

HEALING, Part 2 of 2

More Reasons God heals – or doesn't

by Philip Shields
www.LightontheRock.com

Summary: The Eternal God is our healer. So why aren't we seeing more dramatic healings, more consistently and frequently than we are? In this concluding sermon, we examine if the days of healing are over, the role of faith and obedience, physicians, spiritual vs physical healing, who causes illness and disease. We also cover: can Satan make you sick? We conclude with 3 steps the church can take to improve the likelihood of seeing more dramatic and frequent healings.

.....

Hello, friends and family in the Messiah and warmest greetings to our dear heavenly Father Yahweh and our husband-to-be, Yeshua the Messiah, and to all of you in the Christ. This is Philip Shields with the concluding second part on Healing. I don't want to discuss every aspect of healing in depth, but only as it relates to why aren't we seeing more verifiable, dramatic, instant and powerful healings than we have been.

Please don't misunderstand me. I am not saying we're not seeing any healings, or that God isn't healing today. No way am I saying anything like that. I know God our Healer is alive and well, continues to heal and has not lost His power. He has not retired or gone to a nursing home. I have also experienced even dramatic healing in my own body as well as having been an instrument to lay hands on others and watch healing take place, sometimes even instantly.

I'm just asking why we're not seeing the blind healed, why we're not seeing Alzheimer's brethren suddenly healed, or stage 4 cancer tumors disappear from a cancer-wracked body as that person leaps for joy with new found strength and wholeness. My point today is to talk about some of the things we may be missing in our daily lives that are causing us to see less healings than we could be.

If the problem is with us, if we can correct the problem – think what happens: more healings. Our loved ones, our brother and sister, can be healed. I realize once we're in our 70's and beyond, we can't expect to be endlessly healed. But there are way too many children and young adults also being left unhealed.

If you say, "come on, Philip, those days are over" or imply in any way that we shouldn't be seeing these kings of healings, I submit to you that indeed our faith is weak, as prophesied for the end time. Our beliefs – positive or negative, our faith – positive or negative – is what we'll generally tend to see. If we really don't believe amputees can leap with newly healed and whole bodies, that the blind will see, that even people who have been dead for several days can be resurrected to new life– how can we expect to see anything so stunning?

In fact, I hope by the end of today's message you'll see that healing is far more than just being a dynamic between you and God. In fact, the group has much to do with one's illness or healing, in many cases. A group can cause a lack of healing, and a group can cause a major healing. Yahweh wants us to stop thinking so small – and start thinking as one, as one body, one family. The actions of one can affect thousands, as you'll see, just as much as pain in one part of your body affects your whole body and your whole day. We are parts of one body, the body of Christ.

So hang on to your seats and be ready to have some of your notions challenged. If this sermon stirs something within you—tell others. We've GOT to get God's people receiving more of the power of God in the body than we are.

But before I get into this part 2 – let me remind you that if you have an I-pod or I-phone or something similar, you can set it up so my sermons are automatically downloaded to you and to your iPod, to listen to them whenever you wish. The instructions are on the website "www.Lightontherock.com".

TRACK 2 – ANSWERING Questions that Have Been Presented

Faith and Obedience

I did make it clear last time, I hope, that indeed faith and obedience are key parts of healing. Without faith, our chances of being healed are slim and almost none. Yeshua (Jesus) Himself "could do no mighty work" in Nazareth because of their unbelief (Mark 6:4-6).

But even with faith, it would be wrong to conclude that every faithful and righteous person will be assured of healing every single time in this life. I pointed out how many righteous people, even those full of faith, had physical infirmities, and many of them died with an illness. So it's wrong to conclude, "If I just had more faith, I'd be healed". Maybe—maybe not. It's not always God's will to heal us in this life.

- I talked about Elisha, a man full of faith, dying of an illness (2 Kings 13:14)
- Righteous and faithful Paul was not healed of his "thorn in the flesh".
- Timothy had "often infirmities".
- Trophimus was "left in Miletus sick".
- I spoke of David, and the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob having aging issues of blindness and other issues.
- ALL of them have since died, as will all of *us* if the Christ does not return relatively soon.

