Were Involved in Healing?	15
What's Required for Healing to Occur?	23
Where Does Sickness Come From?	31
What Was Healed?.....	47
Who Were the Healers?	51
Who Was Healed?.....	55
How Fast Did People Heal?	59
What Instructions Were Given After Healing?.....	63
How Many Healings Were Remote?	67
Were Healings Ever Preceded by an Interview?	69
Data Analysis Summary.....	71

DISCUSSION

Does God Want Us Healthy?.....	77
Why Are So Many People Sick?.....	83
The Complete Person	99
Caring for Our Inner Being.....	109
Fasting.....	123
The Gospel and Ultimate Healing	133
Conclusions	137
Postscript	143

APPENDICES

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts.....	147
Appendix B – Possible New Testament Healing Accounts	175
Appendix C – Miraculous Signs and Wonders.....	179
Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts.....	185
Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures.....	197

Introduction

I have heard many claims about miraculous healing as described in the Bible. Some say that God wants Christians to live in a perpetual state of good health and that sickness demonstrates a lack of faith on the part of the sick person. They profess a form of prosperity Gospel that asserts that health (and wealth) is ours for the taking if we simply have enough faith to boldly claim it. At the other end of the spectrum are people who believe that spiritual gifts like healing became inactive at the end of the apostolic age. These people are sometimes described as “cessationists.” In between these two extremes are all sorts of other beliefs regarding healing, health, and wellness.

The debate about supernatural healing includes many topics that people get quite passionate about. For example, does God make people sick? If God wants Christians to be well, why are so many of them sick? Is faith always a prerequisite of healing and, if so, whose faith? Did Jesus want His healings to be kept secret or did He want them to be widely known?

Over the years, I would drift in and out of studying the topic of healing in the Bible, usually in response to a health challenge I was facing. I would read a book on healing or listen to a sermon and walk away thinking I had a decent understanding of the Bible’s teaching on the subject. Invariably, though, I would later encounter another teaching or a Bible verse that called into question what I had come to believe. I found the process to be frustrating, and I never had the motivation to study the topic more deeply.

That all changed three years ago when my ex-wife, Diane, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Diane divorced me eight years before her diagnosis following a 22-year marriage. A few weeks after she informed me of her plans, God revealed to me what I have come to describe as the realness, power, practicality, and beauty of His grace. I told her that my goal moving forward was to allow God to love her through me, more than anyone else. At first, she was cynical and dismissive. Eight years later, we had become incredibly close, and I was the first person she turned to for help.

Introduction

When I first heard the news about Diane’s diagnosis, I was devastated and began searching for ways to help her. Since I believe that the Bible is the ultimate source of wisdom for everything in our lives, I turned to it for answers about health and healing. I soon realized that there are *many* scriptures on these topics and that it would be no small effort to organize and analyze them. I now had a whole new level of motivation, though. Someone I loved dearly was facing a deadly and often painful disease, and I wanted to get smart fast. I wondered if anyone had ever gathered all of the Bible’s healing scriptures together in one place and performed any sort of analysis on them. I did a bit of research and couldn’t find anything that resembled what I had envisioned. So, I decided to dive in myself.

This book is a summary of my findings from an effort that stretched over three years, including a comprehensive data analysis of all the healing accounts described in the Bible. Some things may surprise you, like the fact that Jesus never once prayed and asked God to heal a sick person He encountered. Other findings may not surprise you—like the role of faith in healing—but will challenge you to consider things like *whose* faith is most important.

In the DATA section of the book, I share the results of a data analysis I performed on all the healing accounts described in the New and Old Testaments. I also address questions such as what was required for those healings to occur, where did sickness come from, and what was the purpose of the healings.

In the DISCUSSION section, I broaden the analysis to include scriptures that are either explicitly or implicitly related to health and healing. I also address questions such as does God want us healthy, why are so many Christians sick, what is the Biblical view of a complete person, and how do we care for our “unseen” parts. I wrap up by sharing the Gospel and its relationship to healing and my conclusions on healing in the Bible and its relevance to us today.

This book doesn’t contain much storytelling, and it’s probably not the best book available on the subject of healing. It’s just one man’s analytical dive into the deep end of the Bible’s healing pool. With that said, I pray that it will be a blessing to people. I believe it will. There’s nothing like struggling with chronic health issues or facing a serious health problem and having it shake you to the core. If the information presented here can

HEALING PLUNGE

eliminate confusion and bring peace to those who read it, then I will be overjoyed.

THE DATA

Methodology

I began collecting scriptures describing specific healings along with healing and health related passages in a Microsoft Word document shortly after Diane’s diagnosis. The list quickly ballooned, so I transferred them to an Excel spreadsheet where I categorized them and began highlighting information contained in each passage.¹ I assigned every passage to one of four categories: those that describe a specific healing account (i.e., healing accounts); those that mention healing and/or health but don’t describe a specific healing (i.e., explicitly healing-related scriptures); those that seem related to health and healing without specifically saying so (i.e., implicitly healing-related scriptures); and those that are not healing-related but are still worth considering (i.e., “other” scriptures). Also, from here on out I use the term “healing-related scriptures” to describe scriptures that are either explicitly or implicitly related to healing and health.

Next, I began to capture what every healing account says about things like who was healed, who did the healing, and what was the cause of the sickness. For each healing account, I tried to note everything that was mentioned. For example, when Jesus healed a government official’s son, I noted, among other things, that it was a specific healing account, the healer was Jesus, the sick person was healed because of the faith of a relative, the healing was performed remotely, it resulted in the healed person’s family coming to faith in Christ, and it was called a miraculous sign.²

The spreadsheet eventually expanded to include 294 columns, 316 rows, and 343 passages of scripture. As I manually populated relevant fields for each healing account and watched the column totals rise, insights began to emerge. Before discussing them in the following chapters, some comments are in order.

First, while the analysis of both New and Old Testament scriptures is fairly exhaustive, I have more confidence in the completeness of my New Testament results.

¹ From this point on, when I use the word “passage,” “scriptures” or “verses,” it can mean anything from a single Bible verse to an entire chapter or two in the Bible.

² John 4:46-54.

Methodology

Second, since we are under a new covenant, priority is understandably given to New Testament teachings, but the Old Testament is still quite revealing and important, so its results are included in full. Discussions of Old Testament healing accounts will typically be much shorter than the review of New Testament accounts.

Third, I was continually discovering new things as I performed this analysis over the span of three years. The richness of material on health and healing in the Bible is amazing. I'm sure I missed some details and welcome feedback so that I can improve future versions of this book.

Bird's-Eye View

The following table provides a breakdown by category of the number of passages of scripture considered in the overall analysis:

COUNT		TYPE OF PASSAGE
NT	OT	
182	161	GRAND TOTAL
85	23	Total number of healing account descriptions
28	70	Total number of explicitly healing-related passages
48	27	Total number of implicitly healing-related passages
21	41	Other passages

Some items are worth noting. First, a healing account is a particular story of healing which is described one or more times in the scriptures. For example, the account of Jesus healing a Roman officer's servant is told in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Therefore, it represents a single healing account with two descriptions.

An explicit healing-related scripture is one that does not involve a healing account but specifically mentions healing. A good example is found in the Old Testament:

*Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.*³

An implicit healing-related scripture is one that seems related to healing and/or good health without specifically saying so. A good example is Deuteronomy 6:2, which says that if you obey all of God's decrees and commands, you will enjoy a long life. Good health would seem to be implied in this verse.

³ Psalm 103:1-5 (NIV).

Bird's-Eye View

The 343 passages of scripture, including 108 descriptions of supernatural healings, provide a lot of material from which to draw conclusions and model our behavior.

The following table drills down further on specific healing accounts:

COUNT	HEALING ACCOUNT METRIC
	NEW TESTAMENT
51	Total number of healing accounts
33	Accounts where an individual was healed
18	Accounts where more than one person was healed
85	Total number of healing account descriptions
	GOSPELS
38	Total number of healing accounts
36	Number of healings attributed to Jesus
2	Number of healings attributed to the disciples
71	Total number of healing account descriptions
	ACTS
12	Total number of healing accounts
13	Total number of healing account descriptions
	REMAINDER OF NEW TESTAMENT
1	Total number of healing accounts
1	Total number of healing account descriptions
	JESUS' RESURRECTION
11	Number of times Jesus' resurrection is explicitly mentioned in the New Testament
	OLD TESTAMENT
21	Total number of healing accounts
18	Accounts where an individual was healed
3	Accounts where more than one person was healed
23	Total number of healing account descriptions

This section of the book focuses primarily on healing accounts while occasionally delving into healing-related scriptures. There are 51 such accounts in the New Testament. Approximately three quarters of these (38) are in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and all but one of the remaining accounts are in the book of Acts. Many New Testament

HEALING PLUNGE

healing accounts are described two or three times, raising the total number of descriptions to 85. Only two of the healings in the four Gospels involve a healer other than Jesus.

The Bible books, chapters, and verses for all the New Testament healing accounts that were considered, along with selected excerpts, are included in Appendix A for reference. It's important to note that the decision was made to exclude certain passages from the data analysis calculations. These passages are listed in Appendix B along with a brief explanation for why they were left out.

These numbers do not include the resurrection of Jesus, which is mentioned eleven times—four times in the Gospels, four in the book of Acts, and three times in the remainder of the New Testament.⁴ I did not include this “healing” in the numeric counts or analysis because it is mentioned so many times and, more importantly, it is a unique event that involves God resurrecting His son.

It's interesting to note the lack of healing accounts in books other than the Gospels and the book of Acts. A lot has been written about this. Some scholars believe it's explained by the fact that the Apostle Paul wrote most of the remaining New Testament books and that he was hesitant to boast about the healings with which he was involved.

Insight into this can be gained by looking at the Greek word *sēmeion*, which is translated to *signs*, *miraculous signs*, and similar expressions throughout the New Testament. The Apostle John used this word to describe four of Jesus' healing miracles, i.e., when He healed a government official's son, a blind man, Lazarus (whom He raised from the dead), and many people who followed Him.⁵ John used the same word to describe other miraculous deeds that Jesus performed, like turning water into wine and feeding five thousand men and their families with just five loaves of bread and two fish.⁶ Finally, John used the word several times without attaching any specific deed to it. For example, at one point he

⁴ Jesus' resurrection is a recurring theme throughout the New Testament. We could identify more “mentions” if we went beyond the Gospel accounts of His resurrection and explicit statements such as, “[God] raised [Jesus] back to life” (Acts 2:24).

⁵ John 4:54, 6:2, 9:16, and 12:18.

⁶ John 2:11 and 6:14.

Bird's-Eye View

writes that, “Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in him.”⁷

The Apostle Luke used *sēmeion* to explicitly describe two healings that the Apostle Peter was involved with (the healing of a crippled beggar at the Temple and the healing which occurred when Peter’s shadow passed over the sick) and when Philip healed “many” paralyzed, lame, and demon possessed people in Samaria.⁸ Luke also used the word at least eight times without connecting it to a specific healing or other miracle. Two of these indicate that God proved the truth of Paul and Barnabas’ message in Iconium by “giving them power to do miraculous signs and wonders,” and that Paul and Barnabas shared “the miraculous signs and wonders God had done through them” with believers in Jerusalem.⁹ Between the two of them, John and Luke used *sēmeion* to describe both explicit healings and more general miraculous signs and wonders. The connection between them seems obvious.

Paul used *sēmeion* three times in his letters without tying it to an explicit miracle. He described the “miraculous signs and wonders” done by Christ through him to convince Gentiles to move toward God; “signs and wonders and miracles” that he patiently did among the Corinthians to prove his authority; and the “signs and wonders and various miracles” that confirmed the message of Jesus and those who heard Him speak.¹⁰

It’s also worth noting that Jesus used the word *sēmeion* when describing the abilities of His future followers. The apostle Mark records his instructions to his disciples:

*“Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone... These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe... They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed...” And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.*¹¹

⁷ John 2:23.

⁸ Acts 4:16 and 22; Acts 5:12,15; Acts 8:6.

⁹ Acts 14:3 and Acts 15:12.

¹⁰ Romans 15:19, 2 Corinthians 12:12, and Hebrews 2:4.

¹¹ Mark 16:15-20.

HEALING PLUNGE

It seems safe to say that healings are a part of miraculous signs and wonders whenever they are mentioned in the New Testament. The Apostles John and Luke used the word *sēmeion* to describe both explicit healings and more general signs; Paul used the same word to describe his actions; Jesus explicitly said that healing would be a sign of future believers; and Jesus included healing as part of the miraculous signs that would confirm the Gospel message.

The word *sēmeion* appears in 69 New Testament verses. I have included a sampling of passages containing these verses in Appendix C to assist the reader in making the connection between healings and “miraculous signs and wonders.”

The Old Testament contains 21 healing accounts captured in 23 descriptions. Most of these involve a single person being healed. The Bible books, chapters, and verses for all the Old Testament healing accounts that were considered along with selected excerpts are included in Appendix D for reference.

Appendix E contains a sampling of healing-related scriptures that were considered in the overall analysis. They cover a broad range of topics pertaining to the spiritual and physical health and affliction of individuals, peoples, and nations.

What Actions Were Involved in Healing?

The actions that are explicitly mentioned as part of the healing accounts in the Bible are summarized as follows. (Note: The action of sick people coming to or being brought to a healer will be covered in the next chapter.)

COUNT	ACTIONS INVOLVED IN HEALING
	NEW TESTAMENT
27	Spoken commands and words
22	Touch
6	The sick person was questioned/interviewed
3	Spitting
2	Prayer
2	The healer looked intently at the sick person
2	Obedience to direction
1	The sick person's sins were forgiven
1	Peter's shadow fell upon sick people
1	Paul's handkerchief/apron touched sick people
1	Anointing with oil
1	Jesus wept
1	Jesus spoke out loud to God the Father
8	No action was stated
	OLD TESTAMENT
10	Prayer
2	Lying on a dead person's body
1	Obedience to directions
1	Someone washed in a river
1	Someone was kept in isolation
1	People looked at a replica of a snake on a pole
1	A vow was made
1	The Ark was returned to Israel
1	A guilt offering was made
1	Someone unwittingly touched the bones of a dead prophet
1	Fig ointment was spread over a boil

What Actions Were Involved in Healing?

COUNT	ACTIONS INVOLVED IN HEALING
1	Aaron carried an incense burner among the Israelites
1	David played the harp
1	Spoken words

The fact that leapt out at me when I first reviewed these numbers is that very few New Testament healing accounts included prayers. Only two times is prayer explicitly mentioned, and the contents of those prayers are not described.¹² They also involved Peter and Paul. Jesus never said an explicit prayer for a sick person, unless you count as prayers His seemingly exasperated comments before raising Lazarus from the dead, or when He sighed while looking toward heaven proclaiming, “Be opened!” during the healing of a deaf and speech-impaired man.¹³ Interestingly, Jesus used spit three times as an integral part of healing.¹⁴ He was spitting more than praying!

More importantly, not one single New Testament healing account involved the healer asking God to heal the sick person. This was really surprising to me. I have prayed numerous times for sick people and listened to countless others pray for the sick as well. The formula is almost always the same. We pray that, if it’s God’s will, the person would be healed, and we ask God to heal that person. This behavior began to disturb me when I considered what the scriptures actually describe in healing accounts. I began to wonder if Christians were “off-the-rails,” as they say, regarding prayer and healing, and I wondered if there were other areas where there is misunderstanding as well.

The action that *was* described most frequently in New Testament healing accounts was the utterance of simple statements by the healer, usually in the form of a bold command or proclamation. Short statements were included in the description of over half of all healing accounts, and about two-thirds of the healings of individuals. Matthew recognizes this when he recorded that Jesus, “cast out the evil spirits with a simple command;”¹⁵ and John describes how Jesus raised Lazarus with the simple

¹² Acts 9:36-43 and Acts 28:7-8.

¹³ John 11:41-42 and Mark 7:34.

¹⁴ Mark 7:31-37, Mark 8:22-26, and John 9:6.

¹⁵ Matthew 8:16.

HEALING PLUNGE

shout, “Lazarus, come out!”¹⁶ An example of an apostle using a command involved Peter telling the lame man at the Temple, “In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!”¹⁷

Some form of touch was the second most frequently cited action in healing accounts, occurring in 44 percent of all accounts and nearly one half of the healings of individuals. In one example, a man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. The scriptures say, “Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be healed!’”¹⁸ Touching lepers was highly unusual at that time and would have made a Jew ceremonially unclean. Jesus did not have to touch this man. He could have simply healed him with a command, but it seems He chose to touch him to demonstrate compassion for the lowliest of people and to show that He makes all things clean. In certain instances, multiple people were healed by a touch. Such an example occurs in Mark 6, where people “... begged [Jesus] to let the sick touch at least the fringe of His robe, and all who touched him were healed.”¹⁹

An examination of the data lines up with the teachings and actions of Jesus and the apostles. Jesus sent His disciples out to heal the sick, not to pray that they would get well.²⁰ He also told His disciples to make new disciples and teach them to do what He commanded the disciples to do, and that they would be able to heal the sick.²¹ The apostle Paul included healing as one of the spiritual gifts given to some of Jesus’ followers and encouraged them to “desire the most helpful gifts.”²² It’s worth highlighting some of the passages I have footnoted in this paragraph:

- Matthew 10:5-8 – *Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions... Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!*

¹⁶ John 11:43.

¹⁷ Acts 3:6.

¹⁸ Mark 1:41.

¹⁹ Mark 6:56.

²⁰ Mark 3:14-15, Matthew 10:1,5 & 8, Mark 6:6-13, Luke 9:1-6, and Luke 10:1-2,9,17,19.

²¹ Matthew 28:18-20, John 20:21, and Mark 16:15-20.

²² 1 Corinthians 12:9,28-31.

What Actions Were Involved in Healing?

- Luke 10:1-2,9 – *The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit. These were his instructions to them... Heal the sick, and tell them, ‘The Kingdom of God is near you now...’*
- Matthew 28:19-20 – *[Jesus said] go and make disciples of all the nations (all peoples), baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.*
- Mark 16:15-20 – *And then [Jesus] told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone... These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe... They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.” ...And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.*

In only one instance did Jesus seem to encourage the disciples to pray for the sick. When the disciples failed to cast a demon out of a boy, they asked Jesus, “‘Why couldn’t we cast out that evil spirit?’ Jesus replied, ‘This kind can be cast out only by prayer and fasting.’”²³ (Fasting is not mentioned in all manuscripts.) Note that Jesus simply rebuked the evil spirit Himself. He did not pray, but He seems to imply that for the disciples, prayer and fasting are *sometimes* needed. It’s also interesting to note that this episode happened *after* the twelve disciples were sent out by Jesus to heal the sick, and they “cast out many demons and healed many sick people.”²⁴ What are we to make of this? Are we supposed to always begin with proclamations of healing and sometimes pray afterwards? If so, how do we determine when to pray?

If we widen our scope and consider healing-related scriptures, things get even fuzzier. Consider the following verses from the book written by James, Jesus’ brother and a leader in the Jerusalem church:

²³ Mark 9:28-29.

²⁴ Mark 6:12-13.

HEALING PLUNGE

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.²⁵

Three types of prayer are mentioned in these verses. First, someone who is suffering, which could include more than just illness, is directed to pray. The second prayer seems to be for someone who is so ill that he is unable to leave his bed or home. Phrases such as “pray over” and “the Lord will raise them up” are used in the NIV version of the passage, which would indicate that the sick person is bed-ridden or home-bound. The third type of prayer seems broad and flexible. Given its context, it includes cases of physical healing but does not have to be limited to them. Things like spiritual and relational healing could be included as well.

No information is given on the contents of these prayers. The end of the passage, though, concludes in a way that seems to say that we should not think that such powerful prayers are reserved only for spiritual giants like Elijah. They are for us as well. A quote from pastor and author John Piper of Bethlehem College & Seminary may shed light on the topic. He sees these verses as, “A rebuke to Shepherds (elders) who never have the faith to heal, and to congregations who never pray in the Spirit and power of Elijah.”²⁶

In summary, regarding prayer and healing:

²⁵ James 5:13-18.

²⁶ <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-elders-the-people-and-the-prayer-of-faith>, 36:50.

What Actions Were Involved in Healing?

- Jesus never prayed for anyone He healed, and He never asked God to heal anyone.
- Only twice did one of His followers pray while healing someone. The contents of those prayers are unknown. In one case, the prayer is followed by a command, and the other involves touch, although it's unclear if this occurred during or after the prayer.
- On one occasion Jesus did seem to imply that certain types of healing may require prayer and perhaps fasting. How we determine that is unclear. His comments followed a healing where He himself did not pray.
- James directed believers to (1) pray when they are suffering hardships (which could certainly include sickness), (2) confess their sins to one another and pray so that they may be healed (which could include many types of healing), and (3) call on their elders for prayer when they are sick—perhaps sick to the point of being bedridden or homebound.

It would seem that prayer plays some role in healing, but the data from healing accounts alone indicate that the role of prayer is far less significant than most Christians think.

The remaining actions that were explicitly mentioned in New Testament healing accounts include questions being posed by the healer (six accounts); the healer looking intently at the sick person (two); the sick person being healed while following instructions from the healer (two); Peter's shadow falling on the sick (one); Paul's handkerchief or apron touching the sick (one); Jesus forgiving a paralyzed person's sins (one); a sick person being anointed with oil (one); Jesus speaking out loud to God the Father (one); and Jesus weeping (one). In eight healing accounts, there was no action described.

It's worth noting that Jesus and his disciples never solicited money from the people they healed nor did they take up an offering before or after healings.

In the Old Testament, healing accounts are fewer and less rich in detail. Interestingly, the number one action involved by far in Old Testament healings *is* prayer, which is explicitly recorded in ten of

HEALING PLUNGE

eighteen healing accounts. The following example is recorded in the first book of Kings:

[King Jeroboam] cried out to the man of God, “Please ask the LORD your God to restore my hand again!” So the man of God prayed to the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored, and he could move it again.²⁷

In one case, a very sick person was restored to good health when he prayed for three *other people* who were *not* sick. Job 42:10 records, “When Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes.”

The next most cited action in Old Testament healing accounts is a prophet physically lying on a dead boy and raising him back to life. This is recorded in two separate healing accounts—one with the prophet Elijah and one with his successor Elisha.²⁸ All other actions are only mentioned once and include details such as someone unwittingly touching the bones of a dead prophet, people looking at a replica of a snake on a pole, and an army commander grudgingly washing himself in a river.²⁹

²⁷ 1 Kings 13:6.

²⁸ 1 Kings 17:17-24 and 2 Kings 4:18-37.

²⁹ 2 Kings 13:20-21, Numbers 21:4-9, and 2 Kings 5:1-14.

What's Required for Healing to Occur?

The factors involved with healing that are explicitly mentioned as part of healing accounts in the Bible are summarized as follows. Some health-related scriptures are also included in the table to add depth to the analysis.

COUNT	HEALING FACTORS
	NEW TESTAMENT
	Healing accounts
11	Faith
3	The name of Jesus
2	God's power
1	The authority and power given by Jesus
1	"Jesus Christ"
1	God's mercy
30	Unstated
	Health-related scriptures (Non-exhaustive list)
2	Name of Jesus
2	God's healing power
1	Authority given by Jesus
1	Prayer offered in faith
1	Confession of sins
1	The spiritual gift of healing
	Other scriptures
1	Faith in God & forgiveness
1	Faith in Jesus
	OLD TESTAMENT
	Healing accounts
10	God
1	David playing the harp
1	Touching the bones of Elisha
9	Unstated
	Health-related scriptures (Non-exhaustive list)
5	Obedience leads to healing and freedom from sickness

The healing factor most often cited in New Testament healing accounts is faith (noted in just over 20 percent of all accounts). Also, the

What's Required for Healing to Occur?

faith of four different types of people is described, as broken down in the following table:

COUNT	WHO'S FAITH?
	NEW TESTAMENT
5	Faith of the person healed
3	Faith of a relative
2	Faith of a friend
1	Faith of the healer

I initially expected faith to be mentioned more than 20 percent of the time. After some thought, though, two things occurred to me. First, as we've already seen, Jesus was the healer in most of the New Testament healing accounts. If the faith of the healer is a significant—perhaps primary—factor in some healings, then the faith of Jesus does not need to be noted. He was Immanuel, God with us in the flesh, and the exact representation of God's being. He was with God in the very beginning, and God created all things through Him.³⁰ Naturally, He would have complete faith in His ability to perform healing miracles.

I also began considering what I call “acts of faith.” This includes situations such as people coming to a healer and pleading for help or people being brought to a healer by a family member or friend. Clearly such actions demonstrated faith in the healer's ability to heal someone. These actions could have been included in the previous chapter, but since they demonstrated the faith of a sick person or loved one, I decided to include them here. A tally of these occurrences is below:

COUNT	ACTS OF FAITH
	NEW TESTAMENT
16	Begging, pleading and/or tenaciously pursuing a healer
14	The sick person comes to or is brought to the healer
2	Prayer (also noted in the previous chapter)
1	Ananias following Jesus' healing instructions for Paul

³⁰ Matthew 1:23, Hebrews 1:3 (NIV), John 1:1-3.

HEALING PLUNGE

COUNT	ACTS OF FAITH
	OLD TESTAMENT
10	Prayer (also noted in the previous chapter)
7	Begging, pleading and/or tenaciously pursuing a healer
1	The sick person comes to or is brought to the healer
1	A sick person sends for a healer

A total of 31 New Testament healing accounts explicitly mention faith as the reason for healing and/or involve some act of faith, as we have defined it. This represents approximately 60 percent of all healing accounts. Clearly, faith or some expression of faith plays a role in healing, and it seems to be the predominant factor. Several scriptures support that view:

- When Paul and Barnabas came upon a man in Lystra with crippled feet, *Paul realized he had faith to be healed. So, Paul called to him in a loud voice, “Stand up!” And the man jumped to his feet and started walking.*³¹
- When a synagogue leader came and fell at Jesus’ feet, pleading with him to heal his dying daughter, Jesus said, *Don’t be afraid. Just have faith, and she will be healed.*³² Jesus took her by the hand, made a proclamation, and her life returned.
- When four men lowered their paralyzed friend through a roof in front of Jesus, the scriptures record the following. *Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “My child, your sins are forgiven... I will prove to you [teachers of religious law] that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.” Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!” And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers.*³³

³¹ Acts 14:9-10.

³² Luke 8:41-42,50-55.

³³ Mark 2:3-5,10-11.

What's Required for Healing to Occur?

- After Jesus rebuked a demon from a boy, *[The] disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?" "You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them.*³⁴

All this talk about faith begs the question, faith in what? It would seem reasonable to assume that most of the people who came to Jesus for healing, or who brought someone to Him for healing, believed that Jesus could heal the sick. What's unclear is whether they believed that He was the promised Messiah. It's also unclear whether there were people there who didn't believe anything but followed the excited crowds in the hope that something great would happen.

Some argue that the faith of the sick person is a prerequisite for healing. This begs another question: Were there "unbelievers" who were healed, i.e., people who didn't believe in healing, weren't aware of a healer's ability to heal, or didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah? What does the data say?

It turns out, not much. I searched for scriptures that explicitly identified an unbeliever being healed and found none. This could be inferred, though, when Jesus heals the crippled man at the Pool of Bethesda.³⁵ It seems apparent that this man did not know who Jesus was when he first encountered Him. There was no indication that he even knew about Jesus. When the crippled beggar outside the Temple was healed as described in Acts 3, the beggar didn't recognize Peter or John, and there is no mention of whether he knew about or believed in Jesus.

An argument for unbelievers being healed can be made by including them in the seven healing accounts where a healer cured every sick person in a crowd or area. In four accounts, Jesus healed all of the sick who were brought to Him or followed Him.³⁶ Another account says, "all who touched [Jesus] were healed."³⁷ In the other two accounts, all of the sick were healed who were brought to Peter and Paul.³⁸ A counter argument can be made that these people either came to the healer, were brought to a

³⁴ Matthew 17:14-20.

³⁵ John 5:1-15.

³⁶ Matthew 4:23-25, 8:16, 12:15, and 15:29-31.

³⁷ Mark 6:56.

³⁸ Acts 5:12-16 and 28:9-10.

HEALING PLUNGE

healer, or reached out to a healer, which are demonstrations of faith by someone in the healer's ability to heal.

It's also worth noting a healing-related scripture that summarizes Jesus' ministry in the book of Acts. It simply says, "Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil."³⁹ This would seem to include everyone.

Some people assert that some combination of the faith of a sick person, a healer, and people who love the sick person is needed for successful healing, but they struggle to describe precisely how that would work. This is an interesting idea that might explain the different types of people (the sick person, a relative, a friend, and the healer) whose faith is explicitly mentioned in healing accounts. Clearly, Jesus had perfect faith that is an unquestioned part of all His healings, and the faith and power of His disciples skyrocketed after they received the Holy Spirit. This understandably leads some to reason that the faith of the healer is more important than the faith of anyone else, including the one who needs healing. Whatever the combination, it's clear that faith plays a major role in healing.

Besides faith, other healing catalysts in the New Testament involve elements I call "God factors." These include the name of Jesus (5), God's power (4), the authority given to the healer by Jesus (2), God's mercy (1), "Jesus Christ" (1), and the gift of healing (1). The totals cited include both specific healing accounts and healing-related scriptures. Some examples are as follows:

- God gave Paul power to perform unusual miracles, including imparting healing power to handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul's skin.⁴⁰
- Peter clearly stated that the crippled beggar at the Temple was healed "by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene."⁴¹
- When Jesus chose 72 "other" disciples and sent them out in pairs, He instructed them to heal the sick and said, "I have

³⁹ Acts 10:38.

⁴⁰ Acts 19:11-12.

⁴¹ Acts 4:10.

What's Required for Healing to Occur?

given you authority over all the power of the enemy.”⁴² (There is reason to believe that the number of disciples was actually 70, but we will stick with 72 throughout our discussions.)

- When Peter healed Aeneas, he said, “Jesus Christ heals you!”⁴³

Two other healing catalysts—the prayers of elders and believers, and the confession of sin—were highlighted in the previous chapter while examining a passage in the book of James.⁴⁴ While confession is not explicitly mentioned in any of the 51 New Testament healing accounts, James indicates it plays a role in healing. One interesting way to view this was suggested by Reverend Dr. Eric Foley, the co-founder of the Voice of the Martyrs Korea:

The trio of illness, death, and sin are joined at the root... God's healing focuses on all three, penetrating spirit, soul, and body. Confessing our sins to one another – and then praying for each other about what has been confessed – isn't a prerequisite for healing or preparation for healing. It *is* healing.⁴⁵

I am still surprised, though, at the contrast between James' call for confession and the complete lack of confession and repentance in New Testament healing accounts. I have heard some claim that confession of sin is required for believers to be healed, but this certainly wasn't the case when dead believers were brought back to life in two healing accounts—one involving the Apostle Peter and the other the Apostle Paul.⁴⁶

Also, as we will see later in the analysis, healings confirmed the authority and message of Jesus and his disciples. Since the Good News they shared was so often tied to repentance from sin,⁴⁷ I expected repentance to be a factor in healing accounts. It wasn't.

