

Episode # 630 The Why Question 15: Why Illness?

I. One of the most difficult questions we must ask ourselves regarding God, life, and the world is the “why” question. We who believe that there is a God Who is all-good and all-loving and Who made the world must answer why then this world is such a terrible place and in such a mess.

II. One of the sad situations we face in this world is the reality of sickness, injury, chronic illness, and disease. The sad reality of poor health is something some people must live with their whole lives, while others die of illness and disease, like the current coronavirus situation that is sweeping the world. Why does a good God allow the sad reality of sickness?

III. God’s Provision for Healing.

- A. Genesis 2:9. The tree of life was provided for Adam and Eve to eat of freely. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil (calamity) is what brought sickness.
- B. Genesis 3:22. The tree of life was so powerful it would even have healed the physical damage done by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! But not the moral damage, which was unthinkable. Thus Adam and Eve could not partake, vs. 23-24.
- C. Revelation 22:2. In the new heavens and the new earth, the tree of life is there for the healing of the nations. (This will probably be for injury.) This will bring all sickness to an end for good.

IV. Israel and Sickness.

- A. Deuteronomy 28. Israel was promised blessing if they obeyed the LORD, but if they disobeyed, cursing. One of the curses was sickness. Compare verses 3-4 with 21-22. Yet God does not act this way today, for that would not be gracious, Ephesians 4:32.
- B. Leviticus 13. Leprosy was a terrible scourge on Israel. It appears like no disease we have today, and is a symbol for sin. See verses 1-2; the priests were to diagnose it. Verses 45-46; he was quarantined all his days, or until he was healed.
- C. Psalm 38. David may have been struck with leprosy due to his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. Consider verses 1-11. He is quarantined, as a leper was.
- D. Psalm 88. The only psalm that ends gloomily. This seems to be the song of a leper.
 1. Verses 4-5. He is near death and considered like the dead.
 2. Verse 7. He considers that this illness is God’s wrath.
 3. Verse 8. His acquaintances are all far from him, so he is quarantined.
 4. Verse 9. His eyes waste away because of the disease.
 5. Verse 15. He has been suffering of this disease since his youth.
 6. Verse 18. All ends in darkness, as if swallowed by death.

V. The Lord and Sickness.

- A. Matthew 8:16-17. The Lord took away infirmities and sicknesses. He bore them Himself, like He did our sin and death. This shows again that sickness is connected with both!
- B. Matthew 10:7-8. He sent His disciples to do the same. This was a demonstration of the fact that the kingdom of the heavens was at hand.
- C. Matthew 11:4-6. The Lord healed even to raising the dead!
- D. John 2:4. Consider what the Lord did not do: work miracles before His ministry began. Apparently this even extended to the fact that His foster father Joseph had died, and the Lord had not healed him!

VI. The Apostles and Sickness.

- A. John 20:21. The Lord sent His disciples as He had been sent.

- B. Acts 3:6-8. Peter and John worked a great miracle of healing. This was through the Lord's name, verse 16.
- C. Acts 5:14-16. This extended to the place where even Peter's shadow would heal! Like the Lord, every one who came to them for healing received it.
- D. Acts 19:11-12. Paul's ministry got to the point where he could send a cloth to the sick and they would be healed!
- E. Acts 20:25. This was all part of their proclaiming of the kingdom of God.

VII. Healing Today.

- A. Philippians 2:25-30. Paul's fellow worker was sick, and Paul was not able to heal him, only to pray for God's mercy on him!
- B. I Timothy 5:23. Timothy, Paul's young helper and fellow apostle, did not receive healing from Paul; only medical advice!
- C. II Timothy 4:20. Paul left Trophimus behind him because he was sick!
- D. These three passages show us clearly that powers of miraculous healing had passed off the scene before Paul's ministry ended. I believe this was at the second great dividing line in the New Testament, the beginning of the dispensation of grace at Acts 28:28.
- E. Philippians 4:6-7. We are not promised to be granted every request, but only that peace (a true union) with God will guard our hearts and minds when we pray and present our requests before Him.

VIII. Conclusion: In the beginning, God provided for the perfect health of all His creatures, but that went out the window when mankind rebelled against God at Satan's instigation. Israel had promises for health if they obeyed God and sickness if they did not, but God makes no such promises in the dispensation of grace. The Lord showed He was the enemy of sickness and disease, and when His kingdom comes all disease will be eliminated. The apostles healed diseases like Christ did at first, but toward the end of Paul's ministry the manifest miracles of healing stopped. Then Paul, and we today, have to present our requests for help and healing to God and be at peace with Him no matter what happens. Yet what happens if the worst comes and illness leads to death? We will consider that in our next message.