Many have been left with severe depression wondering why God won't hear them. "How could I be so evil, so lacking in faith, that God won't hear", they ask themselves. The reason for that guilt is that we over-emphasized faith and healing, even though it's clear God has never promised to always heal everyone, even if full of faith and totally obedient.

I also have lost a little boy. I know the questions that can be raised when healing doesn't come about. So remember even the most righteous and most faithful in the Bible also at

times were not healed or couldn't heal others. Even more importantly, please don't conclude that if someone is not being healed it is because they are lacking in faith or have some terrible secret sin. That's not our place to make those conclusions, though thousands of brethren do, it seems.

We certainly have more confidence coming before God when we are obedient (read 1 John 3:21-22). Certainly Lev. 26 and Deut 28 tie obedience to healing as well. So faithful obedience will lead to less illness and more healings – but even then, there are still other reasons why God does or doesn't heal – even when we are obedient – as in Paul's case and others also.

Sinning definitely increases the odds of being struck with illness or plagues – or of not being healed. Sometimes it's the sin of others or society. The sin of someone else's drinking and driving can lead to others being crippled or killed.

David's counting of Israel resulted in 70,000 Israelites dying by plague, for example. That was David's sin that caused that. When we realize how much one life, or one sin can hurt thousands of others, and vice versa, it makes us understand how we must function more as one, as a finely honed body or as a well oiled team – coming together for one purpose.

Doctors and physical remedies

Scripture simply does not support the notion that to use physicians or physical remedies is to demonstrate a lack of faith in God. Yeshua Himself said the sick need physicians (Matthew 9:12). How could He say anything remotely like that if it was wrong to use doctors or medicine? The Bible often speaks of medicines, balms, poultices, oil and wine, dressings, and using physicians in a positive light.

However, it would be wrong to put all our faith in our doctor, or the remedy, even an all-natural remedy – rather than completely on God. It's also definitely wrong to leave God out of the picture, as Asa did, as we pointed out last time (2 Chron 16:11). Asa by that time was demonstrating a pattern of not relying on God even in other areas of his life, if you read the whole chapter. So that's my stand on it. So yes, I have regular medical checkups. Yes, I have colonoscopies and am glad when they snip off polyps that could turn into colon cancer.

Time and Chance?

Some believe that even among God's children, time and chance happens to all. I believe that is true among those with whom God is not yet working. But Psalm 139 says Yahweh knows our thoughts before we do, knows everything about us, every detail. How could we possibly get cancer accidentally, by time and chance, when He knows when we have another gray hair?

When you're in the body of Christ, and "in Christ" and "in God", as I've pointed out in previous sermons—nothing can happen to you and me without Yahweh knowing it well ahead of time and feeling it intimately. If we have faith, if we are obedient, if others are

praying for us – and we’re still being unhealed – then there are specific marvelous reasons Yahweh has for allowing us to remain ill, or even to die. But it’s not time and chance.

So, even in times of suffering, we must remember that this suffering is refining us all. Suffering drives us to our knees. Suffering makes us pray more. Suffering helps unite us in prayer. Suffering is not a bad thing, but part of the process of maturing. So neither am I looking for all suffering to stop in this life. But I’m still asking, why aren’t we seeing more healings, even though we recognize there’s no carte-blanche promise for all God’s children to be healed all the time, or for all suffering to stop in this life.

Praying for Someone in Sin

Several asked me if *we pray for someone we know is not totally obedient?* Perhaps you see a diabetic not sticking to her dietary regimen. Or someone no longer keeps the Sabbath. Perhaps someone is an alcoholic dying of cirrhosis of the liver. Should we still pray for these people, especially if we’re asked to?

Brethren, if I am to err, I want to err on the side of mercy and compassion. “Judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13) I know you and I will be judged by the same standard we use on others (please read Matt 7:2). Think about that. I would rather dish them up a huge scoop of mercy and give lots of latitude and pray fervently for their healing —than be dishing out harsh judgment. I know that I, of all sinners, sure need mercy, acceptance, prayers and love from God and His people.

Who among those Jesus and apostles healed were 100% righteous? Who among you are 100% righteous? If you’re not perfectly righteous, should I refuse to pray for you? You’re either righteous or unrighteous. Of course I should pray!