⁴² Luke 10:1-2,9,19.

⁴³ Acts 9:34.

⁴⁴ James 5:14-16.

⁴⁵ *The Surprising Connection Between Confession and Healing*, Reverend Dr. Eric Foley, May 2, 2012, Doers of the Word blogpost. See <http://dotheword.org/2012/05/02/the-surprising-connection-between-confession-and-healing/>.

⁴⁶ Acts 9:36-43 and Acts 20:9-12.

⁴⁷ Mark 1:14-15, Acts 20:20-21.

HEALING PLUNGE

In the Old Testament, God's involvement/action brought about healing in nearly half of the healing accounts where the source of restoration is explicitly mentioned. Most of these involved God enabling women who couldn't have children to become pregnant. In the other accounts God is credited with healing a deadly boil, boils covering a man's body, a dead boy, and someone's hand that He had made leprous only moments before. Only two other causes of healing are explicitly mentioned in the Old Testament—Saul's relief when David played the harp and a dead man coming back to life after touching the bones of Elisha. The cause of the remaining healing accounts is unstated.

While faith is not explicitly mentioned in any Old Testament healing account, one or more acts of faith are part of the description of thirteen out of the 21 healings, including prayer, seeking out a healer, pleading for healing, and sending for a healer.

It's also interesting to note the correlation between obedience to God and good health in the Old Testament. Five times the scriptures say that obedience will lead to good health.⁴⁸ Consider the following example:

If you listen to these regulations and faithfully obey them, the LORD your God will keep his covenant of unfailing love with you, as he promised with an oath to your ancestors... And the LORD will protect you from all sickness. He will not let you suffer from the terrible diseases you knew in Egypt, but he will inflict them on all your enemies!⁴⁹

The majority of New Testament healing accounts are silent on the cause of healing. Faith is the most often cited reason for healing given in the New Testament. When acts of faith are also considered, some form of faith is involved in most New and Old Testament healing accounts. God, His power, and the power He grants to others in His name also play a significant role. A small number of other healing causes are cited in healing accounts and healing-related scriptures, but none more than once.

⁴⁸ Exodus 15:26, 23:25 and 30:12; Deuteronomy 7:12,15 and 30:19-20.

⁴⁹ Deuteronomy 7:12 and 15.

What's Required for Healing to Occur?

Repentance or the confession of sins are never mentioned as a factor/prerequisite in New Testament healing accounts.

Where Does Sickness Come From?

The sources/causes of sickness that are explicitly mentioned as part of healing accounts in the Bible, plus some health and healing-related scriptures, are summarized as follows:

COUNT	THE SOURCE OF SICKNESS
	NEW TESTAMENT
	Healing accounts
2	The devil
2	Evil spirits/demons
1	Jesus
1	Sin (implied)
1	God (implied)
	Health and healing-related scriptures
1	The sin of improperly observing the Lord's supper, and God's resulting judgement
1	An angel of the Lord afflicted a person who later died
1	God struck two people dead
	OLD TESTAMENT
	Healing accounts
11	God – In response to His people's sin, disobedience, and rebellion. Sometimes this led to death
7	God – To punish Israel's enemies and those who had done something to His people. Sometimes this led to death
3	God – To teach or affect something
1	God
1	Two angels
	Health and healing-related scriptures
5	God says disobedience to him will lead to sickness and death
4	General verses about God making people sick
1	"God disciplines people with pain on their sick beds."

Where Does Sickness Come From?

The source/cause of sickness is controversial, especially when it comes to God's role in people's illnesses. In the Old Testament, there are at least 22 cases where God made a person or groups of people sick – and many of these sicknesses led to death. The vast majority of these were due to either the sin and rebellion of God's people;⁵⁰ punishment for Israel's enemies;⁵¹ or God's desire to teach or affect something.⁵²

Furthermore, five times God tells His people that disobedience to him will lead to sickness.⁵³ Consider the following warning from God in the book of Deuteronomy:

*But if you refuse to listen to the LORD your God and do not obey all the commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you... The LORD will afflict you with diseases until none of you are left in the land you are about to enter and occupy. The LORD will strike you with wasting diseases, fever, and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, and with blight and mildew... He will afflict you with all the diseases of Egypt that you feared so much, and you will have no relief. The LORD will afflict you with every sickness and plague there is, even those not mentioned in this Book of Instruction, until you are destroyed.*⁵⁴

There are also verses that talk about God using pain to discipline people on their sickbeds,⁵⁵ wounding and healing,⁵⁶ and threatening and afflicting people with a plague.⁵⁷

Perhaps the most famous Old Testament example of God afflicting someone with illness involves the trials of Job. God allowed Satan to afflict

⁵⁰ Exodus 32:35; Numbers 12:1-10; Numbers 16:1-40; Numbers 16:41-50; Numbers 21:4-9; 2 Kings 1:2-17; 2 Chronicles 26:16-21; 2 Samuel 24:1,10,15,17; 2 Samuel 12:15; 2 Kings 5:27; Psalm 38:3,5; Psalm 39:11.

⁵¹ Genesis 12:17-18; Genesis 20:17-18; Exodus 9:8-12; Exodus 12:23-30; 1 Samuel 5:6; and 2 Kings 19:35.

⁵² Job 2:3-10; Exodus 4:6-7; and 1 Samuel 1:5-6,11,20.

⁵³ Exodus 5:3, Leviticus 26:14-16, Deuteronomy 28:15,21-22,58-61, 29:22-27 and 32:24.

⁵⁴ Deuteronomy 28:15, 21-22 and 60-61.

⁵⁵ Job 33:19.

⁵⁶ Job 5:17-18, Deuteronomy 32:39.

⁵⁷ Exodus 9:8-16.

HEALING PLUNGE

Job with terrible boils from head to toe.⁵⁸ After Job was restored to good health, the Bible records the following:

*Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the LORD had brought against him.*⁵⁹

It's very clear that sickness can and does come from God if we look at Old Testament evidence. But what about the New Testament? Did God continue to afflict people with illness as recorded there? Let's look at the data.

While accounts of God making people sick or striking them dead are far fewer in the New Testament, they are still present. There are accounts of God striking two believers and later one unbeliever dead.⁶⁰ God even sent his own Son, Jesus, to the earth as a man to be tested in the same ways we are tested,⁶¹ and to be beaten and die on the cross.⁶²

In a letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle Paul explicitly connects the unworthy observance of the Passover with sin, judgment, sickness, and death. Consider the following text from his letter.

*So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord... For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself. That is why many of you are weak and sick and some have even died.*⁶³

In John 9, when Jesus told his disciples that a blind man they had just encountered was born blind “so the power of God could be seen in him,” it seems to imply that his blindness was God's will/doing.⁶⁴ Jesus struck

⁵⁸ Job 2:7.

⁵⁹ Job 42:11.

⁶⁰ Acts 5:1-11 and Acts 12:23.

⁶¹ Hebrews 4:15.

⁶² Philippians 2:5-8.

⁶³ 1 Corinthians 11:27-30.

⁶⁴ John 9:1-3.

Where Does Sickness Come From?

Saul (Paul) with blindness for three days to get his attention and begin his process of conversion.⁶⁵ Jesus also implied that sin caused a man's disability. After healing him He said, "Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you."⁶⁶ In addition, it was God who set the laws governing the consequences of sin, which include sickness, in place. Furthermore, since Satan clearly can do nothing without God's permission (see the affliction of Job⁶⁷ and Satan's request to sift the disciples like wheat⁶⁸), the instances of Satan and his servants being credited with causing illness in four healing accounts are also examples of indirect afflictions.⁶⁹

It's also worth noting that when Adam and Eve sinned, God subjected His creation to decay, death, and frustration. Consider the following verses from Paul's letter to the church at Rome:

*Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.*⁷⁰

God set all of this in motion as a judicial decree in response to our sin. As a result, our fallen bodies are prone to sickness, accidents, injury, and death, especially given all the poor choices we are inclined to make as sinful/deceitful people.⁷¹ It's the natural course of things in our fallen world.

Furthermore, the Scriptures indicate that God, in essence, turns us over to our sinful desires. For example, three times in four verses from the book

⁶⁵ Acts 9:3-5,8-9.

⁶⁶ John 5:14.

⁶⁷ Job 2:6 and 42:11, Romans 13:1 (*all authority comes from God*).

⁶⁸ Luke 22:31.

⁶⁹ Luke 13:10-17, Acts 10:38, Matthew 9:32-34, Matthew 12:22-28, Luke 10:1-20. In the last two examples, the connection between Satan/evil spirits and illness is strongly implied.

⁷⁰ Romans 8:20-23.

⁷¹ Jeremiah 17:9 and Romans 8:5-8.

HEALING PLUNGE

of Romans, Paul notes that God “abandoned” people to their shameful desires and foolish thinking, which all too often led to illness and death.⁷²

Finally, it’s important to consider direct and indirect causation. Sometimes God intervenes with something or someone in a direct way, as He did during the creation. Other times, there are one or more layers of causation. God sent an angel to strike Herod with worms.⁷³ In this case, God used two agents to punish Herod—the angel and the worms. To keep Paul from becoming proud, God allowed “a thorn in [his] flesh, a messenger from Satan” to torment him.⁷⁴ I’m not claiming that this was a health problem, but simply pointing out a layer of causation. As we’ve already seen, God also gave Satan permission to afflict Job.⁷⁵ Throughout the Bible, God often used sinful people to bring about His plans as He did when Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel all united against Jesus prior to His crucifixion. Paul wrote that, “Everything they did was determined beforehand according to [God’s] will.”⁷⁶

The point is that there can be one or more layers of secondary causes between God and a particular action/effect—but God is sovereign over all of it. In that sense, God ultimately “causes” all sickness to happen, whether directly or indirectly. (For a deeper discussion of layers of causation and sickness, please refer to the podcast link below.⁷⁷)

Considering the evidence above, it’s a stretch to say that God doesn’t make people sick—that He only wants us well. From the moment Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, all humans were subjected to eventual death (which is typically preceded by illness) and the length of our lives was limited.⁷⁸ God put the laws in place that unleashed that death penalty when we rebelled. The effect of these laws will be with us until Jesus returns.

⁷² Romans 1:24-28.

⁷³ Acts 12:23.

⁷⁴ 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. I will not join the debate of whether this thorn involved physical affliction, persecution, or spiritual/psychological problems. It’s simply not clear, and people with far greater minds than me have attacked the question.

⁷⁵ Job 2:3-10.

⁷⁶ Acts 4:27-28.

⁷⁷ *Does God Cause All Sickness?*, John Piper, Desiring God podcast, February 18, 2014. See <http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/does-god-cause-all-sickness>.

⁷⁸ Genesis 3:17-19,22-23 and 6:3; and Romans 5:12.

Where Does Sickness Come From?

We will review the causes of sickness in greater detail in the **DISCUSSION** section of this book. For now, suffice it to say that the evidence seems clear that God does indeed afflict people with illness.

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

The outcomes and consequences that are explicitly mentioned as part of healing accounts in the Bible are summarized as follows. These outcomes and consequences can be used to deduce the purpose of healings.

COUNT	OUTCOMES and CONSEQUENCES
	NEW TESTAMENT
14	Many people witnessed the healing(s)
10	People were amazed, awestruck
10	God was glorified/praised
9	Jesus was made famous
9	The religious leaders were offended and critical
5 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lesson about the Sabbath was conveyed (7 healings occurred on the Sabbath) - Demonstrated Jesus' compassion - Called a miraculous sign - Resulted in faith
4 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Kingdom of God was announced or confirmed - Evil spirits proclaimed Jesus to be the Son of God
3 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caused fear to sweep through a crowd - Jesus commanded evil spirits to be silent and not reveal who he was - People noted that it was something never seen before - Confirmed authority/message of Jesus and his followers
2 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Called a miraculous sign and wonder - Jesus was amazed - Many sick people were brought to Jesus - Resulted in joy - Resulted in repentance and forgiveness - Revealed/displayed God's power - Jesus angered (in one case, he "groaned in his Spirit" according to the King James translation) - The healed person was told to go to the priests, once as a "testimony" to them

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

COUNT	OUTCOMES and CONSEQUENCES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Pharisees/religious leaders launched an inquiry and began questioning people - The healer was arrested and jailed - The Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus
1 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Son of God received glory - Fulfilled Old Testament prophecy - Shamed Jesus' enemies - Jesus saddened - Jesus often withdrew from the large crowds to the wilderness for prayer - People told Jesus to go away - The healed person worshipped Jesus - Before the healing, Jesus told his disciples, "Now you will really believe" - People struggled to believe the healed person was the person who was previously sick - People told the Pharisees about the healing - People took the healed person to the Pharisees - Jesus was called a sinner - Jesus stopped his public ministry among the people and left Jerusalem - The healed person thanked the healer - Jesus noted that only one of ten people, a foreigner, returned to give glory to God after being healed - The healer took advantage of the buzz surrounding the healing to share the Gospel with the crowd - The healer was threatened - The healer was beaten - Paul immediately began preaching boldly - Local townspeople tried to offer sacrifices to the healers - Demon identified healer as true servant of God - People were relieved that someone was healed - Many sick people were brought to Paul - The healer and his traveling companions were showered with honors and supplies - The sick person was able to travel

HEALING PLUNGE

COUNT	OUTCOMES and CONSEQUENCES
	OLD TESTAMENT
7	A baby was born, typically someone of importance (e.g., Samuel, Samson)
2	The healed person said, “Now I know...”
1 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – David was retained to serve Saul – Naaman learned that there is a true prophet in Israel – Nebuchadnezzar praised God and told people “throughout the world” about God's signs and wonders – King Jeroboam continued to sin – God protected king Hezekiah and Jerusalem from Assyrian attack for 15 years

Clearly there are a variety of outcomes and consequences given in New Testament healing accounts. In 41 of the 51 accounts (a little over 80 percent) at least one explicit outcome is given—and there are usually two or more provided. The total number counted was 133. In the Old Testament, fourteen out of 22 healing accounts (63 percent) cite an explicit effect of healing, and one account lists two of them.

The public nature and impact of healings stands out. Fourteen New Testament healing accounts explicitly state that they occurred in a public setting (such as in a synagogue) or in front of a crowd. In one example, Jesus encountered a “huge crowd” as He stepped off a boat and He “healed their sick.”⁷⁹

Other accounts speak to the public awareness of and reaction to healings. The “amazement” of people was mentioned ten times, such as when the demoniac shared his healing story throughout the Ten Towns to the amazement of those who heard it.⁸⁰ Nine times a healing led to the spread of Jesus’ fame;⁸¹ three times a healing caused fear to sweep through

⁷⁹ Matthew 14:14.

⁸⁰ Mark 5:20.

⁸¹ In one case, Jesus’ fame spread even after He told people not to share what He had done for them. Matthew 9:29-31 records, “Then [Jesus] touched [the eyes of two blind men] and said, ‘Because of your faith, it will happen.’ Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, ‘Don’t tell anyone about this.’ But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region.”

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

a crowd; and two times the scriptures say that “many” people were brought to Jesus.

Thirty-eight times across eighteen healing accounts—35 percent of all healing accounts—the public nature of healings is either explicitly noted or easily deducible. Many people were aware of and affected by these healings. Here are some examples of the public nature of many healings:

- John 6:2 – *A huge crowd kept following [Jesus] wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick.*
- Luke 8:46-47 – *But Jesus said, “Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me.” When the woman realized that she could not stay hidden, she began to tremble and fell to her knees in front of him. The whole crowd heard her explain why she had touched him and that she had been immediately healed.*
- Acts 2:22 – *People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know.*

To take the point further, even those healings that were private or somewhat private now have great fame given the fact that they are recorded in a book that has been printed and circulated billions of times. Consider the following scripture:

*The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.*⁸²

Another significant outcome of healings was that God was praised and glorified. This is cited in ten New Testament healing accounts. Two of the more well-known accounts involved (1) only one of ten lepers returning to

⁸² John 20:30-31.

HEALING PLUNGE

thank Jesus and praise God after being healed, and (2) the account of Peter healing a crippled beggar at the Temple.⁸³ The scriptures note that Jesus was glorified in the first case and the Apostles were honored in the second. The healings revealed who God is (i.e., a compassionate and supernatural healer) and understandably led many people to praise Him.

Healings were also highly unusual. Seven times a healing account was called either a miraculous sign or a miraculous sign and wonder. In one case, a person healed of blindness said, “Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, He couldn’t have done it.”⁸⁴ When it comes to physical healings, Jesus and His followers were not in the business of healing unseen ailments while leaving those with obvious and profound conditions like blindness and paralysis unattended. Quite the contrary, they focused on the most “impossible” cases, sometimes even raising the dead.

Nine healing accounts, all involving Jesus as the healer, noted that religious leaders were offended by and critical of the healing. In five of these accounts, the healing occurred on a Sabbath day of rest which these leaders used as an excuse for their displeasure. In one example, Jesus healed a man who had been lame for 38 years and all the Jewish leaders could say to the man was, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat.” Then, they “began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules.”⁸⁵

These nine healing accounts described the religious leaders as indignant, demanding, stubborn, cursing, and filled with objections.⁸⁶ They even plotted to kill Jesus.⁸⁷ It’s amazing that their resentment and jealousy of Him simply would not allow them to rejoice over such marvelous miracles. The compassion, power, and authority of Jesus really rubbed them the wrong way.

In five cases, the compassion of Jesus was explicitly noted. Jesus was “moved with compassion” when He touched and healed a leper; “His heart

⁸³ Luke 17:15-18 and Acts 3:8,13 and 4:21.

⁸⁴ John 9:32-33. Also, see Mark 2:12 (“We’ve never seen anything like this before!”), Luke 5:26 (“We have seen amazing things today.”), and Matthew 9:33 (“Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!”).

⁸⁵ John 5:10,16.

⁸⁶ Luke 13:14-17, John 9:17-18,28.

⁸⁷ Matthew 12:9-14.

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

overflowed with compassion” when He raised the only son of a widow from the dead; He “felt sorry for” two blind beggars that He healed; and was moved with compassion when He saw crowds of sick people.⁸⁸ One could also make the point that His compassion was revealed every single time He healed someone, especially when it was in response to the cries and pleas of sick people.

Five healing accounts explicitly resulted in people coming to faith. In three of those accounts people who witnessed a healing came to faith;⁸⁹ one time the healed person came to faith (the Apostle Paul);⁹⁰ and in the last instance, a government official and his family believed in Jesus after his son was healed.⁹¹

Three healings confirmed Jesus and His followers’ authority and message, and in three other healings evil spirits confirmed Jesus’ identity as the Son of God. This confirmation is even more evident when you also consider healing-related scriptures. As we’ve already seen, healing is almost certainly part of the miraculous signs and wonders mentioned in the New Testament. If so, scriptures like the following add support to the validating power of healings:

- John 2:23 – *Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in him.*
- John 3:1-2 – *There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.”*
- Acts 14:3 – *[The] Lord proved [Paul and Barnabas’] message was true by giving them power to do miraculous signs and wonders.*

⁸⁸ Mark 1:41, Luke 7:13, Matthew 20:34, 9:36 and 14:14.

⁸⁹ Acts 9:32-35 and 9:36-42. Also, healing causing people who witnessed it to believe in Jesus might be deduced from the healing accounts in John 11:42-43 (the healing of Lazarus) and Acts 5:12-16. Before Jesus went to Bethany to visit Lazarus’ tomb, He said “Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe.” (John 11:14-15)

⁹⁰ Acts 9:17-18 and 22:11-16.

⁹¹ John 4:46-54.

HEALING PLUNGE

- Hebrews 2:3-4 – *So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak? And God confirmed the message by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose.*

There are many more consequences of healings given, including teaching a lesson about the Sabbath day, confirming the Kingdom of God, repentance and forgiveness, and joy among those who witnessed the healings. Jesus was even recorded as being amazed, angered, or saddened in the course of various healing encounters.

I'd like to drill down on one observation before turning to the Old Testament. In three healing accounts, healing is explicitly associated with going out to people, teaching them, and preaching about the Kingdom of God. Consider the following verses:

- Matthew 4:23 – *Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness.*
- Luke 9:1-2,6 – *One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out all demons and to heal all diseases. Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick... So they began their circuit of the villages, preaching the Good News and healing the sick.*
- Luke 10:1,9,17 – *The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit... Heal the sick, and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God is near you now...' When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!"*

The same healing/Kingdom connection is made in healing-related scriptures. Consider the following passages:

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

- Mark 3:14-15 – *Then [Jesus] appointed twelve of them and called them his apostles. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach, giving them authority to cast out demons.*
- Mark 16:15-20 – *And then [Jesus] told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone... These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe... They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.” ...And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.*
- Acts 4:29-30 – *[All the believers prayed], “And now, O Lord... give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”* (This prayer followed Peter and John healing a crippled beggar, being thrown in jail, and getting released the next morning.)

It’s also noteworthy that, just before Jesus sent out the twelve disciples to preach the Good News and heal the sick, He told them, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields.”⁹² He says something nearly identical when sending out the 72 disciples.⁹³ He told them to go, preach, and heal and to pray for more workers to be sent. Healing is tied to the Good News about the Kingdom, and we are expected to go out into the world and do these things—not wait for people to come to us. Furthermore, it could be argued that *every* New Testament healing was done as the healer moved about sharing the Good News.

With respect to the Old Testament, the outcomes and consequences of healings are sparser than in the New Testament. Out of the 21 Old Testament healing accounts, eleven of them cite a reason for, or

⁹² Matthew 9:37-38.

⁹³ Luke 10:2.

HEALING PLUNGE

consequence of, the healing. Most healings involved barrenness being removed and a child being born, often someone important to the unfolding history of God's people—like Samson the judge and Samuel the prophet.

There are only six other outcomes given. The most interesting of these were the proclamations of a Syrian army commander named Naaman and the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar. After reluctantly following instructions from the prophet Elisha, Naaman was healed of leprosy and proclaimed, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel.”⁹⁴ Many years later Jesus said, “[Many] in Israel had leprosy in the time of the prophet Elisha, but the only one healed was Naaman, a Syrian.”⁹⁵ In this case, a miraculous healing was granted to the commander of a foreign army, which led to an amazing acknowledgement of the incomparable greatness of the God of Israel.

King Nebuchadnezzar was equally effusive after God healed him following a seven-year bout of insanity. The scriptures say he sent a message to “the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world” telling them about “the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for [him].” The Bible records that he “praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever.”⁹⁶

There is a rich variety of outcomes and consequences included in New Testament healing accounts. Based on a review of the data, it would seem safe to conclude that they were intended to accomplish several things. They were meant to get people's attention and be widely known. This can be gleaned from the miraculous and exceedingly rare nature of the healings, and the widespread fame they brought to the healers. They were meant to validate the message of Jesus and His disciples. This was a message about repentance from sin, turning to God, the nearness of the Kingdom of God, and the Good News that Jesus' sacrifice paid the penalty for our sins.⁹⁷

In addition, they were meant to drive people to praise and worship God. They were meant to reveal who God is, i.e., a compassionate, merciful, and loving God. They showed that love and compassion are more

⁹⁴ 2 Kings 5:15.

⁹⁵ Luke 4:27.

⁹⁶ Daniel 4:1-2,34.

⁹⁷ Matthew 3:1-2, Mark 1:14-15, Mark 6:12, Acts 20:20-21.

What Was the Purpose of Healings?

important than the law. Jesus broke the Jewish law on many occasions, like when He healed on the Sabbath, touched unclean lepers, and allowed a woman with a bleeding problem to touch him. In Jesus' words, "...the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath."⁹⁸ Finally, they were meant to give us a foretaste of God's coming Kingdom, a Kingdom without sickness and pain.

⁹⁸ Matthew 12:12.

What Was Healed?

The illnesses that are explicitly mentioned in Bible healing accounts are summarized as follows:

COUNT		AILMENTS HEALED
NT	OT	
16		Sickness, disease, and illness
15		Demons/evil spirits cast out
9		Blindness
7		Lameness/cripple
6	3	Death (The NT number includes Jesus' resurrection)
5		Paralysis
4		Muteness
3		Every kind of sickness and illness
3	3	Leprosy
1		Deafness
1		Speech impediment
1		Deformed hand
1		Bleeding
1		Dropsy/edema (fluid buildup in limbs)
1		Ear reattached
1		Epilepsy
	1	Torment, depression, and fear from an evil spirit
	8	Barrenness
	2	Boils
	1	Tumors
	1	Poisonous snake bite
	1	Plague
	1	Sanity restored
	1	Paralyzed hand

A variety of ailments were healed in New and Old Testament healing accounts, and their seriousness is remarkable (e.g., death, blindness, paralysis, and leprosy). The absence of such healings today leads many

What Was Healed?

people to claim that we are in a period of cessation. My thoughts on this are covered in the DISCUSSION section of this book.

In the New Testament, there are 75 ailments noted across the 51 healing accounts. The discrepancy is due to the fact that multiple infirmities are mentioned in some of these accounts. For example, Matthew records the healing of “a demon-possessed man, who was blind and couldn’t speak.”⁹⁹ Matthew later records that, “A vast crowd brought to [Jesus] people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn’t speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all.”¹⁰⁰

Healings were not restricted to the specific ones cited above. In three cases, New Testament writers record that Jesus and His disciples healed every type of ailment. Consider the following passage from the book of Matthew:

*[Jesus] healed every kind of disease and illness. News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon possessed or epileptic or paralyzed – he healed them all.*¹⁰¹

In the Old Testament, 22 ailments are mentioned across 21 healing accounts. Barrenness was the infirmity most often healed, followed by leprosy and death, which are also mentioned in New Testament healing accounts.

It’s worth noting that the New Testament includes far more accounts (fifteen) of people being released from spiritual oppression than the Old Testament (one). In all of these healings, a person was freed from the influence of a demon or evil spirit which affected both their mental and physical wellbeing.

As noted in the previous chapter, Jesus and His followers were not in the business of healing unseen, minor ailments while leaving those with obvious and profound conditions like blindness and paralysis unattended.

⁹⁹ Matthew 12:22.

¹⁰⁰ Matthew 15:30.

¹⁰¹ Matthew 4:23-24. Also, see Matthew 9:35, and Matthew 10:1 together with Luke 9:6.

HEALING PLUNGE

Quite the contrary, the New Testament emphasizes their focus on the most challenging illnesses, including sometimes raising the dead.

Who Were the Healers?

The following table lists the healers explicitly cited in New and Old Testament healing accounts:

COUNT	HEALERS
	NEW TESTAMENT
36	Jesus
6	God raising Jesus from the dead
6	Paul
4	Peter
2	Disciples
1	The Apostles and/or Peter (unclear)
1	God
1	The Spirit of God
1	Philip
1	Ananias
	OLD TESTAMENT
9	God
4	Elisha
1	Abraham
1	Moses
1	Aaron
1	Elijah
1	David
1	“Man of God”

Jesus is the dominant healer in the Bible, followed by God, the disciples/apostles, and a handful of other individuals. In the New Testament, only three people other than Jesus and the original twelve disciples are mentioned by name as healers—Paul, Philip, and Ananias. The apostle Luke also describes Jesus sending out 72 “other” disciples to heal the sick. While the text does not explicitly say that they did so, it does say that they joyfully reported that even demons obeyed them when they used Jesus’ name. The relevant verses are below:

Who Were the Healers?

*The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit... [He told them to] heal the sick, and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God is near you now...' When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!" "Yes," he told them, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy... But don't rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven."*¹⁰²

I was hesitant to consider this a healing account but ultimately decided that it strongly implied that healings occurred.

God's role in the resurrection of Jesus is mentioned six times, and God's mercy is cited in keeping a believer named Epaphroditus from dying of illness. Epaphroditus' story is another one where healing, while not explicit, is strongly implied.

The apostles Paul and Peter are mentioned in healing accounts most often following Jesus and God. Two men, Philip and Ananias, are both mentioned once. Philip was a Greek-speaking Jew who was one of seven men selected to run a food distribution program for believers in the early church in Jerusalem. He was one of the first traveling missionaries and is recorded healing the paralyzed, lame, and demon-possessed in Samaria.¹⁰³ Ananias has been alternately called a believer, a disciple, and a prophet. He was the Damascus believer who was called by the Lord to find Saul of Tarsus (who became the apostle Paul) and lay hands on him, which healed Saul of his temporary blindness.¹⁰⁴

The fact that only three people other than Jesus and some of the disciples He sent out during His ministry are explicitly named as healers in the New Testament is used by some people to assert that the gift of healing has in some way been withdrawn following the times of the Apostles. A review of the historical record would support such an assertion, with the exception of short periods of time in various places

¹⁰² Luke 10:1,9,17-20.

¹⁰³ Acts 8:6-7.

¹⁰⁴ Acts 9:10-18.

HEALING PLUNGE

where supernatural healing was said to flourish. The real question is, does God want this kind of supernatural healing active in the lives of His followers? If so, why aren't we seeing it now? My thoughts on this are covered in the DISCUSSION section.

In the Old Testament, the predominant healer is God. He is followed by Elisha, who is cited four times in healing accounts, and then a handful of people who are each mentioned once. All the people mentioned are either well-known prophets, such as Elisha and Elijah, or major leadership figures in the history of Israel, like Abraham, Moses, and King David. There are no cases of “lay people” performing supernatural acts of healing in the Old Testament.

Who Was Healed?

A summary of who was healed in Bible healing accounts is included below:

COUNT	WHO WAS HEALED
	NEW TESTAMENT
33	An individual. This includes a wide range of people including, but not limited to, men and women; children and adults; slaves, beggars, and government official family members; dead people and sick people
18	More than one person
6	All
7	Many or an unspecified large number of people
1	Ten lepers
1	A few sick people
1	Two blind men
1	All who touched Jesus
	OLD TESTAMENT
2	Leah
2	Israelites
1 each	17 individuals are mentioned one time each: Sarah (Abraham's wife), Abimelech (plus his wife and female servants), Rachel, Monoah's wife (Samson's mom), the wealthy/barren woman in Shunem, Hannah (Samuel's mom), Moses, Miriam, Job, a dead man being buried by Israelites, the widow of Zarephath's son, the wealthy woman of Shunem's son, Naaman (the Syrian commander of Aram's army), King Nebuchadnezzar, King Saul, King Hezekiah, King Jeroboam

In 33 of the 51 New Testament healing accounts, a single person was healed, and the description of these individuals varies widely. Examples include a government official's son, the apostle Peter's mother-in-law, a demon-possessed man living in a cemetery, a Roman army officer's

Who Was Healed?

servant, a widow's only son, a friend of Jesus named Lazarus, and a crippled beggar at the Temple.

In the remaining eighteen accounts, more than one person was healed. Their descriptions also vary including all the sick people in a crowd, many people, ten lepers, two blind men, and only a few people in Jesus' hometown.¹⁰⁵

The resurrection of Jesus is mentioned eleven times—once in each of the four Gospels, four times in the book of Acts, twice in the book of Romans, and once in Paul's letter to the Ephesian church. No New Testament healing account is mentioned more than three times. As previously noted, the resurrection of Jesus was not included in the data analysis.

