

Medicine and Vaccinations in the Bible:

Is there no medicine in Gilead?
Is there no Doctor there?
Why is there no healing for the sickness of my people?
Jeremiah 8:22

Give her medicine. Perhaps she can yet be healed.
Jeremiah 51:8

The Bible encourages us to use medicine, telling us to apply medicinal support to those in need and to do it to the best of our abilities.

To understand the Bible's description of medicine, we need to remember that the Bible was written by a different culture, between 4000 and 1500 years ago which means that the medicinal terms were different. Secondly, we need to remember the difference between prayer or faith and medicine.

Starting with the second one. Faith, Prayer and Medicine.

James tells us that pure religion is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction (trouble, anguish, sickness)¹. James goes on to say that if a brother or sister is in need and we just pray for them without helping that is dead faith². The statement that we just need faith for healing, is not biblical, we need to provide practical physical help where we can.

From scripture we can see that not everyone is healed immediately, and some are not healed in this lifetime. An example here is the man whom Peter healed at the Beautiful Gate³. He was born cripple⁴ and was 40 years old⁵, begging daily⁶ at the gate. Since Jesus had passed through that gate multiple times, we can assume that this man had seen and heard of Jesus, but he was healed through Peter some time after Jesus was crucified. Another example is Paul who had a Thorn in his flesh⁷, which most commentators consider an issue with his eyesight.⁸ Paul earnestly prayed but was not healed⁹. God does allow sickness to help us spiritually.¹⁰

¹ James 1:27

² James 2:14-17

³ Acts 3:1-9

⁴ Acts 3:2

⁵ Acts 4:22

⁶ Acts 3:2

⁷ 2Cor 12:7, in verse 5 Paul references infirmities so it is logical to understand this as an ailment

⁸ Paul had a scribe write some of his letters (Rom16:22, only writing the salutation in 1Cor 16:21; 2Thes 3:17) and when he did write he wrote in large script as if he could not see well, Gal 6:11. Since Paul did not recognise the High Priest Acts 23:2-5 when as a member of the Sanhedrin he would almost certainly have met him and at the very least seen him. Also, the Galatians would have given Paul their eyes, Gal 4:15.

⁹ 2Cor 12:8-9

¹⁰ 2Cor 12:9

The good Samaritan¹¹ is a really good example for us. When the good Samaritan found the wounded man, he bound up the man's wounds and poured oil and wine on them. This was good medical advice in those days. Jesus tells us to go and do likewise¹² in other words follow good medical advice.

Paul told Timothy to use a little wine for his stomach¹³ and Luke is referred to as the beloved Doctor¹⁴. In the old testament God laments that people have not followed the medicinal practices that would provide healing¹⁵ and in Ezekiel comments on leaves¹⁶ for healing.

The Bible is clear that we are to pray for protection and healing from illnesses, but we are also to follow good medical advice.

There is another important biblical aspect to vaccination, and in specific the Covid Vaccination. Jesus preached and demonstrated acceptance. To reject or alienate someone who has, or has not, had the vaccination is completely against what Jesus stood for. I have had the vaccination and my best friend has not. I admire his honest stand in his opinion. It is not my role to change his mind. Our role is to be considerate and encourage each other in love and good works.¹⁷ The Holy Spirit is the one who is tasked with leading us in truth and guiding us¹⁸. So we continue to listen to what God tells the other, as we grow in faith as brothers in Christ.

Foot note:

I was not going to comment on the view I have heard that the COVID vaccine is the mark of the beast but for completeness lets us examine the mark of the beast.

1. No one can buy or sell without the mark¹⁹
 2. The mark is on the Right hand or foreheads²⁰
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1. While freedom to enter shops may be limited in some countries/places to those with the vaccine there is no limitation on shopping or buying as such, for example we are free to buy online. The Covid vaccine does not meet the specification for preventing buying and selling.
 2. As the vaccination is injected into right or left the shoulder and leaves no mark we cannot link the vaccination and the mark of the beast.
 3. Revelation does talk about plagues but it also describes the death rate as being 1/3rd. The current death rate from COVID without the vaccine is somewhere between 2% and 0.2% or at most 1/50th. So Biblically, COVID is not specifically nor of its own an end times sign.

May the Lord bless you as you search the scripture to see if these things are true.

¹¹ Luke 10:30-37

¹² Luke 10:25-37

¹³ 1 Tim 5:23

¹⁴ Col 4:14

¹⁵ Isa 1:6; Jer 8:22

¹⁶ Eze 47:12

¹⁷ Heb 10:24, see also Heb 3:13

¹⁸ John 14:26, 1Cor 2:10-11, John 16:13-15

¹⁹ Rev 13:17

²⁰ Rev 13:16