How about Naaman, the Syrian leper? Did he keep Sabbath or not have other gods? But wasn’t he healed? In fact even after he was healed, he asked for Elisha to be understanding as he had to prop up the Syrian king when he went into the temple of Rimmon (2 Kings 5:16-19). God was merciful. And how about you and I? If I have to be 100% obedient before you should pray for me, then I am of all men most miserable. And who would be “worthy” of receiving our prayers?

Also along these lines, remember we are told to pray for one another for healing. James says if one has committed sins, they will be forgiven (James 5:15-16). So whatever you do, don’t refuse to pray for people you believe aren’t being fully obedient in some aspect of their lives. Ask God to speak to them, to work with them, and let God be their judge. But you pray for them. I’ll have more on this later.

TRACK 3 – “Spiritual” healing?

“Spiritual” healing vs. “physical” healing

Some ministers dismiss this whole discussion about having more physical healings by simply stating they believe “healing” in the Bible has to do with “spiritual healing”, meaning forgiveness, reconciliation, salvation. They’ve studied the Hebrew in the Old

Testament, point to Isaiah 53 and proclaim the context and words about healing are about “spiritual” healing. These false ministers use this reasoning to explain away why they don’t see any healings.

I will grant you that the many verses about healing must include spiritual healing—or redemption and salvation -- but scripture separates out the spiritual healing and physical healing while quoting from Isaiah 53. Here’s a clear example from Matthew 8:16-17:

"When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to [Jesus], and he drove out the spirits with a word **and healed all the sick**. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 'He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases.'" (Matthew 8:16-17)

Matthew clearly took Isaiah 53:4 to be referring to physical illness – and he himself quotes Isaiah 53 under inspiration from God.

Too many physically ill people were healed in those days to try to claim physical healing was never even intended as some ministers claim. There are those who teach that. There are definite references to spiritual healing – being reconciled with God – but they don’t dissolve all the instances of stunning physical healing.

Church’s condition may also be a factor

I also think we’re seeing less healings possibly because of the condition of the church today. After all, the end time church is prophesied to be in pretty bad shape over all. It’s hardly conducive to healing when we’re described as

- Lukewarm and Laodician (Rev. 3:19-21)
- Probably low in faith (Luke 18:8)
- Prophesied to be low in our level of love too – “the love of many will wax cold” — Matthew 24:12. How can we pray for one another with our whole hearts if our love is getting cold? So, lukewarm, lacking faith, lacking love – no wonder we’re not seeing many dramatic healings.

On top of all that, many –not all – end time ministers are prophesied to largely be self-serving as well, living off the flock (read all of Ezekiel 34:1-10, Jeremiah 23 some time). Many act like lords over the flock- their boss-- rather than as their servant. That’s hardly conducive to seeing more healings. Ministers like that have forgotten that “minister” means “servant”.

Ezekiel 34:4-5

“The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.”

Yeshua washed feet. Yeshua healed the sick. Yeshua fed the hungry crowds. Yeshua – Jesus—ministered. He served and He still continues to serve even though He is in fact the coming King of Kings. But too many of our ministers want a title, want to be praised, want

the chief seats reserved at the Feast of Tabernacles for them, want the best parking spots reserved for them, don't want to visit in people's homes anymore. Plus they want a new car every two years paid for out of the brethren's tithes. You get the picture? Add the fact some of these ministers don't even believe that God heals anymore... is it any surprise we're not seeing as many dramatic healings as we could be? I absolutely believe in healings and want to see many more.

TRACK 4 *who causes sickness and healing?*

One more thing we must cover before going on. I say that with some caution, as I've concluded many of you will be puzzled, even angered; by what I'm about to say but I can't deny the Scripture.

Who causes illness? Who heals?

A lot of illnesses are brought on by our own lifestyle. For example, any of us eat way more calories than we burn off, and we become obese. Obesity often leads to higher risks of stroke, heart disease, diabetes, joint problems, sleep apnea, etc. Many of us eat foods that are not healthy for us. Some drink soda by the gallon over a week (I almost never drink soda). Then we overwork, live a stressful life, or we stop exercising, and we lack sleep – and then wonder why we're sick! Who caused that illness? In many cases, we do. I preach to myself on this point. I don't think we need to wonder whether God or Satan brought illness on in cases like this. We did.