Two healing accounts in the Book of Acts note that each person involved was a "believer."¹⁰⁶ Both people were raised from the dead. Paul also notes in his letter to the Philippians that a "true brother [and] co-worker" named Epaphroditus, who was sick to the point of death, would soon be traveling because of God's mercy.¹⁰⁷ These healings occurred after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the descriptions of each person clearly indicate that they believed He was the Messiah.

It's worth noting that there are post-resurrection accounts of sickness where believers were not healed. In a letter to his protégé, Paul tells Timothy, "Don't drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often."¹⁰⁸ In another letter to Timothy, Paul notes that he "left Trophimus sick at Miletus."¹⁰⁹ These passages beg the question, why didn't Paul heal these men? There are also reasons to believe that Paul was suffering from an ongoing health problem himself. We will address these issues in the DISCUSSION section.

While there are only 21 healing accounts in the Old Testament, the variety of people healed is notable. These include the extremely old wife of the patriarch/father of the Jewish people, a pagan king of Babylon,

¹⁰⁵ Matthew 13:57-58 and Mark 6:5-6 record that Jesus could only heal a few sick people in His hometown because of the lack of faith He found there.

¹⁰⁶ Acts 9:36-43 and Acts 20:7-12.

¹⁰⁷ Philippians 2:25-30. Also, one could argue that Paul rising up after being stoned and left for dead is an example of a believer being healed, but it was excluded to err on the conservative side. See Acts 14:19-20.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Timothy 5:23.

¹⁰⁹ 2 Timothy 4:20.

HEALING PLUNGE

Israel's first king, a Syrian army commander, the mother of Samuel the prophet, the mother of Samson the judge, and the son of a poor foreign woman in Elijah's time. These included people both great and low, rich and poor, and in Israel and foreign countries.¹¹⁰

In two of the more interesting healings, a dead man springs to life after being hastily thrown on the bones of the prophet Elisha, and God strikes Moses' hand with leprosy and then heals it in a matter of moments to demonstrate the signs He will show the Egyptians who are oppressing Israel.

¹¹⁰ It's interesting to note that when Jesus mentioned that both Elijah and Elisha were sent to help foreigners when there was great need in Israel, the crowd of Jews who were listening became so angry that they tried to kill Him.

How Fast Did People Heal?

The following table summarizes the speed of healings in New and Old Testament healing accounts where it was either explicitly cited or is readily deduced:

COUNT	SPEED OF HEALINGS
	NEW TESTAMENT
13	Instantly (explicitly stated)
17	Instant or fast healing can be deduced
3	Slight delay in healing
	OLD TESTAMENT
2	Instantly (explicitly stated)
4	Instant or fast healing can be deduced
2	Slight delay in healing

Throughout the Bible, whenever the speed of a healing is explicitly stated or can be readily deduced, the healing was either instant, very fast, or after a small delay.

In the New Testament, thirteen healing accounts explicitly noted that the healing was instant or immediate. For example, Matthew records Jesus reaching out and touching a leper and that “instantly [his] leprosy disappeared.”¹¹¹ Luke records Jesus turning to a paralyzed man and saying, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!’ And immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God.”¹¹²

An example of one of Jesus’ followers healing someone instantly occurred when Peter healed a lame beggar at the Temple. The scriptures record, “Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man’s feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened.”¹¹³ Also, when Ananias laid hands on Saul after he was

¹¹¹ Matthew 8:3.

¹¹² Luke 5:24-25.

¹¹³ Acts 3:7.

How Fast Did People Heal?

blinded, the scriptures record, “Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight.”¹¹⁴

An example of an instant Old Testament healing can be found in the second book of Kings, which records the following:

*Groups of Moabite raiders used to invade the land each spring. Once when some Israelites were burying a man, they spied a band of these raiders. So, they hastily threw the corpse into the tomb of Elisha and fled. But as soon as the body touched Elisha’s bones, the dead man revived and jumped to his feet!*¹¹⁵

Examples of healings that were fast without explicitly saying so include the healing of two blind men by Jesus. Matthew records, “Then he touched their eyes and said, ‘Because of your faith, it will happen.’ Then their eyes were opened, and they could see!”¹¹⁶ Likewise, when Paul healed a man with crippled feet at Lystra, Acts records, “So Paul called to him in a loud voice, ‘Stand up!’ And the man jumped to his feet and started walking.”¹¹⁷ These healings were clearly very fast, but they didn’t use words like *instantly* or *immediately*.

In three New Testament and two Old Testament cases, healing was slightly delayed, as in the following account where Jesus healed a blind man:

When they arrived at Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Jesus, and they begged him to touch the man and heal him. Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. Then, spitting on the man’s eyes, he laid his hands on him and asked, “Can you see anything now?” The man looked around. “Yes,” he said, “I see people, but I can’t see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around.” Then Jesus placed his hands on the man’s eyes again, and his eyes were opened. His sight was completely restored, and he could see everything clearly.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Acts 9:18.

¹¹⁵ 2 Kings 13:20-21.

¹¹⁶ Matthew 9:29-30.

¹¹⁷ Acts 14:10.

¹¹⁸ Mark 8:22-25.

HEALING PLUNGE

An Old Testament example of slightly delayed healing can be seen where Elisha directs the Commander of the Syrian Army, Naaman, to wash seven times in the Jordan river before his healing occurred.¹¹⁹

The speed of healing is noted or can be deduced in only four cases out of the eighteen times two or more people are healed in the New Testament. Two of those cases involve the healing of two blind men and ten lepers, respectively. Only two times when large crowds of people were being healed does the Bible give an indication of the speed of healing. Thirty out of the 34 individual healing accounts give a strong sense of the speed of healing, and it was almost always instant or nearly so.

¹¹⁹ 2 Kings 5:1-14.

What Instructions Were Given After Healing?

A summary of the instructions that were given after Bible healing accounts is included below:

COUNT	HEALING INSTRUCTIONS
	NEW TESTAMENT
4	Don't tell anyone
4	Go home
4	Stand up, get up. (Some of these appeared to be concurrent with healing.)
2	The healed person was sent away
1	Repent and turn to God
1	Stop sinning
1	Go home to your family and tell them everything the Lord has done for you
1	Go to the priests as a testimony
1	"Go in peace"
1	Hold out your hand
1	The disciples were told to pray for more workers
1	Don't go to town on your way home
1	Jesus told his disciples (the healers) to rejoice that their names are registered in heaven
1	Unwrap him and let him go
1	Give her something to eat
1	Jesus said, "This kind [of evil spirit] can be cast out only by prayer and fasting"
1	"No more of this [fighting]." (It's unclear if this command came before or after Jesus reattached a man's ear that had been cut off with a sword)
1	Get up and be baptized
	OLD TESTAMENT
1	Moses was told to use the affliction and healing of his hand from leprosy as a miraculous sign for the Egyptians

What Instructions Were Given After the Healing?

COUNT	HEALING INSTRUCTIONS
1	The Lord commanded Miriam to stay outside of the Israelite camp for seven days until she was healed of leprosy
1	An angel of the Lord gave Samson's mother dietary restrictions during her pregnancy
1	Elisha told Naaman to "go in peace" after healing him

One thing that stands out in the data above is that only one New Testament healing account ends with the healed person being told to stop sinning. After healing the lame man by the pool of Bethesda, Jesus said, "Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you."¹²⁰ Also, after healing a beggar at the Temple, Peter told the crowd to repent and believe.¹²¹

As we already observed, confession of sin and repentance were not a prerequisite in any healing account. Now we see that only two accounts are followed by a call to stop sinning or to repent.

It should be noted that a call to repentance is also part of the healing account where the twelve disciples are sent out by Jesus to tell people about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.¹²² It seems clear, though, that it's something they told everyone they met, sick or not, so it's not necessarily a healing prerequisite or post-healing instruction.¹²³

As we have seen, healings confirmed the authority and message of Jesus and His disciples. Since the Good News they shared was so often tied to repentance from sin,¹²⁴ I expected repentance to be a bigger factor in healing accounts. The fact that it was noted in only two cases was a surprise to me. Perhaps these two admonitions, coupled with Jesus' instruction to a woman caught in adultery to "go and sin no more,"¹²⁵ make repentance stand out more in my mind than the data indicate.

Another thing that stood out to me was that Jesus told some people not to tell anyone about their healing, yet He told others to do the opposite. In

¹²⁰ John 5:14.

¹²¹ Acts 3:19.

¹²² Luke 9:2.

¹²³ Mark 6:12-13.

¹²⁴ Mark 1:14-15, Acts 20:20-21.

¹²⁵ John 8:10-11.

HEALING PLUNGE

one particular healing, He said both. After healing a man of leprosy, Jesus told the man not to tell anyone, but then instructed him to show himself to the priest and make an offering in accordance with Mosaic law “as a testimony to them.”¹²⁶ Another healing account records that everyone in a crowd knew that the daughter of a synagogue leader had died, yet after Jesus healed her He gave her parents “strict orders not to tell anyone what had happened” despite the fact that they were “totally amazed.”¹²⁷ One has to wonder how on earth such an amazing thing could be kept from the crowd Jesus dismissed just prior to the healing.

Usually, Jesus’ instructions not to speak or to limit who was told went unheeded. Once, after healing two blind men, Jesus “sternly warned them, ‘Don’t tell anyone about this.’ But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region.”¹²⁸ After healing a demon-possessed man known as the demoniac, the man begged to go with Jesus as He prepared to leave the area. What happened next is captured in the following verses:

*But Jesus said, “No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been.” So the man started off to visit the Ten Towns of that region and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed at what he told them.*¹²⁹

The man clearly went far beyond what Jesus told him to do. The tendency for people to share what they had witnessed was captured by the apostle Mark in his description of the healing of a deaf and speech-impaired man. Mark records, “Jesus told the crowd not to tell anyone, but the more he told them not to, the more they spread the news.”¹³⁰ This echoes my experience in life. I have found that when someone pledges to not share something with anyone else, they will still tell a handful of people. We just can’t keep things to ourselves, especially amazing things like supernatural healing.

¹²⁶ Matthew 8:4.

¹²⁷ Mark 5:42-43.

¹²⁸ Matthew 9:29-31.

¹²⁹ Mark 5:19-20.

¹³⁰ Mark 7:36.

What Instructions Were Given After the Healing?

There are a number of other instructions given after New Testament healings including those that demonstrated that healing had occurred (“Hold out your hand”); one intended to restore the healed person’s strength (“Give her something to eat”); and one meant to demonstrate that a profound change had occurred in the healed person (“Get up and be baptized”).¹³¹ The table above contains all of the instructions identified in the analysis.

Old Testament healing accounts were only followed by instructions in four cases. A brief description of each is contained in the table above.

¹³¹ Mark 3:5, Mark 5:43 and Acts 22:16.

How Many Healings Were Remote?

The following table summarizes the number of New and Old Testament healing accounts that were performed remotely, i.e., where the healer was not in the same area as the person who was healed.

COUNT	REMOTE HEALINGS
4	New Testament
1	Old Testament

The New Testament contains descriptions of four remote healing accounts. Three of them involve individuals who were healed by Jesus. Jesus remotely healed a government official's son, the paralyzed servant of a Roman officer, and the demon-possessed daughter of a Gentile woman.¹³²

The only remote healing of a large number of people occurred when aprons or handkerchiefs that had touched the apostle Paul healed people who came into contact with them. The scriptures do not explicitly say that these healings were remote, though, but it seems reasonable to assume. The relevant verses are included for reference:

*God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled.*¹³³

The number of remote New Testament healings would increase by two if we included the cases where Jesus sent someone to do something and they were healed while on their way.¹³⁴

In the Old Testament, there is only one healing account that could be considered remote. It occurred when the prophet Elisha sent Naaman, the Syrian Army commander, to bath in the Jordan river seven times.

¹³² John 4:46-54, Matthew 8:5-13, and Mark 7:29-30.

¹³³ Acts 19:11-12.

¹³⁴ John 9:1-41 and Luke 17:11-19.

Were Healings Ever Preceded by an Interview?

The following table summarizes the number of New and Old Testament healing accounts where the healer questioned the sick person or a family member prior to or during a healing:

COUNT	NUMBER OF HEALINGS WHERE THE SICK PERSON OR A FAMILY MEMBER WAS QUESTIONED BY THE HEALER
6	New Testament
0	Old Testament

In all of the healing accounts, the healer was Jesus. In four accounts, He posed a question to the sick person prior to the healing. Here’s a quick summary of each:

- Just before he healed a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” Bartimaeus responded, “I want to see!”¹³⁵
- When Jesus noticed a disabled man at the pool of Bethesda, He asked him, “Would you like to get well?” After the man responded, Jesus told him to stand up and walk—and he was instantly healed.¹³⁶
- When a demon-possessed man ran to meet Jesus, Jesus demanded, “What is your name?” The demoniac responded, “My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man.”¹³⁷
- After two blind men followed Jesus into a house where He was staying, He asked them, “Do you believe I can make you

¹³⁵ Mark 10:51.

¹³⁶ John 5:1-15.

¹³⁷ Mark 5:6-9.

Were Healings Ever Preceded by an Interview?

see?” After they responded, “We do,” He touched and healed their eyes.¹³⁸

In another account, after witnessing the violent seizure of a demon-possessed boy, Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has this been happening?” After answering Jesus, the boy’s father said, “Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.” Jesus responded by saying, “What do you mean, ‘If I can’? Anything is possible if a person believes.”¹³⁹

In the sixth account, Jesus led a blind man out of a village, spat on the man’s eyes, laid His hands on him, and asked, “Can you see anything now?” When the man responded that he could see people, but not very clearly, Jesus placed His hands on the man again and his sight was completely restored.¹⁴⁰

All of these exchanges were very brief. There were no extended question and answer sessions to assess a person’s condition. Only one pre-healing question was related to a person’s sickness (“How long has this been happening?”), and some of the other questions seem a little odd—like when Jesus asked if the sick person wanted to get well.

¹³⁸ Matthew 9:27-30.

¹³⁹ Mark 9:21-23.

¹⁴⁰ Mark 8:22-26.

Data Analysis Summary

Before diving into a deeper discussion of healing, health, and wellness in the Bible, let's summarize some of the most significant findings of the healing account data analysis. This summary does not consider insights from healing-related scriptures that were discussed above. We will delve further into these in the coming chapters.

- Prayer was part of only two of the 51 New Testament healing accounts. Jesus never prayed for anyone He healed, and He never asked God to heal them. He simply healed the sick. Only twice did one of His followers pray prior to healing someone. The contents of those prayers are unknown. In one case, the prayer was followed by a command, and in the other, it was followed by touch. On one occasion following a healing, Jesus indicated that certain types of healing require prayer and possibly fasting. He provided no instructions, though, for determining when prayer is needed.
- When Jesus sent out twelve—and later, 72—disciples, He commanded them to heal—not pray for—the sick. He also told them to preach the Gospel and pray for God to send out more workers. Sending, preaching, and healing were tied together in the two healing accounts in the Gospels that did not involve Jesus as the healer.
- The most common actions that were part of New Testament healing accounts were short, bold proclamations and commands, as well as some form of touch.
- The majority of New Testament healing accounts are silent on the cause of healing.
- Faith is the most often cited reason for healing given in New Testament healing accounts, but only in 20 percent of the healings. When combined with what could be called “acts of faith,” faith explicitly and implicitly plays a role in approximately 60 percent of New Testament healing accounts.

Data Analysis Summary

- The faith of the sick person, a loved one, and the healer are all cited as factors in healings. Faith could be considered a prerequisite for healing if we assume that all the New Testament healers (i.e., Jesus, his disciples, and a few other men of note) had great faith.
- The other significant factor in healing accounts is something I call “God factors,” which includes things like God, His power, and the power He grants to others in His name.
- Repentance or the confession of sins is never mentioned as a factor in, or prerequisite for, New Testament healings.
- Old Testament healing accounts provide much more detail on the causes of sickness than New Testament healing accounts. The vast majority of sicknesses described in these accounts were due to either sin and rebellion, punishment of Israel’s enemies/oppressors, or God’s desire to teach or affect something.
- While New Testament healing accounts offer less insight into the cause of sickness, the devil, evil spirits, and even Jesus are mentioned. Sin and God are also implied in two respective accounts.
- There are a rich variety of outcomes and consequences mentioned in New Testament healing accounts. We concluded from them that healings
 - were miraculous, undeniable, awe-inspiring, and widely known.
 - validated Jesus and His disciples’ message.
 - aroused praise and worship of God.
 - revealed who God is (i.e., a compassionate, merciful, and loving God).
 - demonstrated that love and compassion are more important than the law.
 - provided a foretaste of God’s coming Kingdom, a Kingdom without sickness, pain, or death.
- A variety of ailments were healed in New and Old Testament healing accounts, and their seriousness is remarkable

HEALING PLUNGE

(including blindness, paralysis, and leprosy). In New Testament accounts, Jesus and His followers were not in the business of healing unseen minor ailments while leaving those with obvious and profound conditions unattended. Quite the contrary, The New Testament emphasizes their focus on the most challenging health issues, including sometimes raising the dead.

- Jesus is the dominant healer in Bible healing accounts, followed by God, the disciples/apostles, and a handful of other individuals. In the New Testament, only three people other than Jesus and the original twelve disciples are mentioned by name as healers—Paul, Philip, and Ananias. The apostle Luke also describes Jesus sending out 72 “other” disciples to heal the sick.
- The variety of people who were healed in Bible healing accounts is noteworthy, including individuals and crowds, men and women, children and adults, Israelites and foreigners, kings and beggars, rich and poor, commanders and servants, madmen and sane people, and army commanders and mothers.
- The speed of healing was noted in the majority of New Testament healing accounts involving single-person healings, and it was always either instant or very quick. The healings were also complete, not partial.
- In a small number of healing accounts, Jesus told the healed person(s) not to tell anyone about their healing. In an even smaller number of accounts, He told people to do the opposite. In one particular healing, He said both.
- Only one New Testament healing account ends with the healed person being told to stop sinning. Also, after healing a beggar at the Temple, Peter told the crowd to repent and believe.
- The New Testament includes far more accounts (fifteen) of people being released from spiritual oppression than the Old Testament (one).

Data Analysis Summary

- Jesus and his disciples never solicited money from the people they healed nor did they take up an offering before or after healings.
- A small number of healing accounts (four in the New Testament, one in the Old Testament) were remote, i.e., the healer was not in the same physical location as the sick person when they were healed.
- In five New Testament healing accounts, healing was preceded by one or more questions posed by the healer to the sick person or a member of their family. All of these exchanges were very brief. There were no extended question and answer sessions to assess a person's condition.
- None of the New Testament healing accounts tell us what happened to the people who were healed later in life. We have no sense if any of their ailments returned.

While the data analysis is revealing, it cannot alone give us a full picture of healing, health, and wellness. For that, we need to consider healing-related and other scriptures along with our data analysis results. We will do this in the following section.

DISCUSSION

Does God Want Us Healthy?

As we have already noted, there are those who believe that God wants Christians to be healthy and that a persistent illness/disability is a sign of a lack of faith. There are others who believe that God allows us to get sick (or even makes us sick) either to help us grow spiritually, to punish us, or because we're in a period when God's healing gifts are inactive. As proof, they point to the fact that so many believers are suffering with illness.

We've already seen in the data analysis of Bible healing accounts that there is substantial evidence that God causes sickness. We also considered the view that all sickness ultimately comes from God. In this chapter, we'll briefly look at four arguments in favor of God wanting to heal his followers and/or others. The evidence for each line of reasoning will be presented using a simple introduction followed by a list of supporting scriptures. We'll let the verses stand on their own.

A Simple View

The least complicated argument I have heard for God's desire to heal us is that it's simply who He is. There are nineteen names for God in the Old Testament,¹⁴¹ and one of them is *Yahweh Rapha*,¹⁴² which means "The Lord that heals." This name is used in Exodus 15:26 in the Old Testament shortly after God led the Israelites out of Egypt and saved them from the Egyptian army. The passage reads as follows:

[The Lord] said, "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you."

¹⁴¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/names-of-God.html>.

¹⁴² Most people use the name *Jehovah Rapha*. The name Jehovah, though, is not a proper transliteration for the original Hebrew word. For an excellent discussion of this, please visit <https://yrm.org/yahweh-or-jehovah/>.

Does God Want Us Healthy?

Every name for God describes a key facet of His character, so God is clearly a healer (among many other things). It's who He is and what He does, as demonstrated repeatedly by Jesus.

A Commandment View

When Jesus sent out His twelve disciples (and 72 other disciples on another occasion), He told them to heal the sick. This was a commandment. He didn't tell them to pray for the sick or ask God to heal the sick. He also later said that He was sending out His disciples "as the Father sent me," and healing was a huge part of Jesus' ministry. Following His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples to teach new disciples to obey all the commands He had given them and that healing would be a sign of those who believe in Him. Later, the Apostle Paul wrote that some of Jesus' followers would have a spiritual gift of healing and that spiritual gifts can never be withdrawn. The following scriptures are used to support this view:

- Luke 9:1-2,6 – *One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out all demons and to heal all diseases. Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick... So they began their circuit of the villages, preaching the Good News and healing the sick.*
- Luke 10:1,9 – *The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit. These were his instructions to them... "Heal the sick, and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God is near you now...'"*
- John 20:21 – *Again [Jesus] said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."*
- Matthew 28:18-20 – *Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations... Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."*

HEALING PLUNGE

- Mark 16:15-18 – *And then [Jesus] told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone... These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name... They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.”*
- 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,28 – *A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other... To one person the Spirit gives... the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles... Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church... [including] those who have the gift of healing...*
- 1 Corinthians 1:7 – *Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 1 Corinthians 14:1 – *Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives...*
- Romans 11:29 – *For God’s gifts and his call can never be withdrawn.*

A Consistency View

From this perspective, since God doesn’t change and He doesn’t play favorites, and because He empowered His followers to heal people during New Testament times, we should be able to do so today. In fact, Jesus healed almost every sick person who came to Him for help. (We will discuss the possible exceptions later.) One could argue that this would have included both believers and unbelievers, so we should expect healing to occur both inside and outside of the boundaries of the church. The following scriptures are used to support this view:

- Hebrews 13:8 – *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*
- James 1:17 – *[God our Father] never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*
- Deuteronomy 10:17 – *For the LORD your God... shows no partiality and cannot be bribed.*

Does God Want Us Healthy?

- Acts 10:34 – *Then Peter replied, “I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism.”*
- Romans 2:11 – *For God does not show favoritism.*
- Mark 1:40-41 – *A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. “If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean,” he said. Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!”* (Some people use this verse to indicate that it is always Jesus’ will to heal, but this is just one instance of healing. I’ll leave it to the reader to draw your own conclusions.)
- Mark 16:17-18 – *[Jesus said,] “These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe [in me]: They will cast out demons in my name... They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.”*
- 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,28 – *A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have... Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages.*

HEALING PLUNGE

A Kingdom Perspective

The Kingdom of God is the perfectly just, peaceful, and prosperous government (God's government) that will be established when Jesus Christ returns. It was partially established when Jesus first came to the earth roughly two thousand years ago. Since there will be no sickness in God's coming Kingdom,¹⁴³ some argue that there should be no sickness among Jesus' followers who have Christ living inside them. Jesus is the ruler of God's Kingdom and his presence inside of us means his Kingdom is, in a sense, already here. The following scriptures are used to support this view.

- Luke 17:20-21 – *One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, “When will the Kingdom of God come? Jesus replied, “The Kingdom of God can’t be detected by visible signs. You won’t be able to say, ‘Here it is!’ or ‘It’s over there!’ For the Kingdom of God is already among you.”* (The Greek word for among is *entos* which can mean either in your midst or inside you.)
- Matthew 12:28 – *[Jesus said], “But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you.”* (Jesus's presence gave us a foretaste of what the Kingdom of God is like, and his miracles attested to that.)
- Luke 10:1,9 – *The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit. These were his instructions to them... “Heal the sick, and tell them, ‘The Kingdom of God is near you now...’”*
- Matthew 28:18 – *[Jesus said,] “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*
- Galatians 2:20 – *It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.*
- Ephesians 3:17 – *Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him.*
- Matthew 5:3,10 – *“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is*

¹⁴³ 1 Corinthians 15:42-53, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, Isaiah 35:4-10, Revelation 21:3-4.

Does God Want Us Healthy?

- theirs... God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.”* (Two of the eight beatitudes speak of the Kingdom of God in the present tense.)
- Matthew 6:10 (KJ) – *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* (The Greek word for “come” is *erchomai*, which means to show itself, be established, and become known. Also, “thy will be done” in this context means for us to pray for God’s will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven, which would naturally include freedom from sickness. We are to be a part of God providing a foretaste of his Kingdom here on earth. This is the first thing Jesus instructs us to ask for in the Lord’s prayer, just after we have offered praise to God.)
 - Matthew 6:33 – *“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.”* (We are told to seek this Kingdom in this lifetime.)
 - Isaiah 35:5,6,10 – *And when [Jesus] comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unstop the ears of the deaf. The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will shout and sing!... Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be overcome with joy and gladness.* (There is no sickness in God’s Kingdom.)
 - Isaiah 25:7-8 – *[The Lord] will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth. He will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears.*

Each of these lines of reasoning seems sound, and taken all together, they seem to indicate that God wants believers to exercise the healing authority we’ve been given. This leads to an obvious question, though. Why don’t we see more healing around us, and why is there so much sickness among Christians and non-Christians alike? We’ll address these questions in the next chapter.

Why Are So Many People Sick?

One thing that became clear as I worked through the healing data analysis and healing-related scriptures is that healing in the Bible is not automatic, formulaic, or “at will.” In other words, it cannot be done anywhere, anytime, and under any conditions. Healing occurs according to God’s will, and His purposes are often mysterious. God heals some people and not others. Consider the following Bible passages that support this point of view:

- Mark 6:5 – *And because of their unbelief, [Jesus] couldn’t do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.* (Some say that Jesus Himself was unable to heal at times. Others claim that the lack of faith among residents of Jesus’ hometown led far fewer people to come to Him for healing, and that is the reason He only healed a few people. The latter view seems to be supported by Jesus’ own comments in Luke 4:23-24 in which He tied a challenge to perform miracles in His hometown with a prophet’s rejection there. Whatever the reason, only a few of the town’s people were healed.)
- Matthew 17:14-16 – *A man came and knelt before Jesus and said, “Lord, have mercy on my son. He has seizures and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. So I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn’t heal him.”* (The disciples were unable to heal at times. Remember, they had already been given authority to heal and had healed many people as described in Matthew 10 and Luke 6.)
- John 5:2-20 – *[At] the pool of Bethesda... crowds of sick people – blind, lame, or paralyzed – lay on the porches. One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years... Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!” Instantly, the man was healed!... So Jesus explained, “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the*

Why Are So Many People Sick?

Son also does... In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man.” (Jesus healed only one person [this man] out of many [crowds of sick people]). Also, this passage indicates that God’s will determines what Jesus does, including who He healed in this instance.)

- Galatians 4:13-15 – *Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News. But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible.* (The apostle Paul was sick at one point during his ministry. There are reasons to believe this was an eye problem that could have been a lingering effect from the stoning he suffered,¹⁴⁴ his being temporarily blinded on the way to Damascus,¹⁴⁵ or both. His use of the phrase “when I first brought you the Good News” could imply the condition was temporary. On the other hand, there are reasons to believe that an eye issue was persistent, like Paul’s writing in large letters, his use of scribes, and the fact that he regularly traveled with companions, including the physician Luke.¹⁴⁶)
- Acts 19:13-16 – *A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!” Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?” Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered.* (This example proves that healing is not something formulaic that can simply be called upon by anyone. It also

¹⁴⁴ Acts 14:19-21.

¹⁴⁵ Acts 9:1-19; 22:11-16.

¹⁴⁶ Galatians 6:11, Romans 16:22, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 3:17.

HEALING PLUNGE

supports the belief that the name of Jesus was known to possess healing power.)

- Philippians 2:25-27 – *Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you. He is a true brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier... [He] was very distressed that you heard he was ill. And he certainly was ill; in fact, he almost died. But God had mercy on him—and also on me, so that I would not have one sorrow after another.* (In this case, a believer’s illness reached a very serious point before God intervened.)
- 2 Timothy 4:20 – *Erastus stayed at Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick at Miletus.* (Paul, the worker of miraculous signs and wonders, whose handkerchief and apron healed those they touched, left a fellow believer sick in a town called Miletus. What are we to make of that? Why didn’t Paul heal him?)
- 1 Timothy 5:23 – *Don’t drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often.* (Here’s another instance where it seems a believer was not healed. There are those who believe that something was in the water supply where Timothy lived that was causing him problems, and that Paul’s advice was simply a common-sense suggestion to address a daily problem. That seems reasonable, but it doesn’t stop people from asking why Paul or someone else didn’t heal Timothy of his persistent ailment.)
- Luke 5:17 – *One day while Jesus was teaching... the Lord’s healing power was strongly with [him].* (The NIV translation says, “And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.” Some people believe this verse indicates that there are times when healing power was with Jesus, and there were times when it wasn’t.)
- Acts 12:1-10 – *About that time King Herod Agrippa began to persecute some believers in the church. He had the apostle James (John’s brother) killed with a sword. When Herod saw how much this pleased the Jewish people, he also arrested Peter... [and] he imprisoned him... But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him. The night*

Why Are So Many People Sick?

before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers... Others stood guard at the prison gate. Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter. The angel struck him on the side to awaken him and said, "Quick! Get up!" And the chains fell off his wrists... So Peter left the cell, following the angel... They passed the first and second guard posts and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and this opened for them all by itself. So they passed through and started walking down the street, and then the angel suddenly left him. (While this is not a healing story, it does show that God chooses to let one person die while another person lives. We don't know why He made these particular choices, and we don't know why one person is healed and another is not.)

Why Doesn't God Heal More Often?

Why are there so many people sick today, particularly in the church? Even in light of the exceptions cited above, we saw in the data analysis discussion that Jesus healed nearly everyone who came to him and that, despite a couple of exceptions, the disciples performed many miraculous signs and wonders. Why isn't this the state of affairs today in the church?

I believe there are four fundamental reasons for this. First, we lack faith—which played a key role in many (if not all) New Testament healing accounts. According to the Pew Research Center, 70.6 percent of Americans self-identify as Christian,¹⁴⁷ yet far too few of us know even the basics about the Bible's teaching on fundamental topics like the Gospel—not to mention healing.

As previously noted, less than four percent of healing accounts in the New Testament involved a prayer while about two-thirds of individual healing accounts involved some sort of bold proclamation or statement, and nearly half involved some form of touch. Yet I seldom see this type of behavior from Christians when confronted with a sick person. Most Christians pray for the sick by pleading with God to heal someone. This is

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>.

