

FIRST

Created to worship Him alone



Sunday, May 28, 2023– Jeromey Martini
“Adonai Rapha”

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

(These are to be used personally, with family, or with your Small Group)

1. Have you ever experienced miraculous physical healing, either for yourself or for someone you know? Briefly share about your experience.

2. Although healing in the Bible is often connected with faith or trust in God, there is no prescribed “formula” for faith. How does faith feature differently (or not at all) in the following passages?
 - a. Mark 2:1-12 – whose faith is associated with healing the paralytic man (note v. 5)?
 - b. Luke 5:25-34 – whose faith is associated with healing the hemorrhaging woman?
 - c. Luke 7:1-17 – whose faith is associated with healing the centurion’s slave (7:1-10)? Is faith associated with healing the widow’s son (7:11-17)?
 - d. Acts 3:1-10 – Is faith mentioned the healing of the paralytic man?

3. Although the prophets and Apostles taught and performed healing miracles, what do these passages suggest about whether they expected healing to happen all the time?
 - a. 2 Kings 13:14
 - b. Philippians 2:26
 - c. 1 Timothy 5:23
 - d. 2 Timothy 4:20

4. James 5 gives the New Testament's clearest directions about praying for healing. The passage refers to Elijah's prayers for rain to cease and then rain to resume three years later, a story encompassing 1 Kings 17-18. How might the miraculous accounts in 1 Kings 17-18 inspire your faith when praying for a miraculous healing today?
5. Has the lack of healing for someone in your life ever challenged your faith in God or in God's goodness? How did you or how do you continue to work through that?
6. The Psalms are Christianity's and Judaism's prayer book. The most common types of psalms in the Bible contain laments. Lament psalms invite us honestly to express our pain or distress to God, and most conclude with a proclamation of hope (even if the hope is not yet realized).
 - a. Read Psalm 6 – a lament from a place of physical affliction. Might praying through a lament psalm help you to express your own suffering or grief?
 - b. Does it help to proclaim hope even in the midst of experiencing hopelessness?
7. Jesus' resurrection and ascension does not mean his work is done. He has overcome and is now finishing his mission to rescue "his own."
 - a. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-26. Picture Jesus still at work, putting God's "enemies" in their place. Does knowing that Death is God's "last enemy" help you to make sense of the sickness and death that persists in the world?
 - b. Skip down to 1 Corinthians 15:51-57. Picture Jesus' final victory, when death and sickness are no more. As you imagine Jesus' victory over Death, recite aloud Paul's (and Hosea's) victory declaration in v. 55, "Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?" Does that picture and recitation inspire faith and hope for you today?
8. Take some time to pray with those around you. If appropriate, follow James' direction and pray for those in need of healing.

Resources for Further Study

For those interested in pursuing this topic further, some resources are listed below. Some are available online, some at the Saskatoon Public Library, and most at Horizon College & Seminary library, where you are welcome to obtain a free library card. Note that just because a resource is listed does not indicate a complete endorsement of its views.

Classic works on healing:

Andrew Murray, *Divine Healing* (various publishers). Available in the public domain at: <https://www.hopefaithprayer.com/books/Divine%20Healing%20-%20Andrew%20Murray.pdf>

The full audiobook is available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XruxFFj8fg>

Andrew Murray (1828-1917) was a Scottish pastor and missionary in South Africa and a leader in the Keswick revival. Among his many teachings, he emphasized that God's divine healing remains active and available today.

A.B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing* (various publishers). Available online through the Alliance Canada: <https://www.cmacan.org/resources/the-gospel-of-healing/>

A.B. Simpson (1843-1919) was a Canadian preacher and theologian and founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. His study and teaching on God's continued work in divine healing remain a cornerstone of Alliance doctrine and practice.

Contemporary works on healing:

Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Ave Maria Press, 1974; revised and expanded, 1999).

Francis MacNutt (1925-2020) wrote Healing while a Dominican priest in 1974.

He later left the priesthood and married his wife, Judith, with whom he established a Christian healing centre in Florida that remains in operation.

Ronald A.N. Kydd, *Healing through the Centuries: Models for Understanding* (Hendrickson, 1998).

Former Horizon College and Tyndale Seminary professor Ron Kydd traces occurrences of miraculous healing from the time of Jesus to present day, offering models for contemporary application.

Craig S. Keener, *Miracles Today: The Supernatural Work of God in the Modern World* (Baker Academic, 2021).

Although this book examines contemporary miracles generally, most of the book focuses on healing miracles. Craig Keener is Professor of Biblical Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary and recently appeared on UK radio program Unbelievable? to defend the existence of healing miracles today:

<https://www.premierunbelievable.com/unbelievable/unbelievable-miracle-healing-does-it-happen-today-craig-keener-peter-may-and-joshua-brown-plus-alanzo-paul-on-reboot/14806.article>

Cautionary works on “perfect health”:

Gordon D. Fee, *The Disease of the Health and Wealth Gospel* (Regent College Publishing, 2006), ch. 2.

Andrew K. Gabriel, *Simply Spirit-Filled: Experiencing God in the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit* (Emanate Books, 2019), ch. 5.

Both Fee and Gabriel write from the Pentecostal tradition, simultaneously affirming God’s miraculous activity today while cautioning against excess. Fee was for years professor of New Testament at Regent College, Vancouver; Gabriel is VP Academics and Professor of Theology at Horizon College & Seminary.

Works on pain and suffering:

C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (various publishers). Available in the public domain at: http://www.samizdat.qc.ca/arts/lit/PDFs/GriefObserved_CSL.pdf

This classic work collects Lewis's theological reflections on the loss of his wife, Joy.

C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (various publishers). Available in the public domain at:

http://www.samizdat.qc.ca/cosmos/philo/PDFs/ProblemofPain_CSL.pdf

In this book, Lewis tackles the longstanding criticism to Christianity – “If God is all good and all-powerful, why does he allow pain and suffering in the world?”

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) is one of Christianity's foremost popular thinkers and apologists. Formerly professor at both Oxford and Cambridge universities, Lewis captured the Christian imagination through his fiction (e.g., Narnia Chronicles) and his accessible theological writings.

Stanley Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering* (Eerdmans, 1990).

In this book, Anabaptist theologian and ethicist Stanley Hauerwas provocatively addresses the question of suffering – especially the suffering of children. He challenges the modern church for largely surrendering its calling to be a place of refuge, comfort, and hope to those who suffer, by instead giving up its place to modern medicine and the secular hope in a technological “cure” for death.