I have to believe we are more likely to see Yahweh being more responsive to our prayers for healing when He sees us respecting the body He gave us. Our body becomes the temple of His spirit and His very dwelling place. Those of us who can get ourselves into better health, should make every effort to do so; to present our Maker with a clean and fit temple of His presence. Some of you are victims of drunk drivers, or have had a bad accident, or have a congenital disease or are very old. I'm not referring so much to you.

What role does Satan play? Is he responsible for all illness and sickness? Some believe so, but is that Biblical? First of all, there are clear scriptures, which show Satan is at least sometimes behind sickness.

Acts 10:38

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were *oppressed by the devil*, for God was with Him."

Luke 13:16–(a woman deeply bowed over ... Jesus healed on the Sabbath)

"So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, *whom Satan has bound* — think of it — for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"

Obviously then, at least some illnesses are because Satan is oppressing or "binding" someone.

He is the god of this world, or more correctly, of this age – 2 Cor. 4:4. He is the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2). This is his world, his kingdom. That is why he could offer Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for Jesus worshipping Satan (Matthew 4). Yeshua – or Jesus – did not question Satan’s assumption that this was his kingdom. That is why we have to ask God to hasten the day when his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Heaven is God’s kingdom today, but we certainly don’t see God’s way being practiced on earth. Jesus said to the Jews of His day, “you are of your father, the Devil” (John 8:44). You get the drift.

So I think it is clear to me at least that among Satan’s family, his people, he has a relatively free hand to do what he wants, as long as it doesn’t interfere with God’s overall goals and timetables – or God’s people.

It is clear from Job 1, that Yahweh does indeed put a hedge around His children. Also Psalm 139:5 says “You have hedged me before and behind...” Yahweh promised Abram He would be a shield around him (Gen. 15:1). The word there refers to a full-length body shield. Psalm 5:12 says Yahweh is a shield to the righteous. Other verses say the angel of the LORD encamps around God’s people and delivers them (Ps. 34:7).

Satan can get through that protective hedge only by God’s permission. In those cases, as hard as Satan can hit us, he can only do so within the limits imposed by Yahweh. That is so clear in Job 1:6-12. I’m saying Satan cannot make you and I sick – or strike us with calamity – except by permission from God. Even then, Yahweh is allowing it for a purpose that makes little or no sense to us at the time we’re going through it, but it has a refining purpose that will become clear when we look back in God’s kingdom.

Job 1:8-12

8 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

9 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? *10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side?* You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord

So can Satan touch you? Only by God’s permission. Once you are bought back – or redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and sealed with God’s Holy Spirit – Satan can’t touch you or bind you unless God specifically allows it, as in the case of Job. Of course Satan has a lot of leeway among his own people in his kingdom, in his world.

That reminds me of the verse where Yeshua warns Peter that Satan “has asked for you, but I’ve prayed for you...” (Luke 22:31). He couldn’t just attack Peter without getting permission. I hope that gives you some comfort.

But here's where it gets surprising to some. If Satan can't touch God's people, who ultimately is responsible for sickness among God's people? Who ultimately was the one who brought on Job's boils and severe trials? Was it Satan? Satan brought on the boils – but because God gave permission, ultimately it was God who brought on Job's boils and troubles!

Job 42:11b "then all his brothers and all his sisters...consoled him for all the adversity *that the LORD (Yahweh) had brought upon him....*"

Even Joseph told his brothers after all the trouble they put him into by selling him into Egypt, that GOD sent him to Egypt to save Israel alive. Joseph understood the concept that God will use Satan to help refine and prepare God's people by adversity and illness and trials.

Gen.50:12—Joseph clearly states to his brothers, "You meant it for evil...but God meant it for good...." Read it yourself.

Now among God's people, God either has to give Satan permission to strike – within limits – or God himself sends the illnesses, plagues and pestilence. You don't want to hear that, but it's Biblical. WHO will send the end time plagues on the earth – God or Satan? Ever hear of the "7 last Plagues" of Revelation? Those are all from God and God's angels. Billions will die. At that time, Yahweh is sending Yeshua to take over the world, so "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." And who sent the plagues on Egypt – Satan or God?

Exodus 15:26

and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, ***I will put*** none of the diseases on you ***which I have brought*** on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." (Also see Deut 7:15; Deut 28:27-28; 2 Chron 7:15).