HEALING PLUNGE

despite the fact that Jesus sent His disciples out to heal the sick (not to pray for the sick) and to teach others to do the same. We are behaving like we either don't know or don't believe "the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him,"¹⁴⁸ or that God is able, through His power at work within us, "to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."¹⁴⁹

This reminds me of a Bible verse about human nature. Jeremiah 17:9 states that, "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" There have been countless studies that talk about how the majority of us think more highly of ourselves than we ought to. The phenomenon is known as *illusory superiority*. I was like this just before my wife filed for divorce. I thought I was a great Christian. Only after I was severely jolted by losing my wife and daughter did I realize that I was actually self-righteous, poor in spirit, and deceived. I'm convinced that the majority of Christians in the United States are like this. We think much more highly of our faith than we ought to. Our apparent disconnect with what the Bible reveals about healing would seem to be evidence of this.

My favorite Bible example of behaving boldly in the face of illness is found in Acts, Chapters 3 and 4. In the healing account, as they approached the Temple in Jerusalem, Peter and John came across a man who had been lame from birth (i.e., for more than 40 years¹⁵⁰). The man looked eagerly at them hoping to get some money, but Peter gave him something much more valuable. He looked intently at the beggar and said, "I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!"¹⁵¹ The man was instantly healed. This was not a prayer. It was a bold proclamation in the name of Christ, and they were sharing power they already had, power *we* already have.

Another example can be found in Acts 14 which describes the Apostle Paul's encounter with a crippled man in the town of Lystra. The scriptures say, "Looking straight at him, Paul realized he had faith to be healed. So,

¹⁴⁸ Ephesians 1:19.

¹⁴⁹ Ephesians 3:20.

¹⁵⁰ Acts 4:22.

¹⁵¹ Acts 3:6.

Why Are So Many People Sick?

Paul called to him in a loud voice, ‘Stand up!’ And the man jumped to his feet and started walking.”¹⁵²

We need to speak like this, i.e., like we believe we have the power that we already have, the power to accomplish the infinite and unimaginable. I think one reason we don’t do this is that we quit too easily. We try something once or twice, and when we don’t see immediate results we stop. Just as we are born with a certain amount of muscle, we are given a measure of faith.¹⁵³ And just as muscles need to be exercised frequently over long periods of time to build them up, so our faith needs to be repeatedly exercised to build it up. If we immediately quit when we don’t get the results we want, we are dramatically shortchanging our growth.

This principal became evident when I tried to extend grace to my wife in the early part of our separation. There were numerous times that I did something good and didn’t get the reaction I was hoping for. Sometimes I even got a bad reaction. Our human tendency is to throw our arms up in the air in frustration and stop trying because we assume it doesn’t work. By persevering, though, regardless of what reactions I got, I learned a huge lesson about grace. Not only is it unearned and undeserved, it’s also *unwavering*.

After Jesus healed a boy with seizures whom the disciples couldn’t heal, He told them, "You don't have enough faith... I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible." ¹⁵⁴

Now with all of this said, let me be quick to acknowledge that it’s tough to overcome our human nature—and our tendency to doubt. The apostle John recorded that, “despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him.”¹⁵⁵ Matthew notes that, even after spending three years with Jesus and watching all He had done, after encountering Him following His resurrection, some of the eleven disciples doubted.¹⁵⁶ Elijah, considered by many to be one of the two most Godly men in Old Testament history, became scared of Jezebel’s

¹⁵² Acts 14:9-10.

¹⁵³ Romans 12:3.

¹⁵⁴ Matthew 17:20.

¹⁵⁵ John 12:37.

¹⁵⁶ Matthew 28:17.

HEALING PLUNGE

threats and fled even after raising a boy from the dead, outrunning a chariot, calling down fireballs from heaven, and being fed by ravens for three years.¹⁵⁷ John the Baptist began doubting who Jesus was while sitting in prison near the end of his life, despite the fact that he baptized Jesus, heard God the Father declare Jesus as His Son, saw the Spirit descend on him, and was called the greatest person who ever lived by Jesus.¹⁵⁸ Peter, whom Jesus called the foundation of the church, and whose shadow alone could heal people, received a reprimand from the apostle Paul when he began withdrawing from Gentile believers in Antioch.¹⁵⁹

Clearly, wavering faith is something we will all contend with, no matter who we are. We are sinful people, placed in a fallen world, surrounded by other sinners, and under attack by the devil and his servants. It's no wonder we struggle.

A second reason that sickness is so prevalent is that we live in a fallen world with imperfect bodies. As previously discussed, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, humans and all creation were subjected to death and decay.¹⁶⁰ Paul describes this in his letter to the church at Rome:

*Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.*¹⁶¹

Everything God created prior to Adam and Eve's sin was good or very good.¹⁶² Once they sinned, though, death, decay, and suffering entered the world. Consider the words of pastor and author Paul Tripp:

¹⁵⁷ 1 Kings 17-19.

¹⁵⁸ Matthew 3:5 and 11:11, and John 1:29-34.

¹⁵⁹ Galatians 2:11-21.

¹⁶⁰ Genesis 12:15-17; Genesis 3:17-19,22-23; Genesis 6:3; and Romans 5:12.

¹⁶¹ Romans 8:20-23.

¹⁶² Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31

Why Are So Many People Sick?

The environment that you're living in today was not the environment that existed when God created the world. The environment that you'll one day exist in won't be the same environment that you're living in today. [When] Adam and Eve rebelled against God, Shalom was shattered; and when Jesus returns, Shalom will be fully restored. What is Shalom? In short, it means "peace." But peace is only a portion of the definition. Shalom could better be described as complete harmony, or the absence of any discord.¹⁶³

God's original world of wholeness and peace was shattered by Adam and Eve's rebellious act. As a result, all sorts of problems entered the world and began afflicting the human race like hatred, violence, war, murder, fear, greed, envy, lust, natural disasters, and sickness. *Everything* was negatively affected as the world became something it was not intended to be. This includes sickness and injury. Viruses now break out and spread, earthquakes and hurricanes injure and kill people, and our bodies suffer from disease, progressively decline, and eventually give out.

While God calls us to join Him in the restorative work of fighting things like poverty, injustice, and disease, Shalom will not be fully restored until the return of Jesus Christ. Sickness will simply be a part of the human experience until then.

A third reason for sickness is that we're sinful people who make dumb decisions that have consequences. The more people we engage in sex with, for example, the greater our chance of suffering from one or more sexually transmitted diseases. The lazier we become, the less we exercise, the greater our risk of developing a host of health problems. The more we gorge ourselves on food, the greater the risk of obesity and other issues. As the scriptures say, "A man reaps what he sows."¹⁶⁴

The dumbest thing we can do, though, is reject God. There are numerous passages in the Old Testament where God basically said, "Obey My commandments and you will have health and prosperity; disobey them

¹⁶³ *Restoring Shalom*, Paul Tripp, May 5, 2014, <https://www.paultripp.com/articles/posts/restoring-shalom>.

¹⁶⁴ Galatians 6:7 (NIV).

HEALING PLUNGE

and you'll experience sickness and trouble."¹⁶⁵ Disobedience is, essentially, sin.

King David wrote the following about God's discipline for his sin:

*O LORD, don't rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your rage... [My] health is broken because of my sins... My wounds fester and stink because of my foolish sins. I am bent over and racked with pain. All day long I walk around filled with grief. A raging fever burns within me, and my health is broken.*¹⁶⁶

In the book of Deuteronomy, disobedience to God is specifically tied to "wasting diseases, fever, and inflammation."¹⁶⁷ I find the use of the word *inflammation* to be particularly fascinating. Medical research increasingly indicates that inflammation contributes to a host of ailments including cancer, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. It's remarkable that a book written thousands of years ago is using terms that so accurately describe the cause of these maladies.

Speaking through the prophet Hosea in the 8th century B.C., God said, "I want to heal Israel, but its sins are too great... Worshiping foreign gods has sapped their strength, but they don't even know it."¹⁶⁸ An even more sobering connection between sin and judgement can be found in the book of Daniel:

*But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations. We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets... [Our] faces are covered with shame. This is true of all of us... So now the solemn curses and judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured down on us because of our sin. You have kept your word and done to us and our rulers exactly as you warned.*¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Leviticus 26:3-39 and Deuteronomy 7:12-15, 8:1&19, 26:16-19, 28:1-68, 30:19-20, and 32:15&24.

¹⁶⁶ Psalm 38:1-7.

¹⁶⁷ Deuteronomy 28:22.

¹⁶⁸ Hosea 7:1,9.

¹⁶⁹ Daniel 9:5-7,11-12.

Why Are So Many People Sick?

Evidence of the ill effect of our sinful nature on our health is everywhere. Think of the food industry that packs unhealthy and addictive ingredients into their products in order to increase their revenues and profits. Consider our healthcare industry, which profits off sick people and is minimally concerned with the prevention of sickness and disease. Consider the drug companies who turn a blind eye to the devastating effects of products like Oxycontin while aggressively pushing their sale around the world.

The three causes of illness we just discussed are fairly well known to anyone familiar with the Bible. The fourth, though, is not as obvious and helps explain a number of questions about the Bible that go beyond health and healing.

As we already noted, the Kingdom of God is the perfectly just, peaceful, and prosperous government that will be established when Jesus Christ returns. We reviewed a number of scriptures that indicate that the Kingdom of God arrived with Jesus. But this doesn't tell the whole story. A careful look at the Bible reveals that the Kingdom was only partially established when Jesus first came, and it will not be fully realized until He returns. This has huge implications for healing and many other things and enables us to explain why many promises in the Bible seem to go unfulfilled.

A good place to start building an understanding of this is the Beatitudes, a collection of verses at the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. At the outset of the sermon, Jesus said the following:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are

HEALING PLUNGE

*persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*¹⁷⁰

Notice that two of the verses state that the Kingdom “is theirs” (present tense) while the other six verses use the term “they will” (future tense). Also, the six future-tense verses are sandwiched between the two present-tense verses.

There a number of conclusions you can draw from the Beatitudes. One is that the Kingdom of God is already here in some sense and that a number of future blessings belong to those who are part of this Kingdom. Since Jesus brought the Kingdom of God with Him when He first came, and He lives in those who believe in Him,¹⁷¹ these future promises are given to those who believe in Him. An even more important conclusion is that the Kingdom of God is somehow both present and future. While the powers of the Kingdom came into the world when Jesus first arrived, there is so much more to come when the Kingdom reaches its full consummation at his second coming.

Consider how the future-tense verses are reflected in a number of Bible passages about the coming Kingdom. Verse 4 of Matthew 5 says that those who mourn will be comforted. Compare this to Revelation 21 where it says that God will, “wipe every tear from [his people’s] eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”¹⁷² Also, consider verse 9 of Matthew 5 where it says that those who work for peace will be called the children of God. Compare this with Romans 8:23 where Paul wrote, “We wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children....” Now consider where Matthew records Jesus saying (just after the Beatitudes), “In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”¹⁷³ God is our Father, and yet we are awaiting our adoption as children. It’s both now and in the future.

While Jesus said the Kingdom was already among us,¹⁷⁴ one Gospel account records Him telling a story “to correct the impression that the

¹⁷⁰ Matthew 5:3-10 (NIV).

¹⁷¹ Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 3:17.

¹⁷² Revelation 21:4.

¹⁷³ Matthew 5:16.

¹⁷⁴ Luke 17:20-21 and Matthew 12:28.

Why Are So Many People Sick?

Kingdom of God would begin right away.”¹⁷⁵ He also said, “My Kingdom is not of this world” when appearing before Pontius Pilate just prior to His crucifixion.¹⁷⁶ There are also a number of prophetic passages about the coming Kingdom, such as the passage where John wrote about future events saying, “The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord... and he will reign for ever and ever.”¹⁷⁷ Once again, it’s both now and in the future.

This unique state of being and yet still-to-come helps explain a great number of things in the Bible that don’t make sense right now. Consider the following healing scriptures:

- 1 Peter 2:24 – *[Christ] personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.*
- Isaiah 53:4-6,10 – *Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all... [His] life is made an offering for sin...*
- Matthew 8:16-17 – *That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, “He took our sicknesses and removed our diseases.”*
- Psalm 103:2-3 (NIV) – *Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.*

¹⁷⁵ Luke 19:11.

¹⁷⁶ John 18:36 (NIV).

¹⁷⁷ Revelation 11:15.

HEALING PLUNGE

These scriptures are used by “health and wealth” Christians to say that God wants us well and that we would not be sick if we only had faith. They say we are already healed and all we have to do is claim it in faith. I don’t agree with this. Here’s why.

First, the words translated to “healed” in both the Old and New Testaments can mean physical or spiritual healing, and it is sometimes unclear which one is intended. Second, the context of the passages in 1 Peter and Isaiah seem to indicate they are talking about spiritual healing, not physical healing. In 1 Peter, “by his wounds you are healed” is preceded by references to Christ personally carrying our sins and his sinless life (Verse 22). Verse 24 also ends with references to our wandering and our reorientation to our Shepherd.

In Isaiah 53, Verse 5 clearly states that Jesus was pierced and crushed because of our rebellion and sin, and Verses 6 through 10 focus only on the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sins is mentioned five times, while physical healing is not mentioned once. With this said, Matthew 8 clearly ties Isaiah 53 to an account of physical healing. So how are we to interpret this? Is it simply a reference to what Jesus would do during his time on earth?

This is where the concept of a partially established Kingdom helps us. Yes, Jesus has taken our sicknesses and removed our diseases, but this will not be fully realized until His return. Yes, He forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases as stated in Psalm 103, but we continue to sin and get sick in this life and the full measure of our healing will not occur until His Kingdom is fully established.

Also, it’s important to remember that Christ is the full embodiment of the Kingdom. Of course, He could heal everyone, yet there were times when He didn’t. And there were times when His disciples couldn’t heal. These instances of non-healing occurred when faith and fellowship were as strong and potent as they could be, and yet not everyone was healed.

It’s also important to note that the miraculous healings of Jesus were truly special. Such healings were unheard of until His time, and they validated His message. Remember what the blind man said after Jesus healed Him, as recorded in John 9. “Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not

Why Are So Many People Sick?

from God, he couldn't have done it."¹⁷⁸ If healing were commonplace or automatic, what power would it have to confirm the healer's authority or message, or to truly lead a sinner to repentance?

Pastor John Piper recently addressed the here-but-not-fully-here view of the Kingdom while discussing Bible promises that are unfulfilled in our lives and the world around us.¹⁷⁹ He concluded that all of the Bible's statements and promises will be fulfilled when Jesus returns; that all healing comes from God, and that we should look for it, ask for it, and thank him when it occurs; and that our diseases and calamities are not defeats, but they accomplish good for us and prepare us for "a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever."¹⁸⁰

God often heals through the restorative powers of our own bodies, the talents of medical practitioners, and sometimes through supernatural means. When He doesn't heal us, sickness can still teach profound lessons which bring about even more powerful healing in our souls and spirits. Only when Jesus returns, though, will the promise of no more death and disease be fully realized.

While we have powers that are beyond our imagination, healing is not "at will" and sickness abounds. There are several reasons for this, including our lack of faith, our fallen world and imperfect bodies, the consequences of sin and disobedience, and the fact that God's Kingdom was only partially established when Jesus first came.

The last point is especially crucial. Before Christ returns and fully establishes his perfect government, many of the Bible's promises will not be fully realized, including complete healing. The Kingdom of God was partially established in the lives of believers when Jesus first came and will be fully established when He returns. Believers are told to live according to His Kingdom's principals in this life in order to provide an attractive (hopefully, irresistible) foretaste of God's coming government, and to contribute to the restoration and flourishing of the world we live in.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ John 9:32-33. Also, see Mark 2:12 ("We've never seen anything like this before!"), Luke 5:26 ("We have seen amazing things today."), and Matthew 9:33 ("Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!").

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/god-heals-all-our-diseases-really>.

¹⁸⁰ Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 4:17. For examples of these truths, consider the lives of people like Joni Erickson Tada and Fanny Crosby.

¹⁸¹ Matthew 6:10 and 33, 1 Corinthians 4:20, Romans 14:17, Colossians 3:17, and Philippians 1:27.

HEALING PLUNGE

In the meantime, it's good to note that all healing—whether through a doctor's care, our body's own healing mechanisms, or a miraculous occurrence—is from God.

There's also nothing wrong with us desiring that supernatural healing would become as commonplace now as it was during Jesus' ministry and early church times. I actually yearn for that now. I'm fond of saying the following prayer that the Jerusalem believers offered up to God as recorded in the book of Acts:

*And now, O Lord... give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.*¹⁸²

¹⁸² Acts 4:24,29-30.

The Complete Person

A little over ten years ago, a young counselor named Kelly Turner was working with cancer patients when she first encountered something she calls radical remission. She defines radical remissions as cases where a person's cancer goes away either without the use of conventional treatment, using alternative treatments after the failure of conventional treatment, or through a combination of both types of treatments in the face of a dire prognosis.¹⁸³

Kelly began searching for other such cases and, to her surprise, found over a thousand in medical journals. Her disbelief was increasingly mixed with frustration, though, as she realized that conventional doctors were not interested in learning more about what these patients had done to get better. Kelly soon decided to dedicate her life to finding, analyzing, and sharing such stories.

In 2014, Kelly published a book entitled *Radical Remission, Surviving Cancer Against All Odds*. In it, she describes how she traveled extensively, conducting over 100 in-person interviews and analyzing over one thousand published cases of radical remission. She identified 75 factors that potentially played a role in healing and reduced that list to nine key factors that were mentioned far more than the others. Kelly wrote, “the majority of Radical Remission cancer survivors I study [employed] all nine of these factors, at least to some degree.”¹⁸⁴

The nine key factors are radically changing your diet; taking control of your health; following your intuition; using herbs and supplements; releasing suppressed emotions; increasing positive emotions; embracing social support; deepening your spiritual connection; and having a strong reason for living.¹⁸⁵ For me, the most fascinating thing about this list is that *only two* of the nine factors are physical (nutrition and supplements). The remainder of the list involves emotional, cognitive, and spiritual factors. This seems to cast a shadow on conventional medicine's over-

¹⁸³ *Radical Remission, Surviving Cancer Against All Odds*, Kelly A. Turner, 2014, Harper Collins.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, page 9.

¹⁸⁵ It's worth noting that exercise is not on the list. This came as a surprise to me. Kelly addressed this by noting that most people are too sick to exercise when they begin their healing journey, and that “almost all of them eventually exercise regularly.” She acknowledges that movement and exercise are essential to good health.

The Complete Person

emphasis on surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation in the treatment of cancer.

As if she's anticipating the typical arguments of Western doctors when confronted with such evidence, Kelly writes, "Radical Remission cases may not be explainable—at the moment—but they are *true*."¹⁸⁶

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Human beings are an absolute marvel in their complexity and function. This was captured beautifully by King David thousands of years ago when he wrote that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." The Hebrew words that David used to describe man and God's creativity in Psalm 139 indicate something that we should be astonished by, something that is extraordinarily difficult to design, create, and understand.

When you consider the many organs and systems that manage, regulate, and sustain each of us, it's awe-inspiring. Organs such as the eye, brain, and heart are amazing in their design, function, complexity, and elegance. There are also many systems that govern the proper functioning of a human being including the cardiovascular, pulmonary, neuromuscular, cognitive, emotional, limbic, endocrine, and adrenal systems. There's even an endocannabinoid system that regulates a host of physiological and cognitive processes as it mediates the effects of marijuana on a person. These all work together in wonderful harmony to sustain life and enable the functionality we take for granted.

An ever-increasing number of scientists, researchers, and doctors realize that in order to properly care for ourselves and promote healing when we are sick, we need to consider all of these systems and organs as an integrated whole. Among other things, this realization has led to the emergence of something called integrative medicine, a healthcare discipline that recognizes the close interplay between factors like those that Kelly Turner identified. By caring for the whole person, we can improve health, prevent disease, and treat illness.

¹⁸⁶ *Radical Remission, Surviving Cancer Against All Odds*, Kelly A. Turner, 2014, Harper Collins, page 10.

HEALING PLUNGE

The Bible reveals that, at the most basic level, every person consists of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. Theologians use words like “tripartite” to describe this. The apostle Paul wrote the following to the church at Thessalonica:

*Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.*¹⁸⁷

This verse has led many to conclude that a whole/complete person is made up of spirit, soul, and body. The apostle John seemed to support this view when he wrote that “these three are one.”¹⁸⁸

A tripartite view makes sense when one remembers that God made man in God’s image, and that God is a Trinity, i.e., God consists of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit—three parts.¹⁸⁹ This also makes sense when Paul writes that we are God’s Temple in a letter to the church at Corinth.¹⁹⁰ We know from the Old Testament that the Temple had three fundamental parts: the outer court, the Holy Place, and the innermost Holy of Holies where God dwelled. One might also conclude that the order in which the spirit, soul, and body are mentioned to believers in Corinth indicates their order of importance, with the spirit being the preeminent part (the Holy of Holies in the Temple), the body the lowest (the outer court), and the soul standing between the two. This is often represented using three concentric circles with the spirit, soul, and body represented by the innermost, middle, and outermost circles, respectively.

The body is the easiest and most obvious to grasp of the three. It’s the physical part of our being that interfaces with the material world through the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. We also experience physical pain in our bodies.¹⁹¹

The soul of a person is a little trickier to define. In the beginning of the Bible, the word soul describes a person’s entire being. Man became a living soul when God created him; a living, breathing creature. He wasn’t

¹⁸⁷ 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

¹⁸⁸ 1 John 5:7 (KJV).

¹⁸⁹ Genesis 1:26, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Matthew 28:19.

¹⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 3:16.

¹⁹¹ Job 14:22.

The Complete Person

given a soul. This is borne out by the account of man's creation in Genesis 2:7 where it says, "Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person."¹⁹² The Hebrew word for person is *nephesh*, which is translated as *soul* in the King James Version of the Bible.

Note that God used both physical and non-physical elements (dust and His breath) when He created man. This reflects the integrated nature of man. Man is neither a soul contained in a body nor a body merely possessing a soul. He is an integrated being. One interesting example of this can be found in the book of Leviticus: "The life of the body is in its blood... The life of every creature is in its blood."¹⁹³ The Hebrew word for life is also *nephesh*. This verse demonstrates the supernatural integration of our physical and non-physical beings. It also shows that the word *soul* is often used for animals.¹⁹⁴

Throughout the remainder of the Bible, the soul is also described as a non-physical entity characterized by our emotions, mind, and will. The Bible links our soul to many emotions including love, hatred, desire, joy, mourning, longing, anguish, and discouragement.¹⁹⁵ It also links our soul to matters of the mind like knowledge, memory, and humility.¹⁹⁶ Finally, it links our soul to the choices we make, our struggles with our thoughts, our decision to bless or curse others, and our choosing to wait for something.¹⁹⁷ The fact that our will is seated in our soul is incredibly important. It means that our soul determines whether or not we yield to the influence of God's spirit, our own spirit, or evil spirits.

The soul is the part of a person that serves as the conduit between our physical body and inner spirit. The soul is central to who we are. It distinguishes each of us as a person and gives us our personality.

The soul is not immortal. There are various scriptures that describe the death of the soul.¹⁹⁸ In perhaps the most important of these Bible passages, Jesus says, "Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they

¹⁹² See 1 Corinthians 15:45 as well.

¹⁹³ Leviticus 17:11,14. See also Deuteronomy 12:23.

¹⁹⁴ See, for example, Genesis 1:21, 24 and 30.

¹⁹⁵ Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Mark 12:29-30, Song of Solomon 1:7, 2 Samuel 5:8, Proverbs 13:4, Psalm 86:4, Job 14:22, Genesis 34:3 and 42:21, Numbers 21:4 (KJV all).

¹⁹⁶ Psalm 139:14, Lamentations 3:20.

¹⁹⁷ Job 6:7, Psalm 13:2 and 77:2, Psalm 104:1, Psalm 130:5.

¹⁹⁸ One example is Ezekiel 18:4 and 20.

HEALING PLUNGE

cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”¹⁹⁹ The Greek word for destroy is *apollymi*, which means to destroy fully, either literally or figuratively.

The spirit is non-physical and unseen. The Bible reveals that every living creature has a spirit that was given to it by God. This spirit gives life, and when God removes it, a living being dies. Man’s spirit was formed by God, and it returns to God when we die.²⁰⁰ It’s the “breath of life” referenced in Genesis 2:7. In this context, the spirit combines with our body to create a soul—a living creature.

The Bible also reveals that God is fundamentally spirit, and we can receive His spirit inside of us.²⁰¹ This is known as being “born of the Spirit” and occurs when a person recognizes, confesses, and repents of sin, and accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the penalty for sin.²⁰² Absent that decision and action, a person lives in a suboptimal spiritual state, guided by his own spirit and/or evil spirits.

Looked at another way, our spirit is the deepest part of our being and the place where we can experience God. It’s where we can connect with God, receive His presence and divine nature, interact with Him, and follow Him. Like a radio that can receive and “interpret” invisible electromagnetic radio waves, our spirit, when properly tuned, can “receive” and come to know God. The soul and body cannot do this. But we must make the choice to invite God’s spirit into our lives. This choice must be made in our soul according to our individual will. As a result, there are two “spirit states” of a man: one in which the spirit of man is under constant attack by the devil²⁰³ and the other in which God’s Spirit joins with our spirit and God adopts us as His children.²⁰⁴

Our spirit is most commonly thought to consist of conscience, fellowship, and intuition. Among other things, our conscience helps us judge right from wrong, deeply troubles us when we see sin and injustice, and confirms truth.²⁰⁵ Our spirit also relates to God (i.e., fellowships with

¹⁹⁹ Matthew 10:28.

²⁰⁰ Psalm 104:24-30, James 2:26, John 6:63, Job 32:8,18; Zechariah 12:1, Ecclesiastes 12:7, Acts 7:59.

²⁰¹ John 4:24, 1 Corinthians 2:11-12, 3:16-17 and 6:19-20.

²⁰² John 3:5-6, Acts 2:21,38 and 10:43.

²⁰³ Ephesians 2:2.

²⁰⁴ Romans 8:16, 2 Timothy 4:22.

²⁰⁵ 1 Corinthians 5:3, Acts 17:16, John 13:21, Romans 9:1.

The Complete Person

Him) through worship, jubilation, prayer, service, and crying out to Him.²⁰⁶

Google dictionary defines intuition as “the ability to understand something immediately, without the need for conscious reasoning. [It’s] a thing that one knows or considers likely from instinctive feeling rather than conscious reasoning.” One helpful way of viewing this is to consider what happens when the hair stands up on the back of your neck when you’re around someone bad or something bad is about to happen. You sense something without really thinking about it. That’s intuition.

The spirit of a person is something deeper than thoughts, knowledge, and imagination; feelings, love, and emotional desires; and ideas, opinion, and determination of the will. The interrelationship between the spirit, soul, and body can be viewed in a number of ways. One was set forth by a Chinese Christian minister and author named Watchman Nee. Nee likened the three parts of man to a lit-up light bulb:

Within a bulb, there is the electricity, the filament, and the light. The body is like the filament, the spirit is like the electricity, and the soul is like the light. Electricity is the source of light, and light is the consequence of electricity. The filament is a physical material for conducting electricity and for emitting the light. When the spirit and the body combine together, they produce the soul. The soul bears the characteristics of the combination of the spirit and the body; it is the product of the union of the two things. The spirit is the motivating force behind the soul, while the body is the means to express the soul.²⁰⁷

I like this analogy because of the use of light. Jesus tells us that His followers are the light of the world, and this illustration captures that.

Another analogy can be drawn using a computer (body), its software (soul), and its power source (spirit), which is nicely summarized by Timothy Jenkins in his book *The Aging Brain*.²⁰⁸ For followers of Jesus, the operating system is upgraded when we receive God’s Spirit and are

²⁰⁶ John 4:23-24, Luke 1:47, 1 Corinthians 14:15, Ephesians 6:18, Romans 1:9, Romans 8:15.

²⁰⁷ Watchman Nee, *The Spiritual Man, Vol. 1*, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, CA, 1998, page 7.

²⁰⁸ Timothy R. Jennings, MD, *The Aging Brain*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2018.

HEALING PLUNGE

connected to an uncorrupted source of power. When we die, our software is stored in the cloud, so to speak, ready for download into the new computer we will receive when Jesus returns. It is possible to erase/destroy the software, but the energy source lives forever.

We say a computer is “asleep” or “sleeping” when it is powered down. Remarkably, this is the same language that Jesus and the Apostle Paul used when describing people who had died.²⁰⁹ They knew that there are two deaths. The first is the one people experience at the end of their lives. The second is the one that affects people who don’t surrender their lives to Christ. The first death is considered sleep because everyone will eventually be resurrected for judgment. With the second death, a person ceases to exist. Watchman Nee has this to say:

The soul is the master of a person because man's will is part of the soul. When the spirit controls the whole being, it is because the soul has yielded itself and has taken a lower position. If the soul rebels, the spirit will not have the power to control it. This is the meaning of “free will” in man. Man has the absolute right to make his own decisions. He is not a machine which turns according to God's will. He has his own faculty of deliberation. He can choose to obey God's will, and he can choose to oppose God's will and to follow the devil's will. According to God's arrangement, the spirit should be the highest part and should control the whole being. Yet the main part of man's personality, the will, is of the soul. Man's will (soul) has the power to choose to let the spirit rule, to let the body rule, or to let the self rule.²¹⁰

Once we come to a genuine relationship with Christ, God’s Spirit enters us and encourages us to live in a way that pleases God. The Spirit influences our conscience in a way that bears witness to our conduct,²¹¹ good and bad. It endows us with wisdom, understanding, good counsel, power, knowledge, deep reverence for God, inner strength, love, self-control, and virtue. Its fruits are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

²⁰⁹ John 11:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 4:13.

²¹⁰ Watchman Nee, *The Spiritual Man, Vol. 1*, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, CA, 1998, page 10.

²¹¹ Romans 9:1.

The Complete Person

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.²¹² The degree to which we surrender control to God’s Spirit varies, though, so it is possible to have both “spiritual” and “carnal/worldly” believers. A table comparing the characteristics of the body, soul, and spirit is included below:

	BODY	SOUL	SPIRIT
What	Physical dwelling for the soul and spirit	Personality	Identity
Form	Physiological	Psychological	Spiritual
Primary parts	Physical organs and systems	Mind, will, emotions	Conscience, fellowship, intuition
Consciousness	World-conscious	Self-conscious	God-conscious
Relates to	Physical realm (environment)	Interpersonal realm (other people)	Spiritual realm (God, the devil, and their servants)
What dwells there	Physical senses	Self	God’s Spirit, man’s spirit, evil spirits
Is it eternal?	No	No ²¹³	Yes, given and withdrawn by God
Hurts in...	Sickness, disease, pain, and weakness	Mental anguish, emotional instability, and paralysis of will	Emptiness, hopelessness, futility, loneliness, and feeling lost
Temple equivalent	Outer court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Importance	Lowliest	In between	Noblest
Light bulb analogy	Filament	Light	Electricity
Computer analogy	Computer hardware	Software	Electricity
Hebrew (OT) words	Sarx, basar	Nephesh	Ruwach
Greek (NT) words	Soma	Psyche	Pneuma
Source	God	God	God

²¹² Galatians 5:6,22-25, Isaiah 11:1-2, Ephesians 3:16, 2 Timothy 1:7.

