

By His Stripes We Are Spiritually Healed - Forgiven: Isaiah 53

800 BC

50 AD

65 AD

1960 AD

Future

4000 BC

2000 BC

Adam sinned.
The Great Problem of Sin.

Gen 3:12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." ESV

From the day that Adam ate of the Tree, it was sin that separates man from God and is the great cosmic problem God had to solve. That, and only that, is what Jesus had to died for. Sin. There was nothing else that needed God to die for, to pay for.

Scholar on Isa 53:4 - William Mc Donald

He also healed all who were sick, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53:4. "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." Verse 17 is often used by faith-healers to show that healing is in the atonement, and that therefore physical healing is something the believer can claim by faith. But here the Spirit of God applies the prophecy to our Savior's earthly healing ministry and not to His work on the cross.

The Believers Commentary

Scholar on Isa 53:4 - Dr Bob Utley
Special interpretive principles related to genre. Let me summarize some of the specific guidelines involved in these specific genres. The structural aspect. If you know nothing about Hebrew parallelism, you cannot interpret 1/3 of the Old Testament, because 1/3 is Hebrew poetry. And it is. It is thought. It is rhymed and thought. And it's going to be saying the same thing, saying the same thing with the little added information, saying exactly the opposite, or saying two things to build to a third conclusion. Now once you see that, it's so helpful. Let me quickly do an illustration of this Psalm 103:3 'who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases'. People have said that healing is a part of the atonement. That in Isaiah 53 when it says by his stripes you were healed, that not only are we saved by Jesus death on the cross, but we are healed by Jesus death on the cross and they use Isaiah 53 and Psalm 103:3. Wait a minute, if you look at 103 in context, it's not talking about healing is talking about forgiveness, and a good example of that is Isaiah 1. As they are one Israel is depicted as a person who's sick from the top of their head to the soles of their feet. Wounds sores, not bandage, not soothing. Now Israel's corporately personified as a sick person. So how do you deal with a sick person? You heal them. Well, how do you deal with Israel? You forgive them. So really it's imagery for forgiveness, not for physical healing. But I couldn't defend that unless I looked at the parallelism in Psalm 103 and the parallel passages and Isaiah 53 and Isaiah 1. So this is how you go about dealing with subjects like that." Biblical Interpretation Seminar - Part 4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VChDTI-JELQ>

The Lord Will Provide Payment For The Sin

Abraham: Gen 22:11 But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided." ESV

Yehovah Jireh: yir'eh = "will see / will see to it," an idiom meaning to provide (cf. Gen 22:8: 'Elohim yir'eh-lô haseh—"God will see to (provide) the lamb"). The second clause yĕrā'eh (Niphal) literally, "will be seen/appear," hence the traditional gloss, "On the mount of the LORD it will be provided / He will be seen." Sense in context: The name marks God's provision of a sacrificial substitute (the ram "instead of his son," v. 13).

There is nothing in the covenant name "Yehovah Jireh" that teaches material prosperity. It declares that the LORD provides—specifically, a sacrificial substitute—foreshadowing God's ultimate provision in the Lamb

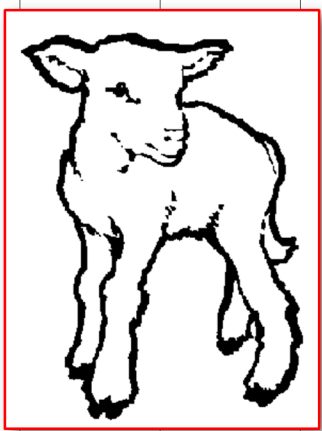
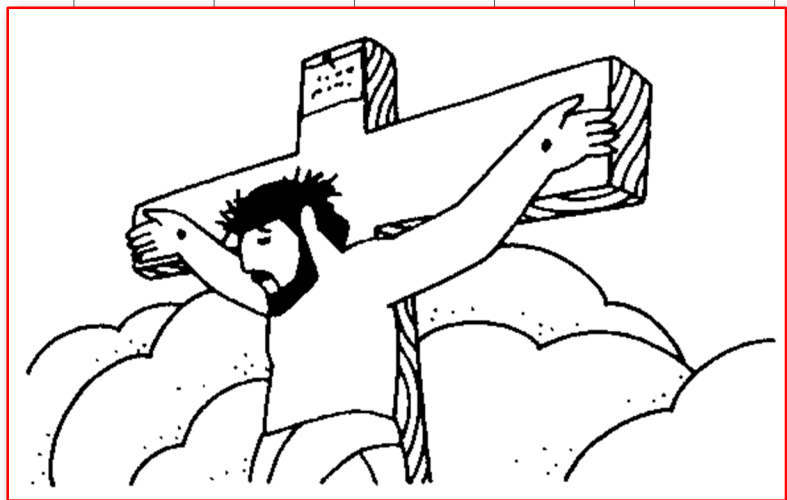
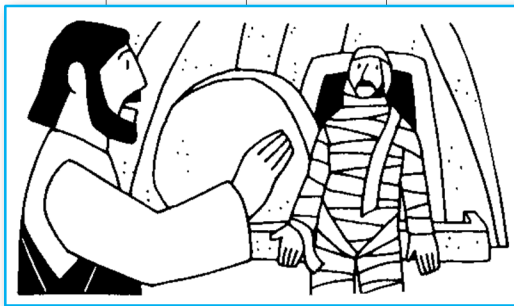
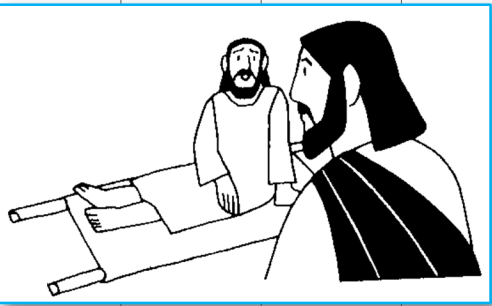
Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ESV

Spiritual Healing Is A Consistent Biblical Metaphor For Forgiveness Throughout Scripture. (Part A)
Spiritual Healing: Forgiveness of sins, cleansing of guilt, restoration of covenant relationship (e.g., Ps 41:4).

Old Testament - Hebrew רָפָא(rapha) is used in both physical and spiritual senses; the prophets often use it metaphorically for forgiveness. Psalm 41:4 "O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you." (healing = forgiveness of sin). Isaiah 1:5–6 Israel's sin pictured as wounds and sores needing healing. Isaiah 6:10 "...lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." (healed = forgiven, restored). Isaiah 19:22 Egypt will be "struck and healed," meaning repentance and forgiveness. Isaiah 53:5 "...with his wounds we are healed." (Messiah's atonement brings forgiveness). Jeremiah 3:22 "Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness." Hosea 6:1 "...he has torn us, that he may heal us... after two days he will revive us." (restoration to covenant). Hosea 14:4 "I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely."



Spiritual Healing Is A Consistent Biblical Metaphor. (Part B)
Spiritual Healing: Forgiveness of sins, cleansing of guilt, restoration of covenant relationship (e.g., Ps 41:4).

New Testament - Greek ἰάομαι (iaomai) in the NT likewise carries a dual sense: physical cure or spiritual salvation/forgiveness. Matthew 13:15 (quoting Isa 6:10) – "...lest they... turn, and I would heal them." Mark 2:17 "Those who are well have no need of a physician... I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (healing = forgiveness). John 12:40 (again Isa 6:10) – Hardening prevents healing (forgiveness). Acts 28:27 Paul cites Isa 6:10, healing = forgiveness/restoration. 1 Peter 2:24 "...by his wounds you have been healed." (explicitly forgiveness). Revelation 22:2 "...the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (eschatological forgiveness & reconciliation).

Theological Meaning in these OT & NT verses: Healing = forgiveness (atonement applied).

Jesus' Death "For Sin" - NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS - But, there is no biblical verse that explicitly says, "Jesus died to pay for physical healing.

- These passages explicitly state that Jesus died for sin, or that His death was a sin offering:
1. Romans 4:25 "Who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."
 2. Romans 5:8–9 "Christ died for us... having now been justified by his blood..."
 3. Romans 6:10 "The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God."
 4. Romans 8:3 "God has done what the law... could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh."
 5. 1 Corinthians 15:3 "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures."
 6. 2 Corinthians 5:21 "He made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
 7. Galatians 1:4 "Who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age..."
 8. Hebrews 1:3 "...After making purification for sins, he sat down..."
 9. Hebrews 9:26 "He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."
 10. Hebrews 10:12 "But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins..."
 11. 1 Peter 2:24 "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree..."
 12. 1 Peter 3:18 "Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous..."
 13. 1 John 2:2 "He is the propitiation for our sins..."
 14. 1 John 3:5 "He appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin."
 15. Revelation 1:5 "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood..."

Matthew 8:14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

Context of Matt 8:17
While Jesus was healing the sick during His earthly ministry.

Applied to earthly healing ministry

As in:

Acts 10:38 He (Jesus) went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Author: Matthew who is a Jew, and is writing a gospel account to the Jews, interprets Isa 53:4 this way. (When the inspired Word of God tells us something, we do not need to try and interpret it.)

Context of 1 Peter 2:24

- 1 Peter is about Suffering as a Christian.
- Chapter 2 is about keeping right attitudes and rejoicing when suffering.
- Verse 21-24 is about how Jesus is our example, and He suffered unfairly, without sinning as we ought, yet did not complain.

There is nothing in this context about physical healing.

The context in 1 Peter, is obeying authorities - God, civil and your master, if you happen to be a slave. The developing theme within the context is to accept unjust treatment i.e. "after all that Jesus did for you with healings and deliverances etc. He suffered unjustly by crucifixion, in fact, He even paid for your sin and spiritually healed/saved you, while He was mistreated and killed. See what a wonderful example He is of suffering unjustly." But, there is no thought anywhere in this passage about physical healing, it is about salvation. Stripes = God's punishment for sin, Jesus the Guilt Offering. There is no need to punish for sickness.

Another consideration:

Physical judgment of sickness & death for underscoring communion takers: If God judges believers with sickness if they do not 'discern the Body of Christ' then obviously Jesus did not pay for sickness on the cross. God ordains weakness/sickness for sanctification or discipline (2 Cor 12:7–10; 1 Cor 11:30–32; 1 Tim 5:23; 2 Tim 4:20):

1 Cor 11:27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

1 Peter 2:18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. 19 For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Supposedly Christ dying for our physical/emotional healing, is popularised:

Kenneth Hagin's testimony: '...The Devil said to my mind, "You're going to die. This is one time you're not going to get your healing." I pulled the covers over my head and began to laugh. I didn't feel like laughing, but I just laughed anyway for about ten minutes. Finally, the Devil asked me what I was laughing about. "I'm laughing at you!" I said. "You said I wasn't going to get my healing. Ha, ha, Mr. Devil. I don't expect to get my healing! Jesus already got it for me! Now, in case you can't read, I'll quote 1 Peter 2:24 for you." And I did. After quoting the last phrase, "By whose stripes ye were healed," I said, "Now if we were—I was! So I don't have to get it. Jesus already got it! And because Jesus got it for me, I accept it, and claim it, and I have it. Now you just gather up your little symptoms and get out of here, Mr. Devil!"'

Joseph Prince:

'But what came on [Jesus] was not just the whip stripping the flesh off His bare back, but your sicknesses and diseases. Each time He was whipped, every form of sickness and disease, including arthritis, cancer, diabetes, bird flu and dengue fever, came upon Him. "The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Today, healing is your right because Jesus has paid the price for your healing. So if the devil says, "You cannot be healed," just declare, "Jesus has paid for my healing. Disease has no right to be in my body. I am healed in Jesus' name!" Every curse of sickness that was supposed to fall on you fell on Jesus instead. He bore every one of those stripes, so that you can walk in divine health all the days of your life. The price has been paid so that you can rise up and get out of your bed of affliction!'

Joyce Meyer:

'How do you stand against sickness? For starters, plead the blood of Jesus against the sickness and over every part of your body—your immune system, your organs, your blood cells and so on. Then speak the Word over your body. You can pray, "Father, I believe it's Your will that I be in health. I believe that by the stripes of Jesus, I am healed. Your Word is health and life to my body, and it will accomplish that which You please and purpose."

<http://www.joycemeyer.org/OurMinistries/Magazine/0703/healing-and-wholeness.htm>

1. Ultimate Healing of Body: There will be a final and complete bodily redemption.

2. Healing of Sin - The Nations:

The culmination is in Revelation 22:2, where the "healing of the nations" = final removal of sin's curse and complete forgiveness.

Summary And The Problems of this Wrong Understanding

Sin was the great cosmic problem that needed to be atoned for, and it was in the cross. Mere physical healing never needed to be. Physical healing is simply a gift, a benevolent move on God's behalf. Physical healing is only related to the Cross in that God accepts us because His Son died for our sin; much the same way that God gives us food to eat or revelation because we are acceptable to Him. What need does God have to sacrifice His spotless Son just to give us a physical healing, mere physical healing would never require that, whereas sin, and only sin demanded it. Yet, at the end, God's own, will be perfected physically too.

The problem of sin had been finally and totally dealt with as a mere lamb could not - this is the recurring excited proclamation of the New Testament writers. Physical healing just did not figure as prominently in their thinking. Physical healing was not 'The Work' but rather 'a sign' (John 2: 1-10) that God had done 'THE WORK' through His Son.

The idea that physical healing is included in the atonement, as a guaranteed benefit, is common among Word of Faith and some Pentecostal groups. They frequently cite Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 8:17, and 1 Peter 2:24 as proof-texts. However, this position fails on several exegetical and theological grounds:

1. It detracts from the real significance of the Blood of Christ and it's propitiatory value. If you are not healed, was the Cross not sufficient? After removing sin that might block healing, is the Cross insufficient? Do not devalue the Cross - sin is the 'great terrible' that, great cosmic problem that required the highest and most Sacred Sacrifice. Healing is easy, but 'SIN'. Do not cheapen the Cross by saying that it was about something as minor as physical healing.
2. It became a 'right': We have taken this teaching with our modern self-centred focus and demanded healing as though it were our right, because Jesus died for it. So we think it is absolutely ours. We do not talk the same way about salvation, we are rather humbled by it – grateful for His sacrifice and not demanding of it. A different attitude. John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. The cross grants the right to forgiveness and adoption, not healing. That is not a right, given anywhere in Scripture.
3. Contextual Misuse of Isaiah 53: The healing language is metaphorical, set in the context of transgression and iniquity (vv. 5–6). The Hebrew מְרִיפָה *meripah* refers to covenantal restoration. Jesus' substitutionary suffering is described in moral categories, not medical.
4. Matthew 8:17 Applied to Earthly Ministry, Not Cross: Matthew clearly applies Isaiah 53:4 to Jesus' healing during His life, not His death. It does not teach that the cross secured healing.
5. 1 Peter 2:24 Speaks of Moral Restoration: Peter explicitly defines the "healing" as turning from sin, not recovering from disease. This confirms a spiritual, not physical, interpretation.
6. Lack of Apostolic Teaching: Nowhere do the apostles claim that Jesus died so we might be physically healed in this life. Paul's theology is future-oriented (Rom 8:23). Timothy (1 Tim 5:23) and Trophimus (2 Tim 4:20) remained sick.
7. Category Confusion: Word of Faith conflates spiritual atonement with physical benefits. While the eschatological promise includes bodily redemption, that is not yet realized (Rom 8:23; Phil 3:21).
8. Presumption vs. Faith: The expectation of guaranteed healing shifts the position of trust from God's will to human insistence. This borders on presumption, not biblical faith.

Pentecostals are so deeply attached to this doctrine, even though it is not necessary for healing to be included in the work of the Cross. Why is this doctrine so important, considering that God heals people anyway, why must it be connected to the Cross?