Food for thought, isn't it? That's why we can't blame Satan for every illness, pain or death! Deut 7:15 is also clear on who afflicts or chooses not to afflict various ones.

Deuteronomy 7:15

"And Yahweh (the LORD) will take away from you all sickness, and **will afflict you with none** of the terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, **but will lay them on** all those who hate you."

Here's one to ponder: To Moses, God asked, "...who makes one dumb or deaf? Or seeing or blind? ***Is it not I***, the LORD?" (Exodus 4:11).

Yahweh sent plagues in Numbers 16, which killed thousands. He caused an epidemic in Num 11:33. In 2 Kings 15:5 it says, "and the LORD struck the king so that he was a leper to the day of his death." Other verses if you're not convinced: Isaiah 10:16, 2 Chron 21:14. And don't we remember Nebuchadnezzar as well as Herod, who were struck by God for giving themselves the glory, rather than God? How about Miriam, whom God publicly

struck with leprosy for one week, for her insolence to Moses (Numbers 12:1-15). For that matter GOD was the one who at least allowed the “thorn in the flesh” on Paul, which Paul also correctly attributed to Satan as well, “as the messenger of Satan sent to buffet me” (2 Cor. 12:7).

Who sent the disease to David and Bathsheba’s first son? It was God. Who told Hezekiah originally he would soon die? It was a message from God. I hope you’re seeing this.

There are also many Scriptures which say GOD was the One who closed some women’s wombs, even righteous women – like Sarah (Gen. 21:1-2), Rebekah (Gen 25:21), Rachel (Gen. 30:2,22) and Samuel’s mom Hannah (1 Sam 1:5-6). Psalm 113:9—“HE grants the barren woman a home, like a joyful mother of children. Praise Yahweh!”

So there’s a dilemma with this: why would a loving Father or God send disease? Or even allow disease? Don’t forget, I also had a son who wasn’t healed—but died. I also wrestled with it, and sometimes still do. It raises a lot of questions, and Paul ultimately answers those kinds of question by saying in my paraphrase of it, “He’s the Potter and we’re the clay. The Potter can do as He wishes with the clay” (Rom. 9:20-21).

Carnally speaking, that’s not satisfying, not at all -- until we come to rest in Him and have the kind of faith that – listen carefully now – that stays on Him whether we’re healed or not. It’s the kind of faith that allowed Daniel’s 3 friends to say their God was able to deliver them from the fire, but if He chooses not to, that was OK with them too (Daniel 3:13-18). So we learn to – as I said last time – thank Him even while we are in chains, as Paul and Silas did. Even while the disease rages on, we’re still learning to praise and thank Yahweh for all things, and in all things – for we are His, and He is ours, whether we live or whether we die (Romans 14:8).

That’s what real faith ultimately is all about: we stick with Him even until death if need be, though we hope for things still unseen (Heb. 11:1). Even when we don’t see the healing. Even as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, real faith says, “I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me”. We learn to thank Him, as I said last time, even before we see any healing, and even if we see death instead.

Now that proves our faith, doesn’t it? Faith is based on Who we know, not on what we see happening. As Yeshua says to Thomas, “you believe because you see. Blessed are those who believe without first seeing”. –John 20:29. We must believe even if we don’t see the healing happen immediately.

As I said last time, I think we will see more healings if we do start thanking and praising even in and even for, the pain and the problems. It’s a test. Don’t be shy to admit a lack of faith. I do all the time. I feel like the father whom Jesus asked if he believed. The father replied, “Yes Lord, I believe...er, help my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). We want to have faith, we want to believe, but – man, that pain is really strong right now... “help my unbelief”, we cry out. Then start to praise and sing and thank God in the pain, even for the pain, knowing we are growing some spiritual muscle even as “the outward man is perishing”, as Paul put it.

We have a lot to grow in still, don't we? So do I. I'm just sharing what I'm learning. I'm not there yet myself. Don't forget, I'm not preaching at anyone. Ever. I'm just sharing what I've learned on my own study and what I've been preaching to myself. If it helps, great. Thank God. Share this website with others, if you think others can be helped by it. I don't need to know.

Another question that comes up is: If Yahweh allows Satan to bind someone with illness, can Satan HEAL?