²¹³ This is not the opinion of the majority of Christians. For scriptures that support my position, please review the following: Matthew 10:28, Romans 6:23, John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9, Galatians 6:8, John 10:28, Psalm 145:20, Psalm 1:6, Psalm 37:9&20, Deuteronomy 30:15-18, Revelation 21:8, 1 Corinthians 1:18, John 17:12, Psalm 73:27, Acts 20:26, 2 Corinthians 4:3, Genesis 2:16-17, Philippians 3:18-19, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Ezekiel 18:4&20, 1 Timothy 6:16, John 6:51&58.

HEALING PLUNGE

The Heart

The scriptures use four principal terms to describe the immaterial parts of a man: spirit, soul, mind, and heart. We have already described the first three. Let us briefly address the heart.

A BibleGateway.com search reveals 884 occurrences of the word *heart* in the King James Version of the Bible. In some cases, it refers to the physical heart. Since the life of the body is in its blood, the primacy of the heart follows from the fact that it circulates blood throughout our bodies.²¹⁴

In the vast majority of times that the word *heart* is used in the Bible, however, it refers to the whole of our innermost being, including our thoughts, intents, emotions, and conscience.²¹⁵ The heart is a combination of our soul and elements of our spirit. As a result, it reflects who we are. This is summed up nicely in the following excerpt from a Dallas Baptist University article:

[To] know a person's heart is to know the actual person. It is the mirror image of a man or woman. As Proverbs 27:19 puts it, "As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man." Since the heart holds the key to one's essential makeup, its content and condition must be regularly examined. "Watch over your heart with all diligence," admonishes the sage in Proverbs 4:23, "for from it flow the springs of life."²¹⁶

The relationship between the heart and soul is also worth noting, and nicely summarized as follows:

The soul is the person himself, but the heart is the person in action. This means that whenever you act, you act by your heart. Therefore, we may say that our heart is our representative in

²¹⁴ Leviticus 17:11.

²¹⁵ Hebrews 4:12 (NIV), Matthew 9:4, Acts 11:23 (KJV), Genesis 6:6, John 16:6&22 (KJV), Romans 9:2-3, Psalm 13:2, Psalm 42:5, Hebrews 10:22 (KJV), 1 John 3:20 (KJV).

²¹⁶ *The Biblical Concept of the Heart*, Dallas Baptist University, 2001 Summer Institute in Christian Scholarship, July 11, 2001.

The Complete Person

action. We have something in our inner being that represents us, and this representative is our heart.²¹⁷

This is supported by Jesus where He is recorded as saying, “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks;” and, “A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart.”²¹⁸

The heart is central to and reflects man’s character, so it only makes sense that we are told to, “Guard [our] heart above all else, for it determines the course of [our] life.”²¹⁹ In the New Testament, we’re told that God’s peace will guard our hearts and minds if we pray about everything, with thanksgiving, as we “live in Christ Jesus.”²²⁰ The importance of guarding our hearts is critical.

The heart is also the place where God dwells in a believer. The Scriptures explicitly tell us that Jesus Christ and God’s Spirit both dwell in the hearts of believers.²²¹

²¹⁷ Witness Lee, *Life-Study of 1 and 2 Thessalonians*, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, CA, July 2001.

²¹⁸ Matthew 12:34 (ESV), Luke 6:45.

²¹⁹ Proverbs 4:23.

²²⁰ Philippians 4:6-7.

²²¹ 2 Corinthians 1:22, Romans 5:5, Ephesians 3:17, and Galatians 4:6.

Caring for Our Inner Being

There is no shortage of advice these days on how to best care for oneself and effectively treat disease. The Internet, television, and book sellers are teeming with resources, including a host of multi-part documentaries with titles such as *The Truth About Cancer*, *The Healing Miracle*, *The Broken Brain*, and *The Sacred Plant*.

While there is a ton of good information out there, it's a bit overwhelming. The good news is that certain core factors that impact our health are repeated over and over. These include nutrition, exercise, sleep, toxins, rest, stress, thoughts, and beliefs. It's pretty much common sense these days that we should eat a diet that is predominantly vegetables, fruit, seeds and nuts while minimizing or eliminating sugar, white flour, processed food, and animal protein; exercise and generally move more throughout each day; sleep seven-to-eight hours per night; rest and recharge during waking hours through meditation, relaxation, hobbies and fun; avoid toxins like tobacco, illicit drugs, and environmental pollutants; and minimize and eliminate stress and negative/unhealthy attitudes and beliefs.

While all these things are true and beneficial, they don't give us a complete picture. We must do more to reach a truly comprehensive state of good health that accounts for our spirit, soul, heart, and body. The Bible reveals a host of connections between things like prayer and thanksgiving and good health and peace. Let's consider an example. The apostle Paul wrote the following to the church at Philippi:

*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*²²²

²²² Philippians 4:6-7.

Caring for Our Inner Being

These verses indicate that prayer, freedom from worry, petitioning God, and thanksgiving result in peace of mind and heart. Consider another example in the Old Testament:

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart; lean not on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.*²²³

The first part of this passage links trust in God and seeking His will to His supernatural direction. The second part links humility, fear of the Lord, and the rejection of evil to healing and strength.

It occurred to me while writing this book that it would be fascinating to perform a data analysis on these correlations while searching for predominant themes. Unfortunately, this idea came to me too late for inclusion in this book. What I *will* do, however, is discuss some major factors that contribute to good health and healing that are seldom addressed in mainstream resources. These relate to the care of our soul and spirit.

Nutrition

Practices such as Bible study, prayer, and fasting are major ways in which we feed and care for the unseen parts of our being. Jesus provided an excellent example of the importance of God's Word²²⁴ at the start of His ministry when He fasted for 40 days and nights. During that time Satan tempted Him at one point by saying, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread." Jesus responded by quoting an Old Testament scripture: "People do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."²²⁵

There are several things worth highlighting in these verses. First, Jesus considered God's Word to be a form of food—spiritual food. Second, He demonstrated that He valued the Word over anything else including

²²³ Proverbs 3:5-8.

²²⁴ I treat the terms Bible, God's Word, and the Word as interchangeable from here on out.

²²⁵ Matthew 4:4, Deuteronomy 8:3.

HEALING PLUNGE

physical food offered to Him while he was *extremely* hungry. Third, Jesus used God's Word to counter a temptation thrown at Him by the devil—through the *misuse* of God's Word, no less. Finally, Jesus prepared for His encounter with Satan by fasting, which is an example of fasting's supernatural power. There is no question as to the importance of God's Word to us. Numerous scriptures point to the power of God's Word to impact our lives. Consider the following:

- John 6:63 – *“[The] very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”*
- Psalm 119:37 – *Turn my eyes from worthless things and give me life through your word.*
- Proverbs 4:20-22 – *My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. (The Message translation reads: Those who discover these words live, really live; body and soul, they're bursting with health.)*
- Deuteronomy 32:46-47 – *Take to heart all the words of warning I have given you today... These instructions are not empty words – they are your life! By obeying them you will enjoy a long life...*
- Psalm 19:7 – *The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul.*
- Romans 15:4 – *[The] Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.*
- Psalm 119:105 – *Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.*
- Colossians 3:16 (NLT 96) – *Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise.*

While I could quote many more scriptures, these are most amazing. They indicate that engagement with the Bible results in numerous benefits including life, healing, refreshment for our souls, hope, encouragement, wisdom, guidance, and power. It's truly supernatural.

Caring for Our Inner Being

The claim that engagement with the Bible has a very real impact on people's lives has been supported by actual data. One example is the REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey developed by Willow Creek Community Church. Between 2004 and 2011, Willow Creek surveyed over 250,000 people across more than 1,000 diverse congregations and published the results in a book entitled *MOVE*.²²⁶ One of the many discoveries of the survey was that, "Nothing has greater impact on spiritual growth than reflection on Scripture. If churches could do only one thing to help people at all levels of spiritual maturity grow... [they] would inspire, encourage, and equip their people to read the Bible – specifically, to reflect on Scripture for meaning in their lives... [This] is much more influential than any other practice by a significant margin."²²⁷

It's critical that we also act on what we learn when we read and reflect on God's Word. The Apostle James wrote the following:

*But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves... [If] you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.*²²⁸

I didn't really understand the practical power of God's Word until I committed to memorizing and applying it to my life. Several years ago, I decided to identify and memorize scriptures related to a challenge I was facing and recite/think about them whenever I became anxious about that issue. I found the experience to be so beneficial that I decided to repeat the exercise for a host of other issues and questions I had been wrestling with. If I was growing impatient with God, I would memorize and recite scriptures about His perfect timing. If I felt discouraged and hopeless, I internalized scriptures about the benefits of unwavering hope and courage. Before long, I had memorized a good deal of scripture. More importantly, the Bible came alive for me and I grew remarkably in my ability to endure

²²⁶ *MOVE: What 1,000 Churches Reveal About Spiritual Growth*, Greg L. Hawkins & Cally Parkinson, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, pages 19 and 117-118.

²²⁸ James 1:22-25.

HEALING PLUNGE

the inevitable storms of life. I saw the supernatural power of God's Word at work in a potent and practical way.

The process of memorizing and reciting scriptures also became a form of prayer. As I repeated verses out loud, they had an affirming effect on me. I was, in essence, speaking truth to myself and the truth became increasingly real and made me progressively stronger. I no longer consider reading and reflecting on God's Word to be Bible "study," something burdensome to be crossed off my daily to-do list. Now I strongly desire to get in the Word every day because I have seen its power to transform my life and the lives of others.

It's also worth pointing out that the Bible considers Jesus to be spiritual food and drink. Writing about the Israelites as they moved through the wilderness, Paul notes, "All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ."²²⁹ Jesus Himself said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever... Anyone who eats this bread will not die...."²³⁰

And where did Jesus get His nourishment? After speaking to the Samaritan woman at a well, Jesus said, "I have a kind of food you know nothing about... My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work."²³¹

More food for thought.

Exercise

In the first century A.D., the apostle Paul exhorted a young disciple: "[Train] yourself to be godly. Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come."²³² In the book of Acts, Paul is quoted as saying to the Governor in Caesarea, "I exercise myself to [always have] a conscience void of offence toward God and men."²³³ In these two verses, Paul is clearly talking about

²²⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:3-4.

²³⁰ John 6:51,58.

²³¹ John 4:32,34.

²³² 1 Timothy 4:7-8.

²³³ Acts 24:16 (KJV).

Caring for Our Inner Being

exercising and building up unseen things—in these cases godliness and conscience.

So how do we exercise unseen parts of our being? It turns out there are several ways, but we'll focus on one—faith—and the role that trials play in building it.

The Bible tells us that faith is the “reality of what we hope for [and] the evidence of things we cannot see,” and that every believer is given a “measure of faith.”²³⁴ It also tells us that, “[It] is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”²³⁵

A primary way we exercise and build our faith—if not *the* primary way—is through trials. Consider the following passage written by James, the brother of Jesus:

*[When] troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*²³⁶

Also, consider the following words written by the apostle Paul to the believers in Rome:

*We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.*²³⁷

One pastor uses the story of Jesus calming a storm at sea to drive home this point. He notes that God brings us into storms (i.e., trials), allows these storms to test our faith, lets us linger in these storms, and then leads us to calm waters. He notes that God's sovereignty over all areas of life means

²³⁴ Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 12:3 (KJV).

²³⁵ Hebrews 11:6.

²³⁶ James 1:2-4.

²³⁷ Romans 5:3-4.

HEALING PLUNGE

that, “Every storm is scheduled by Him, every storm is controlled by Him, and every storm finds its ultimate meaning in Him... [The] storm [that Jesus calmed] tested the faith of the disciples in the boat, not their seamanship.”²³⁸

Our faith muscle becomes weak when we respond poorly to trials, and we grow fearful, jaded, and lose trust in God. On the other hand, when we respond to our trials with confidence in God’s good purpose for them, our faith becomes strong and we are able to withstand increasing difficulties down the road.

Pastor Paul Tripp has a term to describe this process—the redemptive violence of grace. He notes that God sometimes takes us to a place where we would never go on our own to produce change in us that can only happen in that place. I have been to such places a number of times in my life, including when my wife divorced me over ten years ago, and afterward when I helped her through her battle with pancreatic cancer. I would have never chosen to go through either experience, but when I look back on them, I can see that I grew dramatically in each situation.

Sleep and rest

There is no shortage of evidence validating the importance of seven to eight hours of good sleep every night and resting/recharging during waking hours. What is less well known, though, is the role God plays in helping us achieve these things. Consider the following scriptures:

- Psalm 127:2 – *It is useless for you to work so hard, from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones.* (The Hebrew word for “rest” means sleep.)
- Psalm 4:8 – *In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, will keep me safe.*
- Matthew 11:28-30 – *Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you*

²³⁸ *Building the Faith Muscle*, Mike Mazzalongo, YouTube video, 8:45-9:30, October 23, 2016. See: <https://bibletalk.tv/building-the-faith-muscle>.

Caring for Our Inner Being

rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

- Exodus 20:8-10— *Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work.*

I'd like to zero in on the last scripture. Thousands of years ago, God commanded His chosen people to honor the Sabbath day by resting on it. They were to do this because, “[In] six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.”²³⁹ Observation of the Sabbath was also a “sign” of the special relationship that God had with Israel.²⁴⁰ While there is debate as to whether Christians are required to observe the Sabbath today, there is a growing realization that people need to unplug, recharge, and refresh periodically—and the Sabbath is a great way of doing so.

I totally get this. Many years ago, I was part of a church that formally observed the Sabbath. From sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday (the true 7th day), my wife and I would stop working and gather together with like-minded believers for church, fellowship, and fun. We fell out of this practice as we began to drift away from that particular church and, before we knew it, we were running hard, seven days a week.

Only in the last few years did I recall what a blessing a day of rest was at the end of every week, and how out of control my life had gotten. In a sense, the Sabbath forces the discipline of checking out every week and restoring our bodies, souls, and spirits. The need for this is captured beautifully by author Andrew Sullivan in an article recounting his fifteen-year descent into social media obsession. He writes:

²³⁹ Exodus 20:11.

²⁴⁰ Exodus 31:13,17.

HEALING PLUNGE

The reason we live in a culture increasingly without faith is not because science has somehow disproved the unprovable, but because the white noise of secularism has removed the very stillness in which it might endure or be reborn.

The Judeo-Christian tradition recognized a critical distinction—and tension—between noise and silence, between getting through the day and getting a grip on one’s life. The Sabbath... was a collective imposition of relative silence, a moment of calm to reflect on our lives under the light of eternity. It helped define much of Western public life once a week for centuries – only to dissipate, with scarcely a passing regret, into the commercial cacophony of the past couple of decades. It reflected a now-battered belief that a sustained spiritual life is simply unfeasible for most mortals without these refuges from noise and work to buffer us and remind us who we really are.²⁴¹

I began observing a weekly day of rest again a few years ago, this time on Sundays. I make sure I do no formal work. I just go to church and lunch with my daughter and generally walk through the day at a far more leisurely pace than on the other six days of the week. I also make a point of connecting/reconnecting with friends on that day and enjoying some quality fellowship. It has made a huge difference in my life, and I can’t imagine my life without this peaceful, sacred time.

Beliefs and thoughts

The Apostle Paul instructed the Romans as follows: “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”²⁴²

There are numerous ways we can change our thinking. Perhaps the most important is sober thinking. Jesus once said, “Healthy people don’t

²⁴¹ *I Used to be a Human Being*, Andrew Sullivan, New York Magazine, September 19, 2016. See: <https://slct.al/2G1knX1>.

²⁴² Romans 12:2.

Caring for Our Inner Being

need a doctor – sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”²⁴³ Jesus also said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”²⁴⁴

When it comes to spiritual and soul healing, what we think about our condition is of paramount importance. If we want to heal, we must first recognize that we need a doctor—that we are spiritually and morally broken. These are the poor in spirit, and they mourn the fact that they are so. In the words of John Piper, “Blessed are the people who feel keenly their inadequacies, and their guilt and their failures and their helplessness and their unworthiness and their emptiness—who don’t try to hide these things under a cloak of self-sufficiency, but who are honest about them and grieved and driven to the grace of God.”²⁴⁵ Such people live in a state of spiritual well-being and prosperity that doesn’t make sense in our world but makes perfect sense in God’s Kingdom.

In addition to sober thinking, we also need God-focused and surrendered thinking. Consider the following scriptures:

- Isaiah 26:3 – *You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! (“You” in this verse is God.)*
- Matthew 6:31-34 – *“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”*
- Ephesians 4:21-24 – *Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted*

²⁴³ Mark 2:17.

²⁴⁴ Matthew 5:3-4 (NIV).

²⁴⁵ *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit Who Mourn*, John Piper sermon, DesiringGod.org, February 2, 1986.

HEALING PLUNGE

by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

Fixing our thoughts on God and trusting him leads to things like perfect peace, receiving everything we need, and holiness and righteousness. These are truly supernatural benefits.

While there are certainly other changes we can make in our thoughts and beliefs, I'll close this section with Paul's final exhortation in his letter to the Philippian church:

*Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.*²⁴⁶

Toxins

There is growing understanding of the negative effects that toxins have on our physical and mental health. While our immune system is a marvelous detoxifier, it has become increasingly overwhelmed by the staggering amount of chemicals we ingest, breathe, and otherwise encounter on a daily basis. As a result, more and more healthcare professionals are recommending various detoxification programs to cleanse our systems, restore normal functioning, and help us heal and thrive.

In the same way, there are spiritual toxins that harm our spirit, soul, and body. The overarching toxin that needs to be dealt with is sin, which is basically rebellion against God and His will. Sin includes aspects such as jealousy, outbursts of anger, deceit, hypocrisy, selfish ambition, hostility, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, unkind speech, idolatry, sexual immorality, and many other things.²⁴⁷ There is no question that behaviors and attitudes like these hurt us spiritually and physically.

²⁴⁶ Philippians 4:8.

²⁴⁷ Galatians 5:19-21 and 1 Peter 2:1.

Caring for Our Inner Being

The remedy for sin is repentance, belief in the Gospel, and trust that God will help us overcome. This is no small challenge in light of our sinful nature. Consider the following scriptures:

- Jeremiah 17:9 – *The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked.*
- Romans 8:7 – *[Our] sinful nature is always hostile to God.*
- Galatians 5:17 – *The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what [God’s] Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other...*
- Genesis 6:5-6 – *The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil... It broke his heart.*
- 1 Peter 2:11 – *[Your] worldly desires wage war against your very souls.*

The good news is that, “[We] can do everything through Christ, who gives [us] strength.”²⁴⁸ The Bible reveals that when we place our faith in Christ we undergo a surgical procedure where He cuts away our sinful nature.²⁴⁹ It reveals that if we submit our minds to the control of God’s Spirit we will experience life and peace and the Spirit will produce the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in our lives.²⁵⁰

Another toxin to consider is unforgiveness. All religions value forgiveness, but the Christian religion *requires* it. The Apostle Paul wrote, “Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”²⁵¹ Jesus said we should pray to God to, “forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.”²⁵² He also said that, “If you forgive

²⁴⁸ Philippians 4:13.

²⁴⁹ Colossians 2:11.

²⁵⁰ Romans 8:6 and Galatians 5:22-23.

²⁵¹ Colossians 3:13.

²⁵² Matthew 6:12.

HEALING PLUNGE

those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”²⁵³

God’s forgiveness of our sins, a crucial aspect of our lives as followers of Jesus Christ, is tied to our forgiveness of others. If we want to receive the spiritual healing that comes with forgiveness, we must freely forgive those who have hurt and offended us. Whether we’re talking about repentance, forgiveness, or any other form of spiritual detoxification, they all involve choice. Consider the words of the Apostle Paul:

*Don’t be misled... You will always harvest what you plant. Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.*²⁵⁴

There is one more thing I would like to consider that offers tremendous benefits to all three parts of our being. That thing is fasting, and I will cover it in the next chapter.

²⁵³ Matthew 6:14-15.

²⁵⁴ Galatians 6:7-8.

Fasting

Starting in the fall of 2012, my dad's health began a rapid descent. It started when he fell in the garage of his building, and doctors later discovered that he had a heart attack which caused him to briefly lose consciousness. The fall, heart attack, and resulting week-long hospital stay significantly weakened him.

He fell again at the start of the New Year and broke his hip. He wound up back in the hospital and had hip replacement surgery. When he woke up in the recovery room, he was completely deaf. He was already deaf in one ear and had substantial hearing loss in the other before surgery. Now he had no hearing at all. And to make matters worse, something about his broken hip and the surgery exacerbated his emerging memory loss.

Over the next nine weeks, he would bounce between rehab centers, hospital rooms, and various levels of intensive care. Among other things, he contracted a MRSA infection, developed a stage four bedsore near his tailbone, had a pulmonary embolism, had extremely poor vision, and was in a highly weakened state. He was in bad shape.

Parallel to these events, my daughter was accepted to three fashion design schools in New York City, and it appeared she would be moving to either Manhattan or Brooklyn. I had never imagined her living somewhere like that, and I was repulsed at the thought of her living in one of the funky dorm rooms we had seen during tours of each college.

For some reason, my dad's illness and my daughter's looming departure got me thinking more seriously about fasting. I already had experience with the "spiritual discipline" of fasting. I attended an overly Old Testament-focused church during my late twenties and early thirties, and we observed the Day of Atonement, which requires 24 hours of fasting. They also encouraged people to fast more frequently as a spiritual exercise, so I did it two or three times every year.

Something gave me a sense that I would draw closer to God and gain spiritual and physical strength if I fasted more often, but I couldn't really articulate it. So, I prayed about it. I asked God to show me if He wanted me to fast more frequently and, if so, how He wanted me to do it.

Fasting

Not long after I began praying, I stumbled across a PBS special called *Eat, Fast, and Live Longer* in my cable programming guide.²⁵⁵ I thought, *That sounds interesting*, and I programmed my DVR to record it when it came on. A couple of weeks later, coincidentally at the end of a day-long fast, I plunked myself down in front of the TV and scrolled through the programs I had recorded. I saw the show on fasting, which, frankly, I had forgotten I had recorded. I hit the play button, and what I saw was pretty striking.

The host of the program, Michael Moseley, is a former medical doctor (M.D.) who now produces documentaries. His wife is a practicing M.D. Michael began the program by interviewing a 101-year-old Punjabi man running the London Marathon. The man has never had surgery, doesn't take medication, and is incredibly fit for his age. Michael asked him through an interpreter what he did that made him so healthy and vigorous for his age. The man responded that all he does is limit his food intake. He said that in poor countries people starve to death, and in rich countries people die of overeating.

The program then shifted to the United States. Michael noted that from 1929 to 1933, the life expectancy of Americans increased by six years, a significant statistical change. This was during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl period when food was in short supply. Michael wondered if some form of voluntary caloric restriction could have benefits for people in Western cultures. The answer, he would discover, is yes.

The remainder of the documentary featured interviews with leading researchers who have discovered a number of amazing benefits to periodic fasting. One of the more profound discoveries is that fasting lowers the level of a growth hormone called insulin-like growth factor one (IGF-1) in our blood, which in turn significantly lowers the likelihood of developing illnesses like heart disease and cancer. Other research indicates that fasting causes brain cells to regenerate, and studies done at Cornell University found that severely restricting the food intake of mice leads them to live significantly longer.

After considering a number of fasting regimens, Michael began an informal experiment where he fasted two days per week for five weeks.

²⁵⁵ As of 10/25/19, see <https://vimeo.com/259080453>.

HEALING PLUNGE

On each fast day, he restricted his eating to one meal consisting of 600 or fewer calories. He also wasn't terribly rigid about which days he fasted, allowing himself to vary those days each week.

At the end of his five-week trial, Michael had lost over twelve pounds, which seemed to make him a touch giddy. He also mailed a blood sample to one of the researchers (a professor from the Washington University School of Medicine) who had examined him at the beginning of his research, and the professor reported back that Michael's bloodwork had dramatically improved. He said the fasting had made a great impact on his cardio/metabolic health. Michael's IGF-1, glucose level, and cholesterol all made significant improvements. The Professor said his glucose improvement was "fantastic." He concluded that Michael had lowered his risk of developing illnesses like heart disease and cancer in just five weeks.

At the end of the documentary, Michael was shown introspectively looking out at his back yard. It seemed as if his experiences had filled him with a sense of hope and wonder. He concluded by saying, "The results have been absolutely fantastic for me... I plan to go on [fasting]... Fasting is the first thing I have come across that I genuinely believe that if people were to take it up it could radically transform the nation's health. I hope we continue to see massive research going into this territory. Doing this fasting has been one of the most interesting, no, I say *the* most interesting sort of journey/film that I have been on, and I have never said that before."²⁵⁶ (Emphasis mine.)

Fasting in the Bible

I have counted 55 passages in the Bible that mention fasting or describe stories of fasting. Thirty-nine of these can be found in the Old Testament where fasting was commanded on the Day of Atonement;²⁵⁷ used to petition God for something;²⁵⁸ sometimes done while mourning;²⁵⁹ done as an expression of humility, confession, and repentance before

²⁵⁶ As of 10/25/19, see <https://vimeo.com/259080453>, 56:30 to 58:20.

²⁵⁷ Leviticus 16:29-31, Numbers 29:7.

²⁵⁸ Judges 20:26, 2 Samuel 12:16-23, 1 Kings 21:25-29, 2 Chronicles 20:3. Esther 4:3,15-16, Ezra 8:21-23, Psalm 35:13, Daniel 9:3, and Jonah 3:5.

²⁵⁹ 2 Samuel 1:12, Ezra 10:6, Nehemiah 1:3-7.

Fasting

God;²⁶⁰ and was something two of the greatest Old Testament prophets did for 40 days.²⁶¹ God even rewarded a very wicked person for fasting when he delayed destroying King Ahab's family until after the King was dead.²⁶² It almost always involved no food or drink whatsoever.

Sixteen fast-related passages are in the New Testament. The very first thing that Jesus did after He was baptized was fast. This is recorded in three of the Gospels.²⁶³ Out of all the things He could have done at the start of His earthly ministry, and as He prepared for His encounter with Satan, He was led by God's Spirit to fast. This is remarkable.

Jesus also talked of fasting as if it would be a given in a Christian's life. He said His followers would fast after He was gone,²⁶⁴ and gave instructions for what to do when they fasted.²⁶⁵ Fasting was the thing that the Apostle Paul and other early church leaders were doing when they were directed by God's Spirit to send Paul on his first major mission trip.²⁶⁶ This trip played a major role in the initial spread of Christianity. A few years prior to this, Paul also fasted when he was blinded for three days while traveling to Damascus, and his sight was restored at the end of the fast.²⁶⁷

In one Gospel story, the disciples urged Jesus to eat while He was waiting for people as they streamed out of the village of Sychar to meet him. He responded by saying, "I have food you don't know about... My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work."²⁶⁸ I believe this is a story about fasting and about getting our priorities straight when we are confronted with an opportunity to share or display the Gospel. Jesus knew there was a group of people coming to hear His words of life. It was not a time for grabbing a bite to eat.

Fasting was something that was done under serious circumstances and carried supernatural power. It only makes sense that God would build supernatural health benefits into it. In his book, *A Hunger for God*, John

²⁶⁰ 1 Samuel 7:6, Nehemiah 9:1-3.

²⁶¹ Exodus 24:18, Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 9:9-18, 1 Kings 19:8.

²⁶² 1 Kings 21:25-29.

²⁶³ Matthew 4:2, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-2.

²⁶⁴ Mark 2:20, Matthew 9:14-15, Luke 5:33-35.

²⁶⁵ Matthew 6:16-18.

²⁶⁶ Acts 13:2.

²⁶⁷ Acts 9:9.

²⁶⁸ John 4:31-34.

HEALING PLUNGE

Piper notes that it's apple pie rather than poison that keeps us from developing a desire for God.²⁶⁹ He uses one of Jesus' parables to make his point:

*Jesus replied with this story: "A man prepared a great feast and sent out many invitations. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servant to tell the guests, 'Come, the banquet is ready.' But they all began making excuses. One said, 'I have just bought a field and must inspect it. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I have just bought five pairs of oxen, and I want to try them out. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'"*²⁷⁰

This story is just as relevant now as it was when Jesus told it. All you have to do is substitute a Lexus for newly bought oxen, or a finished basement for a field. The point is, it was good things that kept people from the banquet. Piper writes, "The greatest adversary of love [for] God is not his enemies but his gifts."²⁷¹ One of those gifts is food, and we have become absolutely obsessed with it in wealthy countries. We seem to live to eat rather than eat to live.

In the parable cited above, Jesus later says, "none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet." These are sobering words. We need to take a hard look at our lives and ask what good things have come to interfere with our relationship with God.

My Experience

After praying about fasting, watching Michael Moseley's documentary, and reading John Piper's book, I felt led to fast every three days. I ate nothing and drank only water up until dinner on the fast days. I ate dinner between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of each fast was to declare that I desired a relationship with God, and the return of his Son, so much that I was willing to

²⁶⁹ *A Hunger for God*, John Piper, Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1997, page 14.

²⁷⁰ Luke 14:16-20.

²⁷¹ *A Hunger for God*, John Piper, Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1997, page 14.

Fasting

periodically deny myself a good thing like food. As a result, I focused more on prayer and Bible study on fast days than I did on non-fast days.

I first decided to fast like this for a year, but soon felt led to do it for three years. At the time of this writing, I have now been doing it for nearly six-and-a-half years and have no plans to stop.

Besides the primary benefit of my increased focus on God, I also experienced some amazing health benefits. Prior to my divorce, I typically weighed between 188 and 190 pounds, and I reached 200 pounds on one occasion. I also swam a mile-and-a-half two or three times a week, and often went skating for two hours at a time with my daughter. I thought I was in pretty good shape. Unfortunately, though, I seemed to always be sick. I would get *at least* four or five colds per year, every year.

As my fasting stretched out over months and years, a funny thing happened. I stopped getting sick. At the time I began writing this chapter, I had contracted one single cold in four-and-a-half years. Also, my weight dropped to 165 pounds with no changes to my diet. (It had already dropped about ten pounds after my divorce, but before I began fasting). At this weight, I'm right in the middle of the normal BMI range for my height. Furthermore, my weight loss was achieved even though I had to stop swimming due to an arm injury.

At one point during my fasting, I went for a physical exam for the first time in four years. My doctor at first seemed oddly bothered with how I looked. When I pointed out where I was on the BMI scale, he simply shook his head and said, "I guess I just don't ever see anyone like you these days." *Isn't that amazing?* I thought. We don't even know what normal weight looks like in America anymore. At the end of the day, my lab results were excellent, and I was given a clean bill of health.

Benefits

According to one physician, "Fasting is unquestionably, without any micro doubt, the most profoundly powerful metabolic intervention you can

HEALING PLUNGE

possibly do.”²⁷² Another healthcare professional calls fasting a “miracle” and “God’s original medicine.”²⁷³ These are pretty bold words.

What would lead someone to make such statements? Well, it turns out that there is a great deal of research and evidence demonstrating the amazing benefits of fasting. These benefits include the acceleration of the process whereby our bodies move from burning sugar to burning fat for fuel, the stimulation process known as autophagy whereby the body cleans up and recycles unused and damaged cells for nourishment, and the promotion of stem cell growth when we start feeding again following a fast. These things are incredibly important in the fight against disease and obesity.

A detailed review of the research is beyond the focus of this book. I will, though, provide two things for the reader. First, two of the smartest people I came across in my fasting studies were Dr. Valter Longo, a well-known fasting researcher and the Director of USC’s Longevity Institute, and Jason Fung, a practicing physician specializing in nephrology (i.e., kidney care and treatment) who has helped over one-thousand diabetics achieve remarkable improvements with fasting. The footnote below contains information on two books I recommend on the topic—one from Valter Longo and the other by Jason Fung.²⁷⁴

Second, in his book, *The Obesity Code*, Jason Fung describes what fasting is, discusses its benefits, and addresses some of the myths surrounding it.²⁷⁵ Here is a short list of some of his most interesting points:

- Fasting is extremely healthy for you.
- A fast is simply when a person stops consuming all calorie-containing foods and beverages.
- Hunger is not persistent during fasting but instead comes in waves that typically subside after the first two or three days of a prolonged fast.

²⁷² *The Most Important Steps You Need to Take if You Have Cancer*, presentation by Dr. Joseph Mercola at the 2017 Truth About Cancer conference in Orlando, FL.

²⁷³ *Fasting, the Healing Miracle!* presentation by Dr. Edward Group at the 2017 Truth About Cancer conference in Orlando, FL.

²⁷⁴ *The Longevity Diet*, Valter Longo, PhD, 2018, Avery/Penguin Random House, New York, NY.; *The Complete Guide to Fasting: Heal Your Body Through Intermittent, Alternate-Day, and Extended Fasting*, Jason Fung and Jimmy Moore, 2016, Victory Belt Publishing, Las Vegas, NV.

²⁷⁵ *The Obesity Code*, Jason Fung, MD, 2016, Greystone Books Ltd., Vancouver, BC Canada.

Fasting

- Fasting is not starvation. Starvation is not knowing when you'll eat again. Fasting is voluntarily choosing not to eat and when to do so.
- Your body does not go into starvation mode and hang onto fat while fasting. Instead, your body switches from burning sugar to burning fat which leads to weight loss.
- It can take as long as 200 days before you burn all your fat stores. Only when these stores are exhausted will your body burn muscle, so concerns about muscle loss are unjustified.
- Basal metabolism actually *rises* while fasting and many people report having *more* energy during a fast.
- People save lots of time while fasting because they don't have to get, prepare, eat, and clean up after meals. Some people go as far as to say that fasting greatly simplifies their lives.
- Exercise is encouraged during fasting. The body does not need food for energy to work out. Rather, the liver provides energy through gluconeogenesis.
- People typically perform at a higher mental level while fasting. Great thinkers like Plato, Socrates, and Pythagoras were said to have fasted for prolonged periods to improve their mental performance, and Pythagoras had his students fast before entering his classes.
- Fasting lowers insulin and blood sugars more powerfully than anything else. Given insulin's central role in regulating body weight, this is hugely beneficial. When you don't eat, your blood sugar goes down and you lose weight. Period.
- Fasting is the simplest way to improve your health. It costs nothing, takes no time, requires little planning, and you can combine it with any diet.
- When you eat, you tell your body to store fat. You need periods to let your body digest food.
- Successful fasting is intermittent because our lives are intermittent.

Arnold Ehret, who lived in the 1800s, completed numerous long-term fasts and wrote extensively on detoxification, fasting, and longevity. Ehret

HEALING PLUNGE

called fasting, “nature's only, universal and omnipotent remedy of healing.”²⁷⁶ He noted that humans are the sickest animals on earth and, unlike other animals, consume far more food than we need. He believed we are literally dying from the energy required to digest the excessive food we eat—even eating while sick when every other species fasts.

As we've already seen, Jesus kicked off His ministry with a 40-day fast. When tempted by the devil to turn a stone into bread, Jesus refused while quoting the Bible. Jesus, in a sense, passed a food test. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Christians and non-Christians fail this test. Most of the time when I mention fasting, I'm met with either resistance or indifference. People don't want to give up their food for a moment, and are obsessed with its pleasures, as evidenced by the proliferation of food channels on TV, gourmet food stores, and our growing waistlines. We seem to be gluttons through and through.

At the start of a documentary called *Fasting*, one person said, “We're looking for the quick fix, we're looking for that magic bullet [to address what ails us]. Fasting is probably as close to an easy, simple, free magic bullet that ever existed.”²⁷⁷

I urge readers to think and pray about this.

²⁷⁶ *The Mucusless Diet Healing System*, Arnold Ehret, 1994, Ehret Literature Publishing Company, Inc., Ardsley, NY, page 142. See: http://www.truthseekerz.com/Arnold_Mucusless_Diet.pdf for a PDF version of the book. Available as of 10/26/19.

²⁷⁷ *Fasting* documentary, directed by Doug Orchard, Doug Orchard Films, LLC, 2017. See www.fastingmovie.com.

The Gospel and Ultimate Healing

I once saw a missionary speak at an event where he held up a bottle of water and exclaimed, “This is water. It’s perfect. It’s always refreshing and always good for you. It has no calories. It cleanses you internally, and when you bath in it you feel clean and refreshed.” Then he held up a can of Coke and said, “This is also water, but we’ve added a bunch of stuff to it. The more of it you drink, the sicker you get. It’ll make your teeth rot, eat a hole in your stomach, and make you fat. If you bathe in it, you’ll feel sticky and awful.” He held up the water bottle again and said, “This is Jesus Christ.” Then he held up the Coke can and said, “This is Christianity.”²⁷⁸

I have never heard a better explanation of what ails Christianity. It seems that we’ve added so much garbage to Jesus that we barely recognize Him or understand His core message, the Gospel, and what we’ve created is actually quite harmful. So, let’s cut through the garbage and clarify what the Gospel is and its relation to healing.

The Gospel

The word “Gospel” appears 101 times across 95 verses in the King James version of the New Testament. It appears in both noun form, where it means “good news,” and verb form, where it means to bring good news. This good news is that, while we are *all* sinners and subject to God’s judgement, we can be reconciled to God through Jesus’ sacrifice, adopted into his family, and given all the rights that come along with being his sons and daughters. Consider the following scriptures:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 – *Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before... It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you... I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried,*

²⁷⁸ Jamie Winship speaking at Christian Fellowship Church in Ashburn, VA on March 25, 2011.

The Gospel and Ultimate Healing

and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.

- Romans 1:16-17 – *For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes – the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith.*

So, belief in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins and his resurrection has the power to make us right in God's sight and save us. But why do we need to be saved, and from what do we need to be saved? Here are more scriptures to consider:

- Romans 3:23 – *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*
- James 2:10 – *For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws.*
- Romans 6:23 – *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- John 3:16 (NIV) – *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*
- Ephesians 2:8-9 – *God saved you by his grace when you believed [in Christ's sacrifice and resurrection]. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*
- Acts 20:20-21 – *I [Paul] never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes. I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike – the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.*
- Acts 4:8,12 – *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said... There is salvation in no one else [other than Jesus Christ]! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.*

HEALING PLUNGE

- Roman 10:9 – *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.* (The Greek word for saved is *sozo*. While it's mostly used for salvation in The New Testament, it is also used for healing and making whole.)
- Romans 5:8 – *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

In short, we are all sinners and under a death penalty. God sent Christ to die in our place. If we recognize our sinfulness, repent of it, and accept Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection, we are given eternal life that is free from sin, pain, suffering, war, and tears.

Some theologians have said that the Gospel is actually almost-too-good-to-be-true news given how fantastic it is. Even though we do nothing to deserve it and there is no way we can earn it, God is willing to forgive and forget all our sins if we simply accept what Jesus has done for us.²⁷⁹

Love and justice

God is creating a family, and He is doing it through us.²⁸⁰ At the outset of this process, He placed the first two people He created in Paradise. He gave them everything they could possibly desire and imposed only one single rule on them. The consequence of violating that rule would be deadly. This He clearly told them.²⁸¹

We similarly set limits on our kids all the time for their health, safety, and well-being. When they begin to crawl, we try to keep them from sticking their fingers in electrical sockets or swallowing house cleaning products. We do everything in our power to prevent them from being injured or killed. Do babies comprehend why we set limits on them or the dire consequences of violating those rules? Of course not. But that doesn't

²⁷⁹ Romans 3:23-28, 4:4-8, and 5:12-21.

²⁸⁰ 1 John 3:1, Ephesians 1:5, Galatians 3:26 and 4:4-5, Romans 8:14,19,21,23; Matthew 5:44-45, Hebrews 2:14, Genesis 1:28 and 9:1, and Jeremiah 29:6.

²⁸¹ Genesis 2:15-17.

The Gospel and Ultimate Healing

take away from their reality and importance and the serious consequences of violating them.

It was much the same for Adam and Eve, and it's the same for us. We don't fully comprehend why sin is so terrible or its deadly consequences, but that doesn't make these things untrue or unfair. It demonstrates two key attributes of God—His perfect love and righteousness. God is so just that He simply cannot allow sin to go unpunished, yet He loves us so much that He provided a substitutionary sacrifice for each of us that is amazingly simple for us to claim.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed their one rule, sin and death entered humanity and our hearts became deceitful and rebellious.²⁸² This deceit and rebellion leads us to make poor choices that lead to sickness and unhappiness, and eventually, to eternal destruction.²⁸³ But God loves us so much that He was willing to provide a way out for us—one that doesn't depend on how good we are or how hard we work.²⁸⁴ And the price He paid was higher than we could imagine. He sent His one and only son to take on human form, live a life of hardship, and be horribly beaten, humiliated, and crucified.²⁸⁵ He did this so that His death would pay sin's death penalty for anyone who accepts it. It was and is the ultimate expression of grace.

This is the essence of the Gospel, and it is indeed almost-too-good-to-be-true news. If we simply recognize, confess, and repent of our sinful nature, and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sins, we are forgiven every sin we have committed and ever will commit. Our death sentence is removed. We are adopted into God's family with all the rights and privileges that come with it, and we are given eternal life. The Gospel has the power to heal our relationship with God, which is the ultimate form of healing. All other forms of healing pale in comparison.

²⁸² Romans 5:12, Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 8:7.

²⁸³ See footnote 215 on page 110 for supporting scriptures.

²⁸⁴ Ephesians 2:8-9.

²⁸⁵ Philippians 2:5-8.

Conclusions

I have never seen someone miraculously healed of a serious condition like complete blindness, paralysis, or advanced terminal illness, and I have never seen anyone raised from the dead. I have also never been told by someone I deeply trust that they have either experienced such a healing or know someone who has. I have attended healing conferences and seminars hosted by representatives from well-known healing ministries, but I have never seen anyone with cancer or Alzheimer's healed. There were, admittedly, people at these events who claimed healing from various ailments, such as back pain or numbness in their legs. But nothing happened that mirrored the power, completeness, and speed of the healings that Jesus and His disciples were a part of.

Despite these experiences, though, I came away from my research and analysis believing more than ever in miraculous healing. One might logically ask, "Why?" I'm convinced that one big reason is what I learned about healing over the ten years following my separation and divorce from my wife, Diane. Just one day after she moved out from our home, God started revealing the realness, power, practicality and beauty of His grace to me, and I committed to extending that grace to her no matter what. Even though we were enemies at the end of our marriage, I decided to serve her regardless of what she, her lawyer, or anyone else said or did. What resulted from that decision is what I can only describe as the supernatural healing of our relationship.

This made me realize the importance of healing our relationships with others, which I believe is second in importance only to the healing of our relationship with God. When Diane was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, I dove in to help her without a moment of hesitation, and I continued to support her as she battled her disease for 21 months, eventually moving in with her during the last two months of her life. When she died, I was sitting on the edge of her bed with our daughter, gently stroking her leg and telling her how much I loved her, how proud I was of her, and what a great wife and mom she had been. It was both painful and breathtakingly beautiful. Our relationship had been fully restored.

Conclusions

When we experience serious illness or chronic, debilitating health problems, it affects us in a visceral way. Our physical suffering can easily and understandably become the dominant theme of our lives. But the Biblical truth is that no matter how sick we are in this life it doesn't compare with the wonderful things that await us in God's Kingdom once our relationship with Him is restored. Our illnesses also don't compare to the healing of deep divisions between people, groups of people, and nations.

Throughout Diane's illness, I proclaimed healing over her many times, and so did other people. After she died, I proclaimed healing over her body, but nothing happened. In the end, though, this is insignificant. I'll see her again in God's Kingdom where we will live forever with no more sin, sickness, pain, or tears. How cool is that?!

The healing of my relationship with Diane dramatically deepened my trust in God's Word. By following its mandate to love my enemy and to care unwaveringly for someone who hadn't earned it, I saw how real and practical the Bible's teaching about grace is, and I committed to believing God's Word regarding healing and anything else.

Our analysis and broader discussion strongly indicate God's willingness to physically heal people, but it's exceedingly rare in our present age. In the Old Testament, God promised health and blessings to those who obeyed Him and sickness and curses to those who didn't. But no one could fully satisfy the requirements of the law, and history is littered with proof of Israel's rebellion and suffering.

Christ's arrival, death, and resurrection commenced a new covenant. Jesus died so that we would be forgiven our sins and healed of our diseases. But there are challenges here as well, including our sin, fallen world, and lack of faith. We also live in a transitional state between the arrival of God's Kingdom and its full realization when Jesus returns.

Regarding our faith, more needs to be said. There are those who assert that it is simply not enough to accept Jesus' sacrifice and pass from death to eternal life. They believe there is a transition from being a carnal Christian (i.e., a babe in Christ) to a spiritual one who understands that our sinful nature has truly been crucified and walks anew in that truth. I believe far too many of us are stuck in carnal Christian mode and it prevents us

HEALING PLUNGE

from realizing the power we have. Even worse, our hearts are deceived, and we think far better of ourselves than we ought to.

Furthermore, we have lost the connection between healing and going out to people and preaching. God is not in the business of healing people so they can simply eke out a few more years of uninspired, selfish living. Everything He does is for His glory and the advancement of His purposes. We need to place our focus on that, and our other needs will be provided. And we need to get out of our comfort zones and engage people with the Good News of the Kingdom and Jesus' sacrifice rather than waiting for them to come to us. Remember the believer's prayer that was recorded in Acts 4:29-30:

And now, O Lord... give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

With these things said, here are my overall conclusions from my healing research and analysis:

- The ultimate form of healing occurs when we accept Jesus Christ's sacrifice for our sins and are reborn to a new life. This heals our relationship with God and secures our place in God's perfect Kingdom for eternity. The healing of relationships between individuals, groups of people, and nations is also extremely important. We can see the importance of our relationship with God and our neighbors in the greatest commandment. Jesus said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."²⁸⁶

²⁸⁶ Matthew 22:37-40.

Conclusions

- We tend to ascribe the greatest importance to physical and emotional healing because of the visceral impact that illness has on our lives.
- We need to look at everything through the lens of Jesus, including healing. He is our teacher, master, and king. We are His students and apprentices, preparing to continue His work in this life and the next. We should be focusing first on the healer, Jesus, and not on healing.
- Jesus and His disciples went out and engaged people, taught them, preached the Gospel to them, and healed the sick. These things were linked together. Healing does not occur simply for the sake of healing or as a reward for faith, obedience, or our efforts. It confirms the Good News. Going out, preaching, and healing were tied together—and they were commanded.
- Healing is not guaranteed in this lifetime. Miraculous healing is for God’s glory and purposes and happens when He chooses. With this said, I believe we are capable of far greater works than we realize if we make God’s glory and sharing His Good News our ultimate purpose. We should be boldly and confidently proclaiming healing as we move about and share the Gospel with people we meet. We should also be praying for God to send out more workers to do the same.
- Many Christians have lost sight of the fact that God lives inside of us and, by His mighty power, He’s able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or imagine. Let that thought give you courage and boldness.
- We need to realize how interconnected our spirit, soul, and body are. We have to treat the feeding, exercise, and care of our spirit and soul as seriously as our bodies. This will reduce our chances of getting sick.
- You reap what you sow. If you eat unhealthy foods, don’t exercise, and/or conduct other unhealthy practices, you’re going to get sick. We cannot persist in doing these things and expect God to simply bail us out.
- Jesus set a bold and unwavering example for us. We should follow his example and not despair if people aren’t healed. We

HEALING PLUNGE

need to exercise our faith muscle for it to grow. We also need to realize that the Gospel brings ultimate hope and healing, regardless of whether people are physically healed or not.

- There are examples of believers not being healed in the New Testament as well as examples of them being raised from the dead. While the Bible never explicitly says that Christians should live in unimpaired good health, it does instruct us to confess our sins to one another and to call on faithful elders to pray over us when we are seriously sick, both of which are linked to healing.

In summary, we need to move about in our communities, workplaces, schools, and world; share the incredibly Good News of God's coming Kingdom and Jesus' redemptive work; and boldly proclaim healing over those who are sick. Believers need to confess their sins to each other and pray for each other; and they should call on faithful elders to pray over them when they are seriously ill. And we should never stop doing these things no matter who is healed or not.

Postscript

Every time I proofed this book or looked at the spreadsheet containing my data analysis, I found errors, omissions, and other mistakes. I'm certain you have found some as well. I invite you to reach out to me at www.edmelick.com with feedback for improving this book. I would really appreciate the help.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

The following table contains all the New Testament healing accounts included in the data analysis. Whenever there is more than one version of a healing account, one of the versions is featured, and all or portions of other versions follow if they add richness to the account.

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
1	Jesus heals a government official's son	John 4:46-54	As [Jesus] traveled through Galilee, he came to Cana, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official in nearby Capernaum whose son was very sick. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son, who was about to die. Jesus asked, "Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?" The official pleaded, "Lord, please come now before my little boy dies." Then Jesus told him, "Go back home. Your son will live!" And the man believed what Jesus said and started home. While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well. He asked them when the boy had begun to get better, and they replied, "Yesterday afternoon at one o'clock his fever suddenly disappeared!" Then the father realized that that was the very time Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." And he and his entire household believed in Jesus. This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.
2	Jesus frees a man from an evil spirit	Luke 4:31-37; Mark 1:21-28	Luke – Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and taught there in the synagogue every Sabbath day. There, too, the people were amazed at his teaching, for he spoke with authority. Once when he was in the synagogue, a man possessed by a demon – an evil spirit – cried out, shouting, "Go away! Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" But Jesus

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>reprimanded him. “Be quiet! Come out of the man,” he ordered. At that, the demon threw the man to the floor as the crowd watched; then it came out of him without hurting him further. Amazed, the people exclaimed, “What authority and power this man’s words possess! Even evil spirits obey him, and they flee at his command!” The news about Jesus spread through every village in the entire region.</p>
3	Jesus heals Peter’s mother-in-law	Mathew 8:14-15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39	<p>Luke – After leaving the synagogue that day, Jesus went to Simon’s home, where he found Simon’s mother-in-law very sick with a high fever. “Please heal her,” everyone begged. Standing at her bedside, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. And she got up at once and prepared a meal for them.</p> <p>Matthew – When Jesus arrived at Peter’s house, Peter’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. But when Jesus touched her hand, the fever left her. Then she got up and prepared a meal for him.</p>
4	Jesus heals many demon-possessed and sick people	Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 1:32-34; Luke 4:40-41	<p>Matthew – That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, “He took our sicknesses and removed our diseases.” (Isaiah 53:4)</p> <p>Mark – That evening after sunset, many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. The whole town gathered at the door to watch. So Jesus healed many people who were sick with various diseases, and he cast out many demons. But because the demons knew who he was, he did not allow them to speak.</p> <p>Luke – As the sun went down that evening, people throughout the village brought sick family members to Jesus. No matter what their diseases were, the touch of his hand healed every one. Many were possessed by demons; and the demons came out at his command, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But because they knew he was the</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			Messiah, he rebuked them and refused to let them speak.
5	Jesus heals every kind of disease and illness throughout Galilee	Matthew 4:23-25; Mark 1:39	<p>Matthew – Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon-possessed or epileptic or paralyzed – he healed them all. Large crowds followed him wherever he went – people from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River.</p> <p>Mark – So he traveled throughout the region of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons.</p>
6	Jesus heals a leper as a testimony to the priests	Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16	<p>Mark – A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. “If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean,” he said. Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!” Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed. Then Jesus sent him on his way with a stern warning: “Don’t tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy. (See Leviticus 14:2-32) This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed.” But the man went and spread the word, proclaiming to everyone what had happened. As a result, large crowds soon surrounded Jesus, and he couldn’t publicly enter a town anywhere. He had to stay out in the secluded places, but people from everywhere kept coming to him. (Verse 44 in the NIV ends: “...as a testimony to them.” This is referring to the priests.)</p> <p>Matthew – Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. “Lord,” the man said, “if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean...” (The man’s</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>approach is mentioned just after the text notes that large crowds followed Jesus. Yet after healing the man, Jesus says “Don’t tell anyone.” Wouldn’t the crowd have seen this?)</p> <p>Luke 5:15-16 – But despite Jesus’ instructions, the report of his power spread even faster, and vast crowds came to hear him preach and to be healed of their diseases. But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer.</p>
7	Jesus heals the paralyzed friend of four faithful men	Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26	<p>Luke – One day while Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of religious law were sitting nearby. (It seemed that these men showed up from every village in all Galilee and Judea, as well as from Jerusalem.) And the Lord’s healing power was strongly with Jesus. (NIV: And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.) Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a sleeping mat. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, but they couldn’t reach him because of the crowd. So they went up to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the sick man on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, “Young man, your sins are forgiven.” But the Pharisees and teachers of religious law said to themselves, “Who does he think he is? That’s blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!” Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, “Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or ‘Stand up and walk’? So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.” Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!” And immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. Everyone was gripped with great wonder and awe, and they praised God (KJ: they glorified God), exclaiming, “We have seen amazing things today!”</p> <p>Mark 2:12 – And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God,</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>exclaiming, “We’ve never seen anything like this before!”</p> <p>Matthew 9:8 – Fear swept through the crowd as they saw this happen. And they praised God for giving humans such authority.</p>
8	Jesus heals the lame man by the pool of Bethesda	John 5:1-15,19-20	<p>Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. Crowds of sick people – blind, lame, or paralyzed – lay on the porches. One of the men lying there had been sick for 38 years. When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?” “I can’t, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.” Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!” Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!” But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” “Who said such a thing as that?” they demanded. The man didn’t know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, “Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you.” Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him. So the Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules... So Jesus explained, “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man.</p> <p>(Verse 13 seems to indicate that the man did not know who Jesus was. Verse 20 seems to indicate that only one person was healed by the pool. Verse</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>19 seems to support the belief that God determines who will be healed and when, not us and our faith.)</p>
9	<p>Jesus heals a man's deformed hand on the Sabbath</p>	<p>Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11</p>	<p>Mark – Jesus went into the synagogue again and noticed a man with a deformed hand. Since it was the Sabbath, Jesus' enemies watched him closely. If he healed the man's hand, they planned to accuse him of working on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the deformed hand, "Come and stand in front of everyone." Then he turned to his critics and asked, "Does the law permit good deeds on the Sabbath, or is it a day for doing evil? Is this a day to save life or to destroy it?" But they wouldn't answer him. He looked around at them angrily and was deeply saddened by their hard hearts. Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." So the man held out his hand, and it was restored! At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.</p> <p>Matthew 12:11-12 – And he answered, "If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn't you work to pull it out? Of course you would. And how much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Yes, the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath." (By implication, healing is doing good.)</p> <p>Luke 6:11 – At this, the enemies with Jesus were wild with rage...</p>
10	<p>Jesus heals all that followed him</p>	<p>Matthew 12:15; Mark 3:7-12; Luke 6:17-19</p>	<p>Luke – When they came down from the mountain, the disciples stood with Jesus on a large, level area, surrounded by many of his followers and by the crowds. There were people from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from as far north as the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those troubled by evil spirits were healed. Everyone tried to touch him, because healing power went out from him, and he healed everyone.</p> <p>Matthew 12:15 – ...and many people followed [Jesus]. He healed all the sick among them...</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>Mark 3:8-12 – The news about his miracles had spread far and wide, and vast numbers of people came to see him. Jesus instructed his disciples to have a boat ready so the crowd would not crush him. He had healed many people that day, so all the sick people eagerly pushed forward to touch him. And whenever those possessed by evil spirits caught sight of him, the spirits would throw them to the ground in front of him shrieking, “You are the Son of God!” But Jesus sternly commanded the spirits not to reveal who he was.</p>
11	Jesus heals the paralyzed servant of a Roman Officer	Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10	<p>Matthew 8:5-13 – When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, “Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.” Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.” But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.” When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel! And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world – from east and west – and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. But many Israelites – those for whom the Kingdom was prepared – will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened.” And the young servant was healed that same hour.</p> <p>Luke 7:3-7 – When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent some respected Jewish elders to ask him to come and heal his slave. So they earnestly begged Jesus to help the man. “If anyone deserves your help, he does,” they said, “for he loves the Jewish people and even built a synagogue for us.” So Jesus went with them. But just before they arrived at the house, the officer sent some friends to say, “Lord,</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>don't trouble yourself by coming to my home, for I am not worthy of such an honor. I am not even worthy to come and meet you. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed."</p>
12	<p>Jesus raises a widow's only son from the dead</p>	<p>Luke 7:11-17</p>	<p>Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, and a large crowd followed him. A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The young man who had died was a widow's only son, and a large crowd from the village was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't cry!" he said. Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. "Young man," he said, "I tell you, get up." Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother. Great fear swept the crowd, and they praised God, saying, "A mighty prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people today." And the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside.</p>
13	<p>Jesus heals a demon-possessed blind and mute man</p>	<p>Matthew 12:22-28; Luke 11:14,20</p>	<p>Matthew – Then a demon-possessed man, who was blind and couldn't speak, was brought to Jesus. He healed the man so that he could both speak and see. The crowd was amazed and asked, "Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?" But when the Pharisees heard about the miracle, they said, "No wonder he can cast out demons. He gets his power from Satan, the prince of demons." Jesus knew their thoughts and replied, "Any kingdom divided by civil war is doomed. A town or family splintered by feuding will fall apart. And if Satan is casting out Satan, he is divided and fighting against himself. His own kingdom will not survive. And if I am empowered by Satan, what about your own exorcists? They cast out demons, too, so they will condemn you for what you have said. But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you."</p> <p>Luke – One day Jesus cast out a demon from a man who couldn't speak, and when the demon was gone, the man began to speak. The crowds were</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			amazed... But if I am casting out demons by the power of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you.
14	Jesus heals the Gerasene demoniac	Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39	<p>Mark – So they arrived at the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus climbed out of the boat, a man possessed by an evil spirit came out from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the burial caves and could no longer be restrained, even with a chain. Whenever he was put into chains and shackles – as he often was – he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones. When Jesus was still some distance away, the man saw him, ran to meet him, and bowed low before him. With a shriek, he screamed, “Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In the name of God, I beg you, don’t torture me!” For Jesus had already said to the spirit, “Come out of the man, you evil spirit.” Then Jesus demanded, “What is your name?” And he replied, “My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man.” Then the evil spirits begged him again and again not to send them to some distant place. There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding on the hillside nearby. “Send us into those pigs,” the spirits begged. “Let us enter them.” So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the entire herd of about 2,000 pigs plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water. The herdsmen fled to the nearby town and the surrounding countryside, spreading the news as they ran. People rushed out to see what had happened. A crowd soon gathered around Jesus, and they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons. He was sitting there fully clothed and perfectly sane, and they were all afraid. Then those who had seen what happened told the others about the demon-possessed man and the pigs. And the crowd began pleading with Jesus to go away and leave them alone. As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>demon-possessed begged to go with him. But Jesus said, “No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been.” So the man started off to visit the Ten Towns of that region and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed at what he told them.</p> <p>Matthew – (In this account, two possessed men are mentioned.)</p>
15	Jesus heals Jarius’ daughter	Matthew 9:18-19,23-26; Mark 5:21-24,35-43; Luke 8:41-42,49-56	<p>Luke – Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus’ feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying... [A short while later] a messenger arrived from the home of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue. He told him, “Your daughter is dead. There’s no use troubling the Teacher now.” But when Jesus heard what had happened, he said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid. Just have faith, and she will be healed.” When they arrived at the house, Jesus wouldn’t let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, James, and the little girl’s father and mother. The house was filled with people weeping and wailing, but he said, “Stop the weeping! She isn’t dead; she’s only asleep.” But the crowd laughed at him because they all knew she had died. Then Jesus took her by the hand and said in a loud voice, “My child, get up!” And at that moment her life returned, and she immediately stood up! Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were overwhelmed, but Jesus insisted that they not tell anyone what had happened.</p> <p>Matthew 9:26 – The report of this miracle swept through the entire countryside.</p>
16	Jesus heals a woman with a persistent bleeding problem	Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48	<p>Mark – A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. For she thought to herself, “If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed.”</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition. Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my robe?" His disciples said to him, "Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'" But he kept on looking around to see who had done it. Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him and told him what she had done. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over."</p>
17	Jesus heals two blind men	Matthew 9:27-31	<p>After Jesus left the girl's home, two blind men followed along behind him, shouting, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" They went right into the house where he was staying, and Jesus asked them, "Do you believe I can make you see?" "Yes, Lord," they told him, "we do." Then he touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen." Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone about this." But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region.</p>
18	Jesus heals a demon-possessed man who couldn't speak	Matthew 9:32-34	<p>When they left, a demon-possessed man who couldn't speak was brought to Jesus. So Jesus cast out the demon, and then the man began to speak. The crowds were amazed. "Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!" they exclaimed. But the Pharisees said, "He can cast out demons because he is empowered by the prince of demons."</p>
19	Jesus can only heal a few people in his hometown	Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-6	<p>Matthew – [Jesus] returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, "Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?" Then they scoffed, "He's just the carpenter's son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?" And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>among his own family.” And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief.</p> <p>Mark 6:4-5 – Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family.” And because of their unbelief, he couldn’t do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.</p>
20	Jesus heals every kind of disease and illness	Matthew 9:35-38	<p>Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields.”</p>
21	Jesus gives his 12 disciples authority to heal	Matthew 10:1-15; Mark 6:6-13; Luke 9:1-6	<p>Matthew 10:1,8 – Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness... “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons...</p> <p>Mark 6:7,12-13 – And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits... So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God. And they cast out many demons and healed many sick people, anointing them with olive oil.</p> <p>Luke 9:1-2,6 – One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out all demons and to heal all diseases. Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick... So they began their circuit of the villages, preaching the Good News and healing the sick.</p>
22	Jesus heals the sick in a large crowd	Matthew 14:14; Luke	<p>Matthew 14:14 – Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
		9:11; John 6:2	<p>them and healed their sick. (That evening, he fed the five thousand.)</p> <p>Mark 9:11 – [Jesus] welcomed [the crowds] and taught them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those who were sick.</p> <p>John 6:2 – A huge crowd kept following [Jesus] wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick.</p>
23	All the sick who touched Jesus were healed	Matthew 14:34-36; Mark 6:53-56	<p>Mark – After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. They brought the boat to shore and climbed out. The people recognized Jesus at once, and they ran throughout the whole area, carrying sick people on mats to wherever they heard he was. Wherever he went—in villages, cities, or the countryside—they brought the sick out to the marketplaces. They begged him to let the sick touch at least the fringe of his robe, and all who touched him were healed.</p>
24	Jesus heals the demon-possessed daughter of a Gentile woman	Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30	<p>Matthew – Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Gentile woman who lived there came to him, pleading, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely.” But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. “Tell her to go away,” they said. “She is bothering us with all her begging.” Then Jesus said to the woman, “I was sent only to help God’s lost sheep – the people of Israel.” But she came and worshiped him, pleading again, “Lord, help me!” Jesus responded, “It isn’t right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs.” She replied, “That’s true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters’ table.” “Dear woman,” Jesus said to her, “your faith is great. Your request is granted.” And her daughter was instantly healed.</p> <p>Mark 7:29-30 – “Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter.” And when she arrived home... the demon was gone.</p>
25	Jesus heals a deaf man	Mark 7:31-37	<p>Jesus left Tyre and went up to Sidon before going back to the Sea of Galilee and the region of the Ten</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
	with a speech impediment		Towns. A deaf man with a speech impediment was brought to him, and the people begged Jesus to lay his hands on the man to heal him. Jesus led him away from the crowd so they could be alone. He put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then, spitting on his own fingers, he touched the man’s tongue. Looking up to heaven, he sighed and said, <i>“Ephphatha,”</i> which means, <i>“Be opened!”</i> Instantly the man could hear perfectly, and his tongue was freed so he could speak plainly! Jesus told the crowd not to tell anyone, but the more he told them not to, the more they spread the news. They were completely amazed and said again and again, <i>“Everything he does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak.”</i>
26	Jesus healed all the sick people in a crowd	Matthew 15:29-31	Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee and climbed a hill and sat down. A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn’t speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all. The crowd was amazed! Those who hadn’t been able to speak were talking, the crippled were made well, the lame were walking, and the blind could see again! And they praised the God of Israel. (KJ: ...and they glorified the God of Israel.)
27	Jesus heals a blind man	Mark 8:22-26	When they arrived at Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Jesus, and they begged him to touch the man and heal him. Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. Then, spitting on the man’s eyes, he laid his hands on him and asked, <i>“Can you see anything now?”</i> The man looked around. <i>“Yes,”</i> he said, <i>“I see people, but I can’t see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around.”</i> Then Jesus placed his hands on the man’s eyes again, and his eyes were opened. His sight was completely restored, and he could see everything clearly. Jesus sent him away, saying, <i>“Don’t go back into the village on your way home.”</i>
28	Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy	Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29;	Matthew – At the foot of the mountain, a large crowd was waiting for them. A man came and knelt before Jesus and said, <i>“Lord, have mercy on my son. He has seizures and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. So I brought</i>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
		<p>Luke 9:37-43</p>	<p>him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him." Jesus said, "You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well. Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?" "You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."</p> <p>Mark 9:19-29 – Jesus said to them, "You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me." So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. "How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father. He replied, "Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that the crowd of onlookers was growing, he rebuked the evil spirit. "Listen, you spirit that makes this boy unable to hear and speak," he said. "I command you to come out of this child and never enter him again!" Then the spirit screamed and threw the boy into another violent convulsion and left him. The boy appeared to be dead. A murmur ran through the crowd as people said, "He's dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and helped him to his feet, and he stood up. Afterward, when Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, "Why couldn't we cast out that evil spirit?" Jesus replied, "This kind can be cast out only by prayer and fasting." (Fasting is not mentioned in all manuscripts.)</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			Luke 9:42-43 – ...Jesus rebuked the evil spirit and healed the boy... Awe gripped the people as they saw this majestic display of God’s power.
29	Jesus heals the sick in the crowds	Matthew 19:1-2	When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went down to the region of Judea east of the Jordan River. Large crowds followed him there, and he healed their sick.
30	Jesus sends out 72 disciples to heal the sick	Luke 10:1-20	Luke 10:1,9,17-20 – The Lord now chose 72 other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit... Heal the sick, and tell them, ‘The Kingdom of God is near you now...’ When the 72 disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, “Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!” “Yes,” he told them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you. But don’t rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven.”
31	Jesus heals a woman crippled by an evil spirit	Luke 13:10-17	One Sabbath day as Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, he saw a woman who had been crippled by an evil spirit. She had been bent double for eighteen years and was unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, “Dear woman, you are healed of your sickness!” Then he touched her, and instantly she could stand straight. How she praised God! But the leader in charge of the synagogue was indignant that Jesus had healed her on the Sabbath day. “There are six days of the week for working,” he said to the crowd. “Come on those days to be healed, not on the Sabbath.” But the Lord replied, “You hypocrites! Each of you works on the Sabbath day! Don’t you untie your ox or your donkey from its stall on the Sabbath and lead it out for water? This dear woman, a daughter of Abraham, has been held in bondage by Satan for eighteen years. Isn’t it right that she be released, even on the Sabbath?” This shamed his enemies, but all the people rejoiced at the wonderful things he did.
32	Jesus heals a man who	John 9:1-41	As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
	was blind from birth		<p>of his own sins or his parents' sins?" "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent me. The night is coming, and then no one can work. But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world." Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied. Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!" Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them. Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet." The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?" His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself." His parents said this because they were</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him." So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, "God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner." "I don't know whether he is a sinner," the man replied. "But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!" "But what did he do?" they asked. "How did he heal you?" "Look!" the man exclaimed. "I told you once. Didn't you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" Then they cursed him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from." "Why, that's very strange!" the man replied. "He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he comes from? We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it." "You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue. When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" The man answered, "Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him." "You have seen him," Jesus said, "and he is speaking to you!" "Yes, Lord, I believe!" the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, "I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind." Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, "Are you saying we're blind?" "If you were blind, you wouldn't be guilty," Jesus replied. "But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.</p>
33	Jesus heals a man with dropsy	Luke 14:1-6	<p>One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat dinner in the home of a leader of the Pharisees, and the people were watching him closely. There was a man there whose arms and legs were swollen. Jesus asked the</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			Pharisees and experts in religious law, "Is it permitted in the law to heal people on the Sabbath day, or not?" When they refused to answer, Jesus touched the sick man and healed him and sent him away. Then he turned to them and said, "Which of you doesn't work on the Sabbath? If your donkey or your cow falls into a pit, don't you rush to get him out?" Again they could not answer.
34	Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead	John 11:4-54; 12:17-18	John 11:4-6,14-15,17,23-27,32-46,53 – When Jesus heard about [Lazarus' sickness] he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days... [Jesus] told [his disciples] plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him..." When Jesus arrived in Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days... Jesus told [Martha], "Your brother will rise again." "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?" "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God..." When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. (KJ: he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.) "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see." Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?" Jesus was still angry (KJ: groaning in himself) as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.” Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done... So from that time on, the Jewish leaders began to plot Jesus’ death.</p> <p>John 12:17-18 – Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. That was the reason so many went out to meet him – because they had heard about this miraculous sign.</p>
35	Jesus heals 10 lepers	Luke 17:11-19	<p>As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria. As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy. One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!” He fell to the ground at Jesus’ feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, “Didn’t I heal ten men? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And Jesus said to the man, “Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you.”</p>
36	Jesus heals a blind beggar	Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43	<p>Mark – Then they reached Jericho, and as Jesus and his disciples left town, a large crowd followed him. A blind beggar named Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) was sitting beside the road. When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was nearby, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” “Be quiet!” many of the people yelled at him. But he only shouted louder,</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>“Son of David, have mercy on me!” When Jesus heard him, he stopped and said, “Tell him to come here.” So they called the blind man. “Cheer up,” they said. “Come on, he’s calling you!” Bartimaeus threw aside his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus. “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked. “My Rabbi,” the blind man said, “I want to see!” And Jesus said to him, “Go, for your faith has healed you.” Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus down the road.</p> <p>Luke 18:42-43 – And Jesus said, “All right, receive your sight! Your faith has healed you.” Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus, praising God. And all who saw it praised God, too.</p> <p>Matthew 20:29-30,34 – As Jesus and the disciples left the town of Jericho, a large crowd followed behind. Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”... Jesus felt sorry for them and touched their eyes. Instantly they could see! (KJ and NIV say, “Jesus had compassion on them...” Also, Matthew’s account includes two blind beggars, not one.)</p>
37	Jesus heals the blind and lame at the Temple	Matthew 21:12-17	<p>Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out all the people buying and selling animals for sacrifice. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves. He said to them, “The Scriptures declare, ‘My Temple will be called a house of prayer,’ but you have turned it into a den of thieves!” The blind and the lame came to him in the Temple, and he healed them. The leading priests and the teachers of religious law saw these wonderful miracles and heard even the children in the Temple shouting, “Praise God for the Son of David.” But the leaders were indignant. They asked Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?” “Yes,” Jesus replied. “Haven’t you ever read the Scriptures? For they say, ‘You have taught children and infants to give you praise.’” Then he returned to Bethany, where he stayed overnight.</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
38	Jesus re-attaches a man's ear	Luke 22:49-51	When the other disciples saw what was about to happen, they exclaimed, "Lord, should we fight? We brought the swords!" And one of them struck at the high priest's slave, slashing off his right ear. But Jesus said, "No more of this." And he touched the man's ear and healed him.
39	Peter heals the lame beggar at the Temple	Acts 3 & 4	Acts 3:1-20 – Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three o'clock prayer service. As they approached the Temple, a man lame from birth was being carried in. Each day he was put beside the Temple gate, the one called the Beautiful Gate, so he could beg from the people going into the Temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for some money. Peter and John looked at him intently, and Peter said, "Look at us!" The lame man looked at them eagerly, expecting some money. But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!" Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man's feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened. He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them. All the people saw him walking and heard him praising God. When they realized he was the lame beggar they had seen so often at the Beautiful Gate, they were absolutely astounded! They all rushed out in amazement to Solomon's Colonnade, where the man was holding tightly to Peter and John. Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd. "People of Israel," he said, "what is so surprising about this? And why stare at us as though we had made this man walk by our own power or godliness? For it is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of all our ancestors—who has brought glory to his servant Jesus by doing this. This is the same Jesus whom you handed over and rejected before Pilate, despite Pilate's decision to release him. You rejected this holy, righteous one and instead demanded the release of a murderer. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. And we are witnesses of this fact! "Through

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed—and you know how crippled he was before. Faith in Jesus’ name has healed him before your very eyes. “Friends, I realize that what you and your leaders did to Jesus was done in ignorance. But God was fulfilling what all the prophets had foretold about the Messiah—that he must suffer these things. Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord, and he will again send you Jesus, your appointed Messiah.</p> <p>Acts 4:1-10,16-22 – While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees. These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000. The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest. They brought in the two disciples and demanded, “By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?” Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead... “What should we do with these men?” they asked each other. “We can’t deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.” So they called the apostles back in and</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.” The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn’t know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God for this miraculous sign – the healing of a man who had been lame for more than 40 years.</p>
40	Peter’s shadow heals people	Acts 5:12-16	<p>The apostles were performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers were meeting regularly at the Temple in the area known as Solomon’s Colonnade. But no one else dared to join them, even though all the people had high regard for them. Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord – crowds of both men and women. As a result of the apostles’ work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter’s shadow might fall across some of them as he went by. Crowds came from the villages around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those possessed by evil spirits, and they were all healed.</p> <p>(See discussion of these verses in Appendix B.)</p>
41	Philip heals the lame, paralyzed, and demon-possessed	Acts 8:4-8	<p>But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.</p> <p>(This is believed to be Philip the evangelist and deacon first mentioned in Acts 6:5, not Philip the apostle. Philip and Stephen are the only people other than Jesus and the apostles said to do miracles and wonders.)</p>
42	Ananias lays hands on Saul (soon	Acts 9:1-21; 22:11-16	<p>9:1-10,17-21 – Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord’s followers. So he went to the high priest. He</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
	to be Paul), restoring his eyesight		<p>requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them – both men and women – back to Jerusalem in chains. As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?” “Who are you, lord?” Saul asked. And the voice replied, “I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone’s voice but saw no one! Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink. Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision... So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is indeed the Son of God!” All who heard him were amazed. “Isn’t this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus’ followers in Jerusalem?” they asked. “And didn’t he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?”</p> <p>Acts 22:11-16 – “I [Saul] was blinded by the intense light and had to be led by the hand to Damascus by my companions. A man named Ananias lived there. He was a godly man, deeply devoted to the law, and well regarded by all the Jews of Damascus. He came and stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight.’ And that very moment I could see him! “Then he told me, ‘The God of our</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and hear him speak. For you are to be his witness, telling everyone what you have seen and heard. What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord.'</p>
43	Peter heals Aeneas' paralysis	Acts 9:32-35	<p>Meanwhile, Peter traveled from place to place, and he came down to visit the believers in the town of Lydda. There he met a man named Aeneas, who had been paralyzed and bedridden for eight years. Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you! Get up and roll up your sleeping mat!" And he was healed instantly. Then the whole population of Lydda and Sharon saw Aeneas walking around, and they turned to the Lord.</p>
44	Peter raises Tabitha from the dead	Acts 9:36-42	<p>There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor. About this time she became ill and died. Her body was washed for burial and laid in an upstairs room. But the believers had heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda, so they sent two men to beg him, "Please come as soon as possible!" So Peter returned with them; and as soon as he arrived, they took him to the upstairs room. The room was filled with widows who were weeping and showing him the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them. But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, "Get up, Tabitha." And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up! He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive. The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord.</p>
45	Paul heals a man with crippled feet	Acts 14:8-13	<p>While they were at Lystra, Paul and Barnabas came upon a man with crippled feet. He had been that way from birth, so he had never walked. He was sitting and listening as Paul preached. Looking straight at him, Paul realized he had faith to be healed. So Paul called to him in a loud voice, "Stand up!" And the man jumped to his feet and started walking. When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in their local dialect, "These men are gods in human form!" They</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>decided that Barnabas was the Greek god Zeus and that Paul was Hermes, since he was the chief speaker. Now the temple of Zeus was located just outside the town. So the priest of the temple and the crowd brought bulls and wreaths of flowers to the town gates, and they prepared to offer sacrifices to the apostles.</p>
46	Paul frees a slave girl from a demon's control	Acts 16:16-23	<p>One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her. Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. "The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!" they shouted to the city officials. "They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice." A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison.</p>
47	Paul's hankies & aprons heal people	Acts 19:11-12	<p>God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled.</p>
48	Paul heals a young believer who fell to his death	Acts 20:7-12	<p>On the first day of the week, we gathered with the local believers to share in the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching to them, and since he was leaving the next day, he kept talking until midnight. The upstairs room where we met was lighted with many flickering lamps. As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, became very drowsy. Finally, he fell sound asleep and dropped three stories to his death below. Paul went down, bent over him, and took him into his arms. "Don't worry," he said, "he's alive!" Then they all went back upstairs,</p>

Appendix A – New Testament Healing Accounts

#	NT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			shared in the Lord’s Supper, and ate together. Paul continued talking to them until dawn, and then he left. Meanwhile, the young man was taken home alive and well, and everyone was greatly relieved.
49	Paul heals Publius’ father of fever and dysentery	Acts 28:7-8	Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. As it happened, Publius’s father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him.
50	Paul heals sick people on the island of Malta	Acts 28:9-10	Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. As a result, we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip.
51	God’s mercy heals Epaphroditus	Philip- pians 2:25-30	Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you. He is a true brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier. And he was your messenger to help me in my need. I am sending him because he has been longing to see you, and he was very distressed that you heard he was ill. And he certainly was ill; in fact, he almost died. But God had mercy on him – and also on me, so that I would not have one sorrow after another. So I am all the more anxious to send him back to you, for I know you will be glad to see him, and then I will not be so worried about you. Welcome him in the Lord’s love and with great joy, and give him the honor that people like him deserve. For he risked his life for the work of Christ, and he was at the point of death while doing for me what you couldn’t do from far away.

Appendix B – Possible New Testament Healing Accounts

The following passages were not considered healing accounts and therefore don't contribute to the figures in the data analysis. They are included below because an argument could be made for their incorporation and, more importantly, they add insight to the data analysis results and discussion. Each passage is followed by the reason(s) for its exclusion.

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
1	Jesus includes healing with the miraculous signs that will accompany his followers	Mark 16:15-20	<p>And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed." When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.</p> <p>Even though Jesus includes healing in the miraculous signs of his followers, and these verses say their preaching was accompanied by such signs, this was not considered a healing account because it describes activities in many locations and at different times (i.e., it does not describe any specific healings).</p>
2	The apostles perform signs and	Acts 5:12-16	The apostles were performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers were meeting regularly at the Temple in the area known as Solomon's Colonnade. But no

Appendix B – Possible New Testament Healing Accounts

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	wonders, and Peter's shadow heals		<p>one else dared to join them, even though all the people had high regard for them. Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord – crowds of both men and women. As a result of the apostles' work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter's shadow might fall across some of them as he went by. Crowds came from the villages around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those possessed by evil spirits, and they were all healed.</p> <p>Some things are unclear in these verses. First, we cannot be certain that miraculous signs and wonders included healings, even though we strongly suspect they did. Second, it's not absolutely clear whether it was Peter's shadow, the apostles' signs and wonders, or both that healed the crowds. For purposes of the data analysis, the decision was made to consider this as a single healing account and assume Peter's shadow healed the people.</p>
3	Peter shares Jesus' healing works with Cornelius	Acts 10:38	<p>[Peter said to Cornelius], "You know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him."</p> <p>This passage refers to all of Jesus' work healing those oppressed by the devil, so it is clearly not a single healing account.</p>
4	Paul rising up after he was stoned and left for dead	Acts 14:19-20	<p>Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. But as the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.</p> <p>This is an amazing account. Paul was stoned to the point where his attackers thought he was dead and dragged him out of town. He must have been unconscious. At some point after being left for dead, he gets up, goes back to town, and then travels to another town the next day – which would seem to indicate that his condition improved considerably in roughly one day. But the</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>passage doesn't clearly state Paul's condition or emphasize how remarkable his rise was, so it was excluded from the healing account tallies.</p>
5	Paul is bitten by a poisonous snake	Acts 28:3-6	<p>As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand. The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live." But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn't harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god.</p> <p>Technically speaking, Paul was not healed from a sickness but rather prevented from getting sick.</p>

Appendix C – Miraculous Signs and Wonders

The following table includes selected passages that contain the Greek word *sēmeion*, which is used to describe some of the New Testament healing accounts as well as the “miraculous signs and wonders” that Jesus and his disciples performed. The case was made in the *Bird’s Eye View* chapter that we should include healings as part of miraculous signs and wonders. An “HA” in a Description indicates a healing account and the number next to it corresponds to the healing account number in Appendix A.

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
1	Jesus turned water into wine	John 2:1-11	John 2:11 – This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.
2	Jesus’ miraculous signs in Jerusalem	John 2:23	Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in him.
3	Nicodemus visits Jesus	John 3:1-2	There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.”
4	Jesus heals a government official’s son (HA 1)	John 4:48-54	Jesus asked, “Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?” The official pleaded, “Lord, please come now before my little boy dies.” Then Jesus told him, “Go back home. Your son will live!” And the man believed what Jesus said and started home. While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well... This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.
5	A huge crowd sees	John 6:1-2	After this, Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A

Appendix C – Miraculous Signs and Wonders

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	Jesus heal the sick (HA 22)		huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick.
6	Jesus feeds a huge crowd that included 5,000 men	John 6:10-14	“Tell everyone to sit down,” Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.” So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, “Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!”
7	Jesus heals a blind man with spit and dirt (HA 32)	John 9:6-7,16	Then [Jesus] spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!... Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?”
8	Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (HA 34)	John 12:17-18	Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. That was the reason so many went out to meet him – because they had heard about this miraculous sign.
9	Most people do not believe in Jesus despite his miraculous signs	John 12:37-41	But despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him. This is exactly what Isaiah the prophet had predicted: “LORD, who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm?” But the people couldn’t believe, for as Isaiah also said, “The Lord has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts – so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and have me heal them.” Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he said this, because he saw the future and spoke of the Messiah’s glory. (These verses quote Isaiah 53:1 and 6:10.)

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
10	Jesus' miraculous signs are recorded so we might believe	John 20:30-31	The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.
11	Jesus includes healing with the miraculous signs that will accompany his followers	Mark 16:15-20	<p>And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed." When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.</p> <p>(Unlike Matthew, Mark includes healing in the Great Commission. This is part of the longer-ending version of Mark that contains verses 9 through 20, though.)</p>
12	God endorsed Jesus through signs and wonders	Acts 2:22	People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know.
13	The apostles' sign and wonders	Acts 2:43	A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.
14	Peter heals a man who was lame for over 40 years (HA 39)	Acts 4:16,21-22	"What should we do with these men?" they asked each other. "We can't deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it..." For everyone was praising God for this miraculous sign – the healing of a man who had been lame for more than 40 years.

Appendix C – Miraculous Signs and Wonders

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
15	The apostles pray for signs and wonders	Acts 4:29-30	And now, O Lord... give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”
16	The apostles perform signs and wonders, and Peter’s shadow heals (HA 40)	Acts 5:12-16	The apostles were performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people... [and] more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord – crowds of both men and women. As a result of the apostles’ work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter’s shadow might fall across some of them as he went by. Crowds came from the villages around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those possessed by evil spirits, and they were all healed.
17	Stephen performs signs and miracles	Acts 6:8	Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed amazing miracles and signs among the people. (Philip and Stephen are the only people other than Jesus and the apostles said to perform miracles and wonders.)
18	Stephen talks about God’s signs and wonders	Acts 7:36	And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, [God] led [the Israelites] out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for 40 years. (These miraculous signs included afflicting the Egyptians with illness while protecting the Israelites among them.)
19	Philip performs miracles in Samaria (HA 41)	Acts 8:4-8	But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city. (Philip and Stephen are the only people other than Jesus and the apostles said to do miracles and wonders.)

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
20	Simon amazed by Philip's signs and miracles	Acts 8:13	Then Simon [the Sorcerer] himself believed and was baptized. He began following Philip wherever he went, and he was amazed by the signs and great miracles Philip performed.
21	God proves Paul and Barnabas' message was true by giving them power to perform signs and wonders	Acts 14:1-4	The same thing happened in Iconium. Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue and preached with such power that a great number of both Jews and Greeks became believers. Some of the Jews, however, spurned God's message and poisoned the minds of the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas. But the apostles stayed there a long time, preaching boldly about the grace of the Lord. And the Lord proved their message was true by giving them power to do miraculous signs and wonders. But the people of the town were divided in their opinion about them. Some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles.
22	Paul and Barnabas share with the council at Jerusalem	Acts 15:12	Everyone listened quietly as Barnabas and Paul told about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.
23	Paul notes the convicting power of signs and wonders	Romans 15:18-19	Yet I dare not boast about anything except what Christ has done through me, bringing the Gentiles to God by my message and by the way I worked among them. They were convinced by the power of miraculous signs and wonders and by the power of God's Spirit.
24	Signs and wonders proved Paul's apostleship	2 Corinthians 12:12	When I was with you, I certainly gave you proof that I am an apostle. For I patiently did many signs and wonders and miracles among you.
25	Salvation was confirmed with signs and wonders	Hebrews 2:3-4	So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak? And God confirmed the message by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose.

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

The following table contains all the Old Testament healing accounts included in the data analysis. Whenever there is more than one version of a healing account, one of the versions is featured and all or portions of other versions follow if they add richness to the account.

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
1	God enables Sarah to become pregnant despite her advanced age and barrenness	Genesis 16:1, 17:15-16, 21:1-2; Hebrews 11:11	<p>Genesis 16:1 – Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had not been able to bear children for him.</p> <p>17:15-16 – Then God said to Abraham, “Regarding Sarai, your wife – her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah. And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants.”</p> <p>21:1-2 – The LORD kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age.</p> <p>Hebrews 11:11 – It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise.</p>
2	God removes Abimelech’s infertility curse	Genesis 20:17-18	Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so they could have children. For the LORD had caused all the women to be infertile because of what happened with Abraham’s wife, Sarah.
3	God enables Leah to have a child	Genesis 29:31-32	When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he enabled her to have children... So Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son.
4	God enables Leah to have another child	Genesis 30:17	And God answered Leah’s prayers. She became pregnant again and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob.

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
5	God enables Rachel to have children	Genesis 30:22-23	Then God remembered Rachel’s plight and answered her prayers by enabling her to have children. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son.
6	God makes Moses’ hand leprous and then heals it	Exodus 4:6-8	Then the LORD said to Moses, “Now put your hand inside your cloak.” So Moses put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out again, his hand was white as snow with a severe skin disease. “Now put your hand back into your cloak,” the LORD said. So Moses put his hand back in, and when he took it out again, it was as healthy as the rest of his body. The LORD said to Moses, “If they do not believe you and are not convinced by the first miraculous sign (turning a staff into a snake and then back to a staff), they will be convinced by the second sign.”
7	God strikes Miriam with leprosy	Numbers 12:1,9-10, 13-16	While they were at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he had married a Cushite woman... The LORD was very angry with them, and he departed. As the cloud moved from above the Tabernacle, there stood Miriam, her skin as white as snow from leprosy... So Moses cried out to the LORD, “O God, I beg you, please heal her!” But the LORD said to Moses, “If her father had done nothing more than spit in her face, wouldn’t she be defiled for seven days? So keep her outside the camp for seven days, and after that she may be accepted back.” So Miriam was kept outside the camp for seven days, and the people waited until she was brought back before they traveled again. Then they left Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran. (It doesn’t explicitly say Miriam was healed. It’s implied.)
8	Aaron halts a plague using burning incense	Numbers 16:41-50	But the very next morning the whole community of Israel began muttering again against Moses and Aaron, saying, “You have killed the LORD’s people!” As the community gathered to protest against Moses and Aaron, they turned toward the Tabernacle and saw that the cloud had covered it, and the glorious presence of the LORD appeared. Moses and Aaron came and stood in front of the Tabernacle, and the LORD said to Moses, “Get away from all these people so that I can instantly destroy them!” But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the

HEALING PLUNGE

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>ground. And Moses said to Aaron, “Quick, take an incense burner and place burning coals on it from the altar. Lay incense on it, and carry it out among the people to purify them and make them right with the LORD. The LORD’s anger is blazing against them – the plague has already begun.” Aaron did as Moses told him and ran out among the people. The plague had already begun to strike down the people, but Aaron burned the incense and purified the people. He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague stopped. But 14,700 people died in that plague, in addition to those who had died in the affair involving Korah. Then because the plague had stopped, Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tabernacle.</p>
9	Moses heals people with snake bite wounds	Numbers 21:4-9	<p>Then the people of Israel set out from Mount Hor, taking the road to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom. But the people grew impatient with the long journey, and they began to speak against God and Moses. “Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness?” they complained. “There is nothing to eat here and nothing to drink. And we hate this horrible manna!” So the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people, and many were bitten and died. Then the people came to Moses and cried out, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take away the snakes.” So Moses prayed for the people. Then the LORD told him, “Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if they simply look at it!” So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to a pole. Then anyone who was bitten by a snake could look at the bronze snake and be healed!</p>
10	God enables Manoah’s wife to become pregnant with Samson	Judges 13:2-5	<p>In those days a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan lived in the town of Zorah. His wife was unable to become pregnant, and they had no children. The angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah’s wife and said, “Even though you have been unable to have children, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son. So be careful; you must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his</p>

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines.”
11	God strikes Job with boils and later heals him	Job 1:1, 6-12; 2:3-10; 42:5-11	<p>Job 1:1,6-12 – There once was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil... One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. “Where have you come from?” the LORD asked Satan. Satan answered the LORD, “I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that’s going on.” Then the LORD asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless – a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.” Satan replied to the LORD, “Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!” “All right, you may test him,” the LORD said to Satan. “Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don’t harm him physically.” So Satan left the LORD’s presence....</p> <p>2:3-10 – One day the members of the heavenly court came again to present themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them... Then the LORD asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless – a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil. And he has maintained his integrity, even though you urged me to harm him without cause.” Satan replied to the LORD, “Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. But reach out and take away his health, and he will surely curse you to your face!” “All right, do with him as you please,” the LORD said to Satan. “But spare his life.” So Satan left the LORD’s presence, and he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot. Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. His wife said to him, “Are you</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die.” But Job replied, “You talk like a foolish woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?” So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.</p> <p>42:5-11 – [Job said], “I had only heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes. I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.” After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “I am angry with you and your two friends, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has.... My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer on your behalf. I will not treat you as you deserve, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has...” When Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes. In fact, the LORD gave him twice as much as before! Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the LORD had brought against him.</p>
12	God enables Hannah to become pregnant with Samuel	1 Samuel 1:1-28; 2:1-21	<p>1 Samuel 1:5-6,10-11,17,19-20 – [The] LORD had given [Hannah] no children... [The] Lord had kept her from having children... Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD. And she made this vow: “O LORD of Heaven’s Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime... Eli [the priest] said, “go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him...” When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the LORD remembered her plea, and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, “I asked the LORD for him.”</p> <p>1 Samuel 2:21 – [Later] the LORD blessed Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.</p>
13	David soothes Saul with his harp playing	1 Samuel 16:14-23	<p>Now the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and the LORD sent a tormenting spirit that filled him with depression and fear. Some of Saul’s servants said to him, “A tormenting spirit from God is troubling</p>

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>you. Let us find a good musician to play the harp whenever the tormenting spirit troubles you. He will play soothing music, and you will soon be well again.” “All right,” Saul said. “Find me someone who plays well, and bring him here.” One of the servants said to Saul, “One of Jesse’s sons from Bethlehem is a talented harp player. Not only that – he is a brave warrior, a man of war, and has good judgment. He is also a fine-looking young man, and the LORD is with him.” So Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say, “Send me your son David, the shepherd.” Jesse responded by sending David to Saul, along with a young goat, a donkey loaded with bread, and a wineskin full of wine. So David went to Saul and began serving him. Saul loved David very much, and David became his armor bearer. Then Saul sent word to Jesse asking, “Please let David remain in my service, for I am very pleased with him.” And whenever the tormenting spirit from God troubled Saul, David would play the harp. Then Saul would feel better, and the tormenting spirit would go away.</p>
14	<p>God restores King Jeroboam’s hand to good health</p>	<p>1 Kings 13:4-6,33</p>	<p>When King Jeroboam heard [a] man of God speaking against the altar at Bethel, he pointed at him and shouted, “Seize that man!” But instantly the king’s hand became paralyzed in that position, and he couldn’t pull it back. At the same time a wide crack appeared in the altar, and the ashes poured out, just as the man of God had predicted in his message from the LORD. The king cried out to the man of God, “Please ask the LORD your God to restore my hand again!” So the man of God prayed to the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored and he could move it again... But even after this, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways.</p>
15	<p>Elijah raises a poor widow’s son from the dead</p>	<p>1 Kings 17:17-24</p>	<p>Some time later the [woman of Zarephath’s] son became sick. He grew worse and worse, and finally he died. Then she said to Elijah, “O man of God, what have you done to me? Have you come here to point out my sins and kill my son?” But Elijah replied, “Give me your son.” And he took the child’s body from her arms, carried him up the stairs to the room where he was staying, and laid the body on his bed. Then Elijah cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, why have you brought</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>tragedy to this widow who has opened her home to me, causing her son to die?” And he stretched himself out over the child three times and cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, please let this child’s life return to him.” The LORD heard Elijah’s prayer, and the life of the child returned, and he revived! Then Elijah brought him down from the upper room and gave him to his mother. “Look!” he said. “Your son is alive!” Then the woman told Elijah, “Now I know for sure that you are a man of God, and that the LORD truly speaks through you.”</p>
16	Elisha enables the wealthy woman from Shunem to have a child	2 Kings 4:8-17	<p>One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem. A wealthy woman lived there, and she urged him to come to her home for a meal. After that, whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for something to eat. She said to her husband, “I am sure this man who stops in from time to time is a holy man of God. Let’s build a small room for him on the roof and furnish it with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp. Then he will have a place to stay whenever he comes by.” One day Elisha returned to Shunem, and he went up to this upper room to rest. He said to his servant Gehazi, “Tell the woman from Shunem I want to speak to her.” When she appeared, Elisha said to Gehazi, “Tell her, ‘We appreciate the kind concern you have shown us. What can we do for you? Can we put in a good word for you to the king or to the commander of the army?’” “No,” she replied, “my family takes good care of me.” Later Elisha asked Gehazi, “What can we do for her?” Gehazi replied, “She doesn’t have a son, and her husband is an old man.” “Call her back again,” Elisha told him. When the woman returned, Elisha said to her as she stood in the doorway, “Next year at this time you will be holding a son in your arms!” “No, my lord!” she cried. “O man of God, don’t deceive me and get my hopes up like that.” But sure enough, the woman soon became pregnant. And at that time the following year she had a son, just as Elisha had said.</p>
17	Elisha heals the woman from	2 Kings 4:18-37	<p>One day when [the wealthy woman from Shunem’s] child was older... he died. She carried him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and left him there. She sent a</p>

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
	Shunem's son		<p>message to her husband: "Send one of the servants and a donkey so that I can hurry to the man of God and come right back." "Why go today?" he asked. "It is neither a new moon festival nor a Sabbath." But she said, "It will be all right." So she saddled the donkey and said to the servant, "Hurry! Don't slow down unless I tell you to." As she approached the man of God at Mount Carmel, Elisha saw her in the distance. He said to Gehazi, "Look, the woman from Shunem is coming. Run out to meet her and ask her, 'Is everything all right with you, your husband, and your child?'" "Yes," the woman told Gehazi, "everything is fine." But when she came to the man of God at the mountain, she fell to the ground before him and caught hold of his feet. Gehazi began to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone. She is deeply troubled, but the LORD has not told me what it is." Then she said, "Did I ask you for a son, my lord? And didn't I say, 'Don't deceive me and get my hopes up?'" Then Elisha said to Gehazi, "Get ready to travel; take my staff and go! Don't talk to anyone along the way. Go quickly and lay the staff on the child's face." But the boy's mother said, "As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I won't go home unless you go with me." So Elisha returned with her. Gehazi hurried on ahead and laid the staff on the child's face, but nothing happened. There was no sign of life. He returned to meet Elisha and told him, "The child is still dead." When Elisha arrived, the child was indeed dead, lying there on the prophet's bed. He went in alone and shut the door behind him and prayed to the LORD. Then he lay down on the child's body, placing his mouth on the child's mouth, his eyes on the child's eyes, and his hands on the child's hands. And as he stretched out on him, the child's body began to grow warm again! Elisha got up, walked back and forth across the room once, and then stretched himself out again on the child. This time the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes! Then Elisha summoned Gehazi. "Call the child's mother!" he said. And when she came in, Elisha said, "Here, take your son!" She fell at his feet and bowed before him, overwhelmed with gratitude.</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			Then she took her son in her arms and carried him downstairs.
18	Elisha heals Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army	2 Kings 5:1-19	<p>The king of Aram had great admiration for Naaman, the commander of his army, because through him the LORD had given Aram great victories. But though Naaman was a mighty warrior, he suffered from leprosy. At this time Aramean raiders had invaded the land of Israel, and among their captives was a young girl who had been given to Naaman’s wife as a maid. One day the girl said to her mistress, “I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy.” So Naaman told the king what the young girl from Israel had said. “Go and visit the prophet,” the king of Aram told him. “I will send a letter of introduction for you to take to the king of Israel.” So Naaman started out, carrying as gifts 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing. The letter to the king of Israel said: “With this letter I present my servant Naaman. I want you to heal him of his leprosy.”</p> <p>When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes in dismay and said, “Am I God, that I can give life and take it away? Why is this man asking me to heal someone with leprosy? I can see that he’s just trying to pick a fight with me.” But when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes in dismay, he sent this message to him: “Why are you so upset? Send Naaman to me, and he will learn that there is a true prophet here in Israel.” So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha’s house. But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: “Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy.” But Naaman became angry and stalked away. “I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!” he said. “I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the LORD his God and heal me! Aren’t the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than any of the rivers of Israel? Why shouldn’t I wash in them and be healed?” So Naaman turned and went away in a rage. But his officers tried to reason with</p>

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>him and said, “Sir, if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn’t you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, ‘Go and wash and be cured!’” So Naaman went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed! Then Naaman and his entire party went back to find the man of God. They stood before him, and Naaman said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant.” But Elisha replied, “As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept any gifts.” And though Naaman urged him to take the gift, Elisha refused. Then Naaman said, “All right, but please allow me to load two of my mules with earth from this place, and I will take it back home with me. From now on I will never again offer burnt offerings or sacrifices to any other god except the LORD. However, may the LORD pardon me in this one thing: When my master the king goes into the temple of the god Rimmon to worship there and leans on my arm, may the LORD pardon me when I bow, too.” “Go in peace,” Elisha said. So Naaman started home again.</p>
19	Elisha’s bones revive a dead man	2 Kings 13:20-21	<p>Then Elisha died and was buried. Groups of Moabite raiders used to invade the land each spring. Once when some Israelites were burying a man, they spied a band of these raiders. So they hastily threw the corpse into the tomb of Elisha and fled. But as soon as the body touched Elisha’s bones, the dead man revived and jumped to his feet!</p>
20	God heals King Hezekiah	2 Kings 20:1-11; 2 Chronicles 32:24-31; Isaiah 38:1-8	<p>2 Kings 20:1-11 – About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to visit him. He gave the king this message: “This is what the LORD says: Set your affairs in order, for you are going to die. You will not recover from this illness.” When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, “Remember, O LORD, how I have always been faithful to you and have served you single-mindedly, always doing what pleases you.” Then he broke down and wept bitterly. But</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>before Isaiah had left the middle courtyard, this message came to him from the LORD: "Go back to Hezekiah, the leader of my people. Tell him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you, and three days from now you will get out of bed and go to the Temple of the LORD. I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my own honor and for the sake of my servant David.'" Then Isaiah said, "Make an ointment from figs." So Hezekiah's servants spread the ointment over the boil, and Hezekiah recovered! Meanwhile, Hezekiah had said to Isaiah, "What sign will the LORD give to prove that he will heal me and that I will go to the Temple of the LORD three days from now?" Isaiah replied, "This is the sign from the LORD to prove that he will do as he promised. Would you like the shadow on the sundial to go forward ten steps or backward ten steps?" "The shadow always moves forward," Hezekiah replied, "so that would be easy. Make it go ten steps backward instead." So Isaiah the prophet asked the LORD to do this, and he caused the shadow to move ten steps backward on the sundial of Ahaz!</p>
21	God restores King Nebuchadnezzar's sanity	Daniel 4:1-37	<p>Daniel 4:1-2,4-8,24-30,33-34,36-37 – King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you! "I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for me..." I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity. But one night I had a dream that frightened me; I saw visions that terrified me as I lay in my bed. So I issued an order calling in all the wise men of Babylon, so they could tell me what my dream meant. When all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers came in, I told them the dream, but they could not tell me what it meant. At last Daniel came in before me, and I told him the dream... "This is what the dream means, Your Majesty, and what the Most High has declared will happen to my lord the king. You will be driven from human</p>

Appendix D – Old Testament Healing Accounts

#	OT Account	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>society, and you will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like a cow, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses. But the stump and roots of the tree were left in the ground. This means that you will receive your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules. “‘King Nebuchadnezzar, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past and be merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper.’ “But all these things did happen to King Nebuchadnezzar. Twelve months later he was taking a walk on the flat roof of the royal palace in Babylon. As he looked out across the city, he said, ‘Look at this great city of Babylon! By my own mighty power, I have built this beautiful city as my royal residence to display my majestic splendor...’ “That same hour the judgment was fulfilled, and Nebuchadnezzar was driven from human society... “After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever... “When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before. “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble the proud.”</p>

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

The following table contains a sampling of healing-related scriptures that were considered in the overall analysis. They cover a broad range of topics pertaining to the spiritual and physical health and affliction of individuals, peoples, and nations.

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
1	Call on the elders if you are sick, and confess your sins to each other	James 5:14-18	Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.
2	Jesus fulfills Isaiah 53:4	Matthew 8:16-17	That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, "He took our sicknesses and removed our disease."
3	By Christ's wounds we are healed	1 Peter 2:24-25	[Christ] personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls. Healed = <i>iaomai</i> (2390) = (1) to cure, heal; and (2) to make whole, free from errors and sins. The 2 nd definition seems to be the intended meaning given the fact that <i>healed</i> is used right after sin is mentioned twice, and just before it talks about wandering and our souls.

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
4	With his stripes we are healed	Isaiah 53:4-6,10	<p>NLT – Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all... his life is made an offering for sin...</p> <p>KJ – Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed... when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...</p> <p>Some observations: The meaning of three key words in the King James version of these verses is as follows.</p> <p>Griefs = <i>choliy</i> (2483) = sickness. The Greeks who translated this to Greek in 150 B.C. wrote <i>sins</i> for <i>griefs</i>.</p> <p>Sorrows = <i>makob</i> (4341) = pain (physical and mental), sorrow.</p> <p>Healed = <i>rapha</i> (7495) 1.) To heal, make healthful. a.) <i>Qal</i> – to heal. b.) <i>Niphal</i> – to be healed. i.) literal (of persons) ii.) of water, pottery iii.) of national hurts (fig) iv.) of personal distress (fig) C.) <i>Piel</i> – to heal. D.) <i>Hithpael</i> – in order to get healed (infinitive).</p> <p>Verses 6-12 of Isaiah 53 focus only on the forgiveness of sins. It’s mentioned 5 times, and physical healing is not mentioned at all. Also, the verses leading up to the word <i>healed</i> talk about</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			our transgressions and iniquities. Finally, verse 5 mentions transgressions and iniquities, not physical sickness.
5	Healthy people don't need a doctor – sick people do	Matthew 9:10-13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31	Matthew – Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such scum?” When Jesus heard this, he said, “Healthy people don't need a doctor – sick people do.” Then he added, “Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”
6	Jesus' works prove that God sent him	John 5:36	But I have a greater witness than John – my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me. (The King James version uses the word “works” (Greek: <i>ergon</i>) in place of teachings and miracles.)
7	Jesus chooses the twelve disciples and gives them authority	Mark 3:13-15; Luke 6:12-13	Mark – Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go with him. And they came to him. Then he appointed twelve of them and called them his apostles. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach, giving them authority to cast out demons. Luke – One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles.
8	Jesus eases John the Baptist's doubts	Matthew 11:4-6; Luke 7:21-22	Matthew – Jesus told them, “Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen – the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.” And he added, “God blesses those who do not fall away because of me.” Luke – At that very time, Jesus cured many people of their diseases, illnesses, and evil spirits, and he restored sight to many who were blind. Then he told John's disciples, “Go back to John and tell him

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>what you have seen and heard – the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.”</p>
9	They cannot turn to me and let me heal them	Matthew 13:15	<p>For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes – so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.</p> <p>(Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 in this verse. Jesus is recorded quoting the same verse in Mark 4:12 and Luke 8:10, but those Gospels do not use the word heal.)</p>
10	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, the blind will see	Luke 4:16-21	<p>When [Jesus] came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the LORD’s favor has come.” He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. “The Scripture you’ve just heard has been fulfilled this very day!”</p> <p>(Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2 and 58:6 in these verses.)</p>
11	Physician, heal yourself	Luke 4:23-24	<p>Then [Jesus] said, “You will undoubtedly quote me this proverb: ‘Physician, heal yourself’ – meaning, ‘Do miracles here in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum.’ But I tell you the truth, no prophet is accepted in his own hometown.</p>
12	Why should you be angry with me healing on the Sabbath	John 7:21-24	<p>Jesus replied, “I did one miracle on the Sabbath, and you were amazed. But you work on the Sabbath, too, when you obey Moses’ law of circumcision. (Actually, this tradition of circumcision began with the patriarchs, long before the law of Moses.) For if the correct time for circumcising your son falls on the Sabbath, you go</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>ahead and do it so as not to break the law of Moses. So why should you be angry with me for healing a man on the Sabbath? Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly.”</p> <p>(The Greek word for miracle is <i>ergon</i>, which means work.)</p>
13	Tell Herod I will keep casting out demons and healing people	Luke 13:31-33	At that time some Pharisees said to him, “Get away from here if you want to live! Herod Antipas wants to kill you!” Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox that I will keep on casting out demons and healing people today and tomorrow; and the third day I will accomplish my purpose. Yes, today, tomorrow, and the next day I must proceed on my way. For it wouldn’t do for a prophet of God to be killed except in Jerusalem!
14	The seven sons of Sceva are attacked by an evil spirit	Acts 19:13-20	A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!” Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?” Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered. The story of what happened spread quickly all through Ephesus, to Jews and Greeks alike. A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honored. Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices. A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars. So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect.
15	They cannot turn to me and let me heal them	Acts 28:25-27	And after they had argued back and forth among themselves, they left with this final word from Paul: “The Holy Spirit was right when he said to your ancestors through Isaiah the prophet ‘Go and say to this people: When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend. For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear,

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>and they have closed their eyes – so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.”</p> <p>(Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10.)</p>
16	Belief and declaration lead to salvation	Romans 10:9	<p>If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.</p> <p>(Saved = <i>sozo</i> = save, make whole, be whole, and heal. In Mark 6:56, it says that the sick who touched at least the fringe of Jesus’ robe were healed (<i>sozo</i>). The Greek word <i>sozo</i> is mostly used to indicate salvation from sin and its penalty, and sickness is part of that penalty.)</p>
17	Partaking of the Lord’s supper unworthily leads to sickness and even death	1 Corinthians 11:27-30	<p>So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup. For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God’s judgment upon yourself. That is why many of you are weak and sick and some have even died.</p>
18	Spiritual gifts, including healing, are given by the Spirit	1 Corinthians 12:7-11 & 27-31	<p>A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages (in various tongues), while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have... All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it. Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles,</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages. Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.</p>
19	Paul's thorn in the flesh	2 Corinthians 12:7-10	<p>So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.</p> <p>(Weaknesses = <i>astheneia</i> = infirmity, weakness, disease, and sickness.)</p>
20	Paul was sick when he first brought Good News to the Galatians	Galatians 4:13-15	<p>Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News. But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible.</p>
21	Honor to Christ	Philippians 1:20	<p>And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die.</p>
22	Paul tells Timothy not to drink the water	1 Timothy 5:23	<p>Don't drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often.</p>
23	Paul left Trophimus sick	2 Timothy 4:20	<p>Erastus stayed at Corinth, and I (Paul) left Trophimus sick at Miletus.</p>
24	God's discipline is	Hebrews 12:10-13	<p>For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might</p>

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	always good for us		share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.
25	John wishes Gaius good health	3 John 1:2	Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit.
26	The leaves of trees will be used for medicine	Revelation 22:1-2	Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.
27	Obedience to God leads to good health	Exodus 15:25-26	It was there at Marah that the LORD set before them the following decree as a standard to test their faithfulness to him. He said, “If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you.”
28	Obedience to God leads to good health	Exodus 23:25	“You must serve only the LORD your God. If you do, I will bless you with food and water, and I will protect you from illness.”
29	A payment protects Israelites from plague	Exodus 30:11-12	Then the LORD said to Moses, “Whenever you take a census of the people of Israel, each man who is counted must pay a ransom for himself to the LORD. Then no plague will strike the people as you count them.”
30	Disobedience leads to sickness	Leviticus 26:14-16	“[If] you do not listen to me or obey all these commands, and if you break my covenant by rejecting my decrees, treating my regulations with contempt, and refusing to obey my commands, I will punish you. I will bring sudden terrors upon you – wasting diseases and burning fevers that will cause your eyes to fail and your life to ebb away.
31	Obedience to God	Deuteronomy 7:12,15	“If you listen to these regulations and faithfully obey them, the LORD your God will keep his covenant of unfailing love with you, as he

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	leads to good health		promised with an oath to your ancestors... And the LORD will protect you from all sickness. He will not let you suffer from the terrible diseases you knew in Egypt, but he will inflict them on all your enemies!
32	Disobedience leads to sickness	Deuteronomy 28:15,21-22,60-61	“But if you refuse to listen to the LORD your God and do not obey all the commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you... The LORD will afflict you with diseases until none of you are left in the land you are about to enter and occupy. The LORD will strike you with wasting diseases, fever, and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, and with blight and mildew. These disasters will pursue you until you die... He will afflict you with all the diseases of Egypt that you feared so much, and you will have no relief. The LORD will afflict you with every sickness and plague there is, even those not mentioned in this Book of Instruction, until you are destroyed.
33	Abandoning God leads to disease and devastation	Deuteronomy 29:22,25	“Then the generations to come, both your own descendants and the foreigners who come from distant lands, will see the devastation of the land and the diseases the LORD inflicts on it... ‘This happened because the people of the land abandoned the covenant that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.’”
34	A challenge to choose life over death	Deuteronomy 30:19-20	“Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! You can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the LORD, you will live long in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”
35	Abandoning God leads to sickness	Deuteronomy 32:15,24,39	But Israel... abandoned the God who made them... [so the Lord said], “I will weaken them with famine, burning fever, and deadly disease... I am the one who wounds and heals; no one can be rescued from my powerful hand!”

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
36	God wounds and heals	Job 5:17-18	“But consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty when you sin. For though he wounds, he also bandages. He strikes, but his hands also heal.”
37	God disciplines with pain	Job 33:19	...God disciplines people with pain on their sickbeds...
38	Elisha’s last illness	2 Kings 13:14	When Elisha was in his last illness, King Jehoash of Israel visited him and wept over him.
39	A plea for God to hear his people’s prayers	2 Chronicles 6:28-31	“If there is a famine in the land or a plague or crop disease or attacks of locusts or caterpillars, or if your people’s enemies are in the land besieging their towns – whatever disaster or disease there is – and if your people Israel pray about their troubles or sorrow, raising their hands toward this Temple, then hear from heaven where you live, and forgive. Give your people what their actions deserve, for you alone know each human heart. Then they will fear you and walk in your ways as long as they live in the land you gave to our ancestors.”
40	If my people...	2 Chronicles 7:14	Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore (heal) their land.
41	Jehoshaphat prays to God before the Israelites	2 Chronicles 20:5-9	Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem in front of the new courtyard at the Temple of the LORD. He prayed, “O LORD... Your people settled here and built this Temple to honor your name. They said, ‘Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war, plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us.’”
42	Hezekiah’s answered prayer	2 Chronicles 30:20	And the LORD listened to Hezekiah’s prayer and healed the people.
43	A plea for God’s healing	Psalms 6:2-3	Have compassion on me, LORD, for I am weak. Heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony. I am sick at heart. How long, O LORD, until you restore me?
44	A cry for help	Psalms 30:2-3	O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you restored my health. You brought me up from the

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	restores health		grave, O LORD. You kept me from falling into the pit of death.
45	A plea for God's help in sickness	Psalm 38:3,5-7,11,17, 21-22	Because of your anger, my whole body is sick; my health is broken because of my sins... My wounds fester and stink because of my foolish sins. I am bent over and racked with pain. All day long I walk around filled with grief. A raging fever burns within me, and my health is broken... My loved ones and friends stay away, fearing my disease. Even my own family stands at a distance... I am on the verge of collapse, facing constant pain... Do not abandon me, O LORD. Do not stand at a distance, my God. Come quickly to help me, O Lord my savior.
46	A prayer for mercy when sick or abandoned	Psalm 41	Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor! The LORD rescues them when they are in trouble. The LORD protects them and keeps them alive. He gives them prosperity in the land and rescues them from their enemies. The LORD nurses them when they are sick and restores them to health. "O LORD," I prayed, "have mercy on me. Heal me, for I have sinned against you." But my enemies say nothing but evil about me. "How soon will he die and be forgotten?" they ask. They visit me as if they were my friends, but all the while they gather gossip, and when they leave, they spread it everywhere. All who hate me whisper about me, imagining the worst. "He has some fatal disease," they say. "He will never get out of that bed!" Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me. LORD, have mercy on me. Make me well again, so I can pay them back! I know you are pleased with me, for you have not let my enemies triumph over me. You have preserved my life because I am innocent; you have brought me into your presence forever. Praise the LORD, the God of Israel, who lives from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and amen!
47	My health may fail, but God is my strength	Psalm 73:3-5,26	For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness. They seem to live such painless lives; their bodies are so healthy and strong. They don't have troubles like other people; they're not plagued with problems like everyone else... My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
48	Make the Lord your shelter and he will protect you from disease	Psalm 91:1-3,6,9-10	Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him. For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease... Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness... If you make the LORD your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home.
49	The Lord heals all your diseases	Psalm 103:1-5 (NIV)	Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
50	God’s word heals	Psalm 107:17-20	Some were fools; they rebelled and suffered for their sins. They couldn’t stand the thought of food, and they were knocking on death’s door. “LORD, help!” they cried in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them, snatching them from the door of death.
51	I called on the Lord and he saved me from death	Psalm 116:3-4,6-8	Death wrapped its ropes around me... Then I called on the name of the LORD: “Please, LORD, save me!” ... I was facing death, and he saved me. Let my soul be at rest again, for the LORD has been good to me. He has saved me from death...
52	The Lord heals	Psalm 147:3	[The Lord] heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.
53	Trust in the Lord with all your heart...	Proverbs 3:5-8	Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don’t be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.
54	God’s word brings life and healing	Proverbs 4:20-23	My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don’t lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
55	Words of the wise bring healing	Proverbs 12:18	Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing.
56	A reliable messenger brings healing	Proverbs 13:17	An unreliable messenger stumbles into trouble, but a reliable messenger brings healing.
57	Gentle words are life	Proverbs 15:4	Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.
58	Good news brings health	Proverbs 15:30	A cheerful look brings joy to the heart; good news makes for good health.
59	Kind words bring health	Proverbs 16:24	Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.
60	A cheerful heart	Proverbs 17:22	A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person’s strength.
61	Words kill or give life	Prov. 18:21	The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences. (NLT) Words kill, words give life; they’re either poison or fruit – you choose. (MSG)
62	There is a time for everything	Ecclesiastes 3:1-3	For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die... A time to kill and a time to heal.
63	Worry is unhealthy	Ecclesiastes 11:10	So refuse to worry, and keep your body healthy.
64	They cannot turn to me and let me heal them	Isaiah 6:8-10	Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?” I said, “Here I am. Send me.” And he said, “Yes, go and say to this people, ‘When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend.’ For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes – so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.” (Compare to Matthew 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; Acts 28:26-27)

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
65	The Lord will strike and heal	Isaiah 19:22	The LORD will strike Egypt, and then he will bring healing. For the Egyptians will turn to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas and heal them.
66	The deaf will hear, the blind will see	Isaiah 29:18	In that day the deaf will hear words read from a book, and the blind will see through the gloom and darkness.
67	The Lord will cure the wounds he gave	Isaiah 30:18,25-26	So the LORD must wait for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion... In that day... The moon will be as bright as the sun, and the sun will be seven times brighter – like the light of seven days in one! So it will be when the LORD begins to heal his people and cure the wounds he gave them.
68	Eyes will see and ears will hear	Isaiah 32:1,3-4	Look, a righteous king is coming!... Then everyone who has eyes will be able to see the truth, and everyone who has ears will be able to hear it... Those who stammer will speak out plainly.
69	The Lord will forgive	Isaiah 33:24	The people of Israel will no longer say, “We are sick and helpless,” for the LORD will forgive their sins.
70	He will open the eyes of the blind...	Isaiah 35:5-6	And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!
71	The Lord gives power and strength	Isaiah 40:29-31	[The Lord] gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.
72	God will heal us despite our rebellion	Isaiah 57:1-2,16-19	Good people pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come. For those who follow godly paths will rest in peace when they die... For I will not fight against you forever; I will not always be angry. If I were, all people would pass away – all the souls I have made. I was angry, so I punished these greedy people. I withdrew from them, but they kept going on their own stubborn way. I have seen what they do, but I will heal them anyway! I will lead them. I will comfort those who mourn, bringing words of praise to their lips.

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
73	This is the kind of fasting God wants	Isaiah 58:6-11	[This] is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind. Then when you call, the LORD will answer. 'Yes, I am here,' he will quickly reply. Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors! Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. The LORD will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring.
74	Is there no medicine in Gilead?	Jeremiah 8:14-15,21-22	"[The] LORD our God has decreed our destruction and has given us a cup of poison to drink because we sinned against the LORD. We hoped for peace, but no peace came. We hoped for a time of healing, but found only terror..." I hurt with the hurt of my people. I mourn and am overcome with grief. Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why is there no healing for the wounds of my people?
75	My wound is incurable	Jeremiah 15:17-19	[Jeremiah said], "I never joined the people in their merry feasts... Why then does my suffering continue? Why is my wound so incurable...?" This is how the Lord responds: "If you return to me, I will restore you so you can continue to serve me."
76	The Lord's healing is true healing	Jeremiah 17:14	O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed; if you save me, I will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone!
77	God wounds Israel for its sins, but also heals	Jeremiah 30:3-4,12-17	"For the time is coming when I will restore the fortunes of my people of Israel and Judah. I will bring them home to this land that I gave to their ancestors, and they will possess it again. I, the LORD, have spoken!" This is the message the LORD gave concerning Israel and Judah... This is what the LORD says: "Your injury is incurable – a terrible

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			<p>wound. There is no one to help you or to bind up your injury. No medicine can heal you. All your lovers – your allies – have left you and do not care about you anymore. I have wounded you cruelly, as though I were your enemy. For your sins are many, and your guilt is great. Why do you protest your punishment – this wound that has no cure? I have had to punish you because your sins are many and your guilt is great. But all who devour you will be devoured, and all your enemies will be sent into exile. All who plunder you will be plundered, and all who attack you will be attacked. I will give you back your health and heal your wounds,” says the LORD.</p>
78	<p>God will heal the wounds of Judah and Israel</p>	<p>Jeremiah 33:2,6-9</p>	<p>“This is what the LORD says... [The] time will come when I will heal Jerusalem’s wounds and give it prosperity and true peace. I will restore the fortunes of Judah and Israel and rebuild their towns. I will cleanse them of their sins against me and forgive all their sins of rebellion. Then this city will bring me joy, glory, and honor before all the nations of the earth! The people of the world will see all the good I do for my people, and they will tremble with awe at the peace and prosperity I provide for them.”</p>
79	<p>God reveals that he will take Ezekiel’s wife’s life</p>	<p>Ezekiel 24:15-16</p>	<p>Then this message came to [Ezekiel] from the LORD: “Son of man, with one blow I will take away your dearest treasure. Yet you must not show any sorrow at her death. Do not weep; let there be no tears.”</p>
80	<p>God will wound Egypt and strengthen Babylon</p>	<p>Ezekiel 30:20,24-25</p>	<p>[This] message came to me from the LORD... “I will strengthen the arms of Babylon’s king and put my sword in his hand. But I will break the arms of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he will lie there mortally wounded, groaning in pain. I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, while the arms of Pharaoh fall useless to his sides. And when I put my sword in the hand of Babylon’s king and he brings it against the land of Egypt, Egypt will know that I am the LORD.</p>
81	<p>God will bandage the injured and strengthen</p>	<p>Ezekiel 34:1-2, 4, 16, 20-22</p>	<p>Then this message came to me from the LORD: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel. Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks... You</p>

HEALING PLUNGE

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
	the weak in Israel		have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured... I will search for my lost ones who strayed away, and I will bring them safely home again. I will bandage the injured and strengthen the weak... Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. For you fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. So I will rescue my flock..."
82	The leaves of trees used for healing	Ezekiel 47:12	Fruit trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river. The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, for they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing. (See also Revelation 22:1-3)
83	Daniel's vegetable diet	Daniel 1:11-16	Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. "Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said. "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's food. Then make your decision in light of what you see." The attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others.
84	We will never serve other gods	Daniel 3:16-18	Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

Appendix E – Healing-Related Scriptures

#	Description	Verses	Scriptures
			(Whether God delivers you or not from persecution, threat, or health problems, don't compromise your faith. See also Philippians 1:20.)
85	Daniel is protected from the lions	Daniel 6:21-23	Daniel answered, "Long live the king (Darius)! My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty." The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.
86	Israel and Judah were sick with rebellion	Hosea 5:10-13	The leaders of Judah have become like thieves. So I will pour my anger on them like a waterfall. The people of Israel will be crushed and broken by my judgment because they are determined to worship idols. I will destroy Israel as a moth consumes wool. I will make Judah as weak as rotten wood. When Israel and Judah saw how sick they were, Israel turned to Assyria – to the great king there – but he could neither help nor cure them.
87	The Lord injures and heals	Hosea 6:1	Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces; now he will heal us. He has injured us; now he will bandage our wounds.
88	The Lord wants to heal	Hosea 7:1	"[The Lord] want[s] to heal Israel, but its sins are too great."
89	The Lord heals	Hosea 11:3	It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them.
90	The worthless shepherd	Zechariah 11:15-16	Then the LORD said to me, "Go again and play the part of a worthless shepherd. This illustrates how I will give this nation a shepherd who will not care for those who are dying, nor look after the young, nor heal the injured, nor feed the healthy. Instead, this shepherd will eat the meat of the fattest sheep and tear off their hooves."
91	Sun of righteousness	Malachi 4:2	"But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture."