

Lord, why am I ill?

Lord, why am I ill?

*Why Christians fall ill –
and how all illness can be healed*

And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? (Exodus 4:11)

Tom Harrison

Rickfords Hill Publishing Ltd.

Published by
RICKFORDS HILL PUBLISHING LTD.
P.O. Box 576, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 6XX, UK.

Copyright © 2008 Tom Harrison

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the publisher. Short extracts may be used for review purposes.

First published 2008

ISBN 978-1-905044-04-7

Extracts from the Authorized Version of the Bible (The King James Bible), the rights in which are vested in the Crown, are reproduced by permission of the Crown's Patentee, Cambridge University Press.

Printed and bound in China by 1010 Printing International Ltd.

Contents

SECTION I

- 1 A testimony
 - 2 Lord, why am I ill?
 - 3 Sin and sickness – what the Bible says
 - 4 Sin and sickness – the purpose
 - 5 Sin and sickness – the precision of the link
 - 6 The doctrine in detail
 - 7 My servant Job (why men of God fall ill)
 - 8 How does healing come?
 - 9 The role of elders
 - 10 The time of Jacob's trouble
 - 11 Satan and demons – their role in sickness
- Appendices

SECTION II – Guidance Notes

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his sincere thanks to Dr Jeremy Boucher for comments and suggestions on medical factual accuracy. Any mistakes are the author's own.

SECTION I

He healeth me

He healeth me, O blessèd truth,
His mighty word renews my youth,
By His own power from sickness free,
My precious Saviour healeth me.

*He healeth me, He healeth me,
By His own word He healeth me;
His faithful witness I would be,
For by His word He healeth me.*

Sometimes through testing times I go,
Dark seems the way, and full of woe;
But in the furnace though I be,
My great Physician healeth me.

Lord, I would spread this truth abroad,
The mighty power of Thy word;
It's just the same, the blind now see,
And demons at Thy presence flee.

For sin and sickness doth depart,
When Thou dost reign within the heart;
And I from all the curse am free,
Since Christ, my Saviour, healeth me.

Anonymous, from Redemption Hymnal

1

A testimony

In the spring of 2003 I was busy serving the Lord. I was in church leadership and at the same time was running a Christian publishing company. I was seeking to be all out for God. Then I fell ill.

What started as a virus turned into a particularly bad case of *systemic candidiasis*. This is an unpleasant disease in which a fungus, *candida albicans*, lives in your digestive system, feeds on the food you eat and then releases toxins into your blood stream, which then poison the rest of your body. The symptoms are diarrhoea, aching muscles, chronic fatigue, mental incoherence and others.

I was unable to do much work as a result of this illness and I had to lie on my bed most of the day from exhaustion. Diarrhoea was a part of daily life. If I ate a normal meal, within half an hour my body would be racked with aches, and my mind as incoherent as if I were drunk.

I found, however, that by following a strict diet I could get some relief. This diet consisted of only potatoes, oil, meat and fish. I kept to this as much as I could but every few days I had to eat some other things, such as fruit, in order to stop myself feeling ill from malnutrition. This however made me feel ill again from the candidiasis.

This lasted for two and a half years.

When I first became ill, I was wondering if there was any

reason for it. I meditated on it and the passage of scripture that came to mind was this:

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents. (John 9:1-3)

I thought that this was the Lord's answer to my question, so from that point on I didn't look for a reason for my illness. I just trusted God to use my life as He chose, even if this meant I had to endure physical illness. I thought that the Lord might want me to suffer just for the general refinement of my character.

After two and a half years I was desperate to be healed. I had been to three GPs, a consultant haematologist, a consultant dermatologist, a consultant gastroenterologist, had had four courses of drugs, numerous blood tests, had tried many different herbal remedies and supplements, but felt as bad as I had ever done.

Through all this I was continuing to seek to maintain a close walk with God. One day, as I was communing with the Lord, I was asking Him what I could do to walk more closely with Him, and how I could please Him. I felt Him say, 'It saddens me that you go to earthly doctors and not to me.'

A few days later I heard my brother preach a gospel message on the woman with the issue of blood.

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. (Mark 5:25-29)

I was struck by the fact that the doctors, as in my case, had been unable to help her. I felt challenged again that I should be getting

my healing from the Lord. However, I had been out for prayer in two churches. Elders had laid hands on me and prayed. I was no better. I didn't know what to do.

Over a period of some weeks, I started drawing very near to the Lord. I cut out every kind of distraction from my life. Then I was asked to give a message at a church's Prayer and Bible Week. I sought the Lord for a message, and He gave me something I had never heard or understood before, a message about discerning the body of Christ.

The heart of the message was that God has provided His church (the body of Christ) for our spiritual food, and that by spending time with other believers we are fed spiritually. Consequently, we should not despise any part of it and should realise how precious it is, love it, enjoy it, cherish it, and treat it with the respect it deserves. This includes every believer, whatever his failings, and every church of every denomination (this obviously refers only to born again people – the true church).

This completely changed my outlook. I had known that my personal fellowship with God was my spiritual food, but I had not seen my need for fellowship with people. I had been choosy about whom I would associate with, dismissing individuals and churches; I had only been interested in my own personal encounter with God rather than enjoying fellowship with other believers. The Lord made it clear to me that fellowship with other people was part of my spiritual diet. (*For more on this subject see Digestive System, page 148*).

In the period preceding this I had kept rigidly to the exclusion diet, eating only meat, fish, oil and potatoes. I ate absolutely nothing else for several weeks. At the end of this period I felt so continually hungry that it made me feel 'spiritually hungry' at the same time. I just had a desire for everything and especially for the fellowship of others.

The Prayer and Bible Week was an intense time spiritually. I came back home exhausted, but immediately felt strongly impressed to fast for a few days. On the third day of my fast, I prayed that I would have the faith for my healing.

The next day I was seeking the Lord for something else, and

suddenly I felt strongly that God really wanted to heal me. I always knew He could, but suddenly I realised that my heavenly Father wanted to give me good things and not to have me suffer unnecessarily. I asked Him to heal me. In response, He powerfully revealed to me that my healing was to be found in the wounds of the Lord Jesus and nowhere else.

With his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

After a few seconds of seeing this truth, I suddenly had the impression 'I have received my healing', and had the sensation not of healing but of cleansing sweeping through my body. I felt cleansed, washed, and came into a sense of rest. As I relaxed I felt full of joy and was certain that I had been healed. Indeed it proved to be so. The candida had entirely gone.

I realized through all this that I had been wrong at the outset, that my illness *had* been the result of sin: it had been God's way of revealing it to me and correcting me. If I had known this at the beginning, my healing might have come far more quickly and easily.

Since being healed myself, the Lord has opened up for me the whole subject in a remarkable way, showing the link between sin and sickness, so that I can now say with certainty that all sickness reveals to us a problem in our spiritual condition. My purpose in writing this book is to help reveal to others what it took me so long to understand, that their healing might come quickly and easily, and that God might be glorified.