God is our healer. I rather we focus on Yahweh than on Satan. I've watched some "faith healers" end up talking to Satan (rebuking him) when they pray for healing rather than pray to God, our healer.

But think about this: if Satan is allowed to bind someone with an illness, if Satan unbinds that person through one of his ministers, perhaps that would look like a genuine healing. His ministers come as ministers of light. Even the great Anti-Christ of the end time will have miracle working powers so impressive that he comes close to deceiving even the very elect (Matthew 24:24; Rev 13:12-15). But his powers are from demons (Rev. 16:13-14). So demons can also work miracles, presumably even ones that appear to be genuine healings.

Remember Jesus says in Matthew 7:21-23 to some who did marvelous works in His name – "I never knew you".

Having said that, I am also cautious to claim any healing is from Satan, lest I be giving glory to Satan for what should be God's glory. So be aware of the possibility that Satan can make something look like a real healing if he unbinds someone he bound, but tread lightly there. Don't forget the time when some were casting out demons in Jesus' name and He didn't stop them (Luke 9:49-50). Neither should we forget the serious warning Yeshua gave to those who were accusing Him of casting out demons by Satan (Mark 3:22-30), almost tantamount to the unpardonable sin. Beware of accusing a genuine healing as being sourced in Satan. Danger, danger. Let the Living God make that call and just praise Yahweh that someone was healed.

TRACK 5 – 3 STEPS WE CAN TAKE THAT COULD ENCOURAGE MORE HEALINGS

Last time we started discussing several steps we can immediately start applying. These points could lead to God once again pouring out His wonderful gift of healing – dramatically and more frequently.

1. THANK GOD during, in, and for the trial even before we see any physical healing.

I've already said that we can do this because of faith, because of knowing who He is, and we are His, and we are just the clay. We trust His timing. We know healing is a done deal – whether now or in the resurrection. Timing -- when we see it-- is His. So we thank Him. We act as if the healing has already taken place—by being thankful in all things and for all (Phil. 4:4-6; Eph. 5:20).

We have to see Yahweh walking with us even as He leads us, at times, through the valley of the shadow of death. Even on our death bed we can be at peace and thank Him, if we really understand what God is all about. Thanking Him demonstrates a quiet and confident faith – regardless of what the X-rays show, regardless of how badly it hurts, regardless of what we can see.

We spoke of Yeshua thanking Abba for having already heard Him, even while Lazarus was still dead in the tomb? That's John 11: 41.

One idea my wife mentioned last night to me on our deck as the sun was setting: “when we pray for healing, the 2nd and 3rd time we pray about it, it should be to thank Him for having already heard us – even though we may not see or feel any change. Faith is based on what is unseen. If we can see an issue already fully resolved, we no longer need faith on that issue. If we keep asking for healing, defined by what we can see, we're telling God He hasn't heard us, hasn't responded yet. But that misses the whole point of true faith and resting in Him”.

I could not have said it better. My wife has so much faith and is so calm even in the face of pain or death, knowing God knows it all, and has it all in hand, even though He may have decided to let a person die.

CONTINUING POINT OF DISCERNING THE BODY OF CHRIST

2. We also started Point #2 last time -- God's word specifically says we're seeing people going unhealed because the church is not discerning or esteeming the body of Christ enough – meaning the way we treat one another.

1 Corinthians 11:28-32

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body*. 30 *For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep*. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.”

I Cor. 11 spoke of not “discerning the Lord's body”. We know from many scriptures that “the Lord's body” is God's church, the body of believers in whom resides God's Holy Spirit (Col. 1:18, 24; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:23). Our bodies are the temple, the inner holiest part of the temple, of God's Spirit. Over the years I've heard it mostly explained that we need to appreciate the sacrifice and life of Christ. Certainly that has to be included here, but I think in context of the whole book of 1 Corinthians, that Paul is continuing the theme he started in chapter 1 – “come together, don't be of Peter or of Paul, honor one another, quit the infighting and lawsuits, be one body, you're the temple of the Holy spirit – now act like it. “

When I treat a brother or sister who has God's spirit a certain way, I'm treating the Christ that way! Are we getting it, brethren? Whether I mistreat you, or honor you, I am treating God's presence with that disrespect – or honor. I am also treating Yeshua Himself that

way! Yeshua teaches us in Matthew 25:31-46 that whatever I do – or don't do – to even the "least of these my brethren", He takes personally. "You are doing that to Me", He says, "the good and the bad".

That's why when calling Paul on the road to Damascus, Jesus asked Paul why he was persecuting Him (Acts 9:5). Are we getting it? Whatever Paul was doing to the brethren – beating them, torturing them, imprisoning them – Paul was doing to Christ himself, since THEY were the body of Christ.

Whom do you consider "least" brother or sister? Probably we would come to describe the one we despise the most as one who was probably even unconverted or lacking God's spirit – and therefore not even one who is a brother or sister. Watch out. Those people may be in spiritual prisons, or be spiritually naked –but the way we treat one another is the way the King says we're treating HIM. If we're ready to remove them from membership in the body in our minds, guess what? You've just removed your King from membership in your mind.

That's how serious this is. If you don't consider someone who has God's spirit to be a brother in Christ – but let's say Yeshua considers him a brother – you're on very, very thin ice. Yeshua will identify with the brother you are despising more than He will identify with you. He is not going to bless us when we continue this horrible conduct we've been seeing in the church for the past 15 years.

The "least brethren", when we look at it that way, becomes the King and Savior himself, for He identifies with every part of His body. Yeshua is not only our brother, He is our king. He is pleased as we come together, honor one another, and respect one another. I think we'll see more healings if we do esteem everyone as we would the Christ Himself. And He feels dishonored when we dishonor even the lowest brother or sister. Ponder that carefully.

Back to Paul – "therefore many of you are sick and sleep" – or die. We can turn this around, brethren, if enough of us will start doing what I'm teaching here.

I can't escape the fact that I feel Yahweh wants us to learn this and learn it quickly, if we want to see more healings in the church. Start respecting and honoring every one in the body as you would Jesus the Christ himself! Think of it. I mean it.

Do you not think you despise anyone? For whom would you not fast for, if you heard he or she was very ill?

Another passage – Isaiah 58:6-10 – says something similar:

Isaiah 58:6-10

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house
the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
 And your righteousness shall go before you;
 The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
 9 *Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;*
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'
"If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
 10 If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul,
 Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the
 noonday."

That Old Testament passage says what I'm trying to say so much better. God will say, "Here I am", and He'll hear our prayers, when we stop the finger pointing. We must stop hiding ourselves from our own flesh. Is there anyone you won't speak to? If their sin is long ago repented of, why not? Will you really turn your back on someone for whom Christ died? Then no wonder we're not seeing more dramatic healings than we are.

Part of why we feel we can disrespect a part of Christ's Body is that we have accepted a false teaching from the world: that honor has to be earned.

God teaches us we're supposed to honor all people – without condition (1 Pet. 2:17). By "without condition" I mean we have to stop thinking, "I will honor him or her IF..."

- Children are to honor their parents, without condition
- Wives are to submit to, honor, respect and some translations even say "reverence" their husbands, without condition given – as they would to Christ himself.
- Husbands are to love and honor their wives, without condition, as Christ did the church
- We are to honor the king – who was Nero when that was written – without condition. I hope that makes you think. We are to honor one another! How else would you explain "honor all" – in 1 Peter 2:17? If you read 1 Pet 2:17, it includes the phrase "Fear God".

•
 NONE of those have preconditions. God wants us to humbly be respectful of anyone and everyone, especially parts of his body. I'm not there yet, but working on it. We are "members of one another" (Rom. 12:5). When we don't accept the weak, we are taking God's job of being their judge. Read Romans 14:1-4 some time please. Even now. Roman 14:3 says we are to accept/receive every one in the body, "for God has received/accepted him". Verse 4 clearly calls that person "God's servant" and asks how we can be so presumptuous as to be the judge of one of God's servants. "God will make him stand, for God is able to make him stand."—end of verse 4.

I am talking about people who are God's people. I am not talking about someone who calls himself a brother but lives an ongoing life of living in sin. That's different. 1 Corinthians 5:9-12 handles that issue.

Are we getting it? Paul teaches us under inspiration to not just quit despising one another, but start helping one another stand. Let's pray for and encourage each other. Let's cheer on one another. Let's come together as one body, happy to be a well-oiled family that works smoothly.

Why aren't we seeing more healings? Because we keep kicking our Savior in the groin, as it were, when we despise a brother or sister we no longer deem worthy of our honor.

In a nutshell – let's wrap up point 2 of things we must change if we wish to see more healings: Treat every human being, especially those in the body, as we would treat the King himself if He were standing in that brother or sister's place. For you Kenyans hearing this: that includes members of that other tribe – whether Maasai, Luo, Kikuyu, Tutsi, Hutu or Twa.

Brethren in America, Canada and Australia: thank you in advance for any help you can muster for our 200 brethren in Kenya who are coming out of Sunday worship into the true light of the Sabbath and holydays. They need our help to get on their feet, and they are working so hard to learn God's way. They need rental money, Bibles, Feast of Tabernacles assistance... so thank you in advance for loving them as you would the Christ.

From now on, let's all walk away from conversations if someone starts gossiping and tearing apart members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, or Yeshua the Messiah. We will no longer participate in tearing down our Lord by tearing down a member of His body. We will not desecrate His Holy of Holies any longer by listening to anyone ridicule another fellowship of God, or any brethren or ministers "over there". . . . for after all – each and every one of us who has been given His Spirit is a living, breathing, Holy of Holies.

If you want a full dissertation on this one point – hear my recent sermon on "Who is Least of these my brethren to you". You can find it on the website www.LightontheRock.com

One more huge way we're not esteeming the body of Christ: we're not esteeming and honoring our spouses enough. We entered a covenant with our husband or wife and God intends we keep that promise, unless there are grievous Biblical grounds for divorce. There's way too much divorcing going on otherwise.

What I'm about to read in Malachi 2:13-16 has spoken very forcefully to my heart, and I hope it does yours. What I'm about to read has made me pray to be a lot more appreciative, gentle, loving, kind to my wife than I sometimes have been. I hope you have the same reaction.

Malachi 2:13-16

"And this is the second thing you do:

You cover the altar of Yahweh with tears, with weeping and crying;

So He does not regard the offering anymore, nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.

14 Yet you say, "For what reason?"

Because the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth,

*With whom you have dealt treacherously;
 Yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.*
 15 But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit?
 And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.
 16 *"For Yahweh God of Israel says that He hates divorce,*
 For it covers one's garment with violence," says Yahweh of hosts.
"Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

How is it that when we're dating our wife-to-be, we feel like the song "I will always love you". But some years after marriage we're singing a different tune, more like "Please release me, let me go, for I don't love you anymore..."

We *can* have a happy marriage if we practice basic Christianity at home, humble ourselves, overcome selfishness and self-centeredness and seek to please the other, made in the image of God. We *can* have a happy marriage if we learn to submit to one another. We *can* have a happy marriage if we seek the other's good, and not just our own. We *can* have a happy marriage if we seek ways to serve and to show our love. Think of your wife or your husband as a living Holy of holies, whether he or she acts like it or not. Respect him or her AS IF.... And you'll be honoring God Himself.

So point #2 – Honor one and all. Esteem and regard the body of Christ as being the Messiah Himself. In your mind, see each person in the Body as holy, anointed by God, as being Yeshua Himself. Ask yourself: 'would I say this about my Savior? Would I treat my Savior this way? Would I participate in this if Yeshua was in the room?'—and then behave accordingly.

TRACK 6

3. *Fervently intercede for one another in fervent prayer, and we will see more healings*

James 5:14-16

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Confess your trespasses* to one another, *and pray for one another, that you may be healed.* The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

I would ask it this simply: are you praying as frequently, and as fervently, for others as you would for yourself if you were to find out *you* had pancreatic cancer, or *you* were going to be laid off, or *your* child has been hit by a car...? That's the way we should be praying for one another. When was the last time you actually fasted for someone's healing who was outside of your family? (of course we're all family!).

David said even when his enemies were sick, he afflicted his soul - he fasted.

Psalm 35:13-14

But as for me, when they were sick my clothing was sackcloth;

I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer would return to my own heart.
 14 I paced about as though he were my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother.

Amazing, isn't it? He did this for his enemies. Job said the same - - Job 30:25. Jesus teaches us to "pray for those who spitefully use you" (Matt. 5:44). If we should do that for an enemy, how much for – for Christ himself – for as we pray for one another, we are praying for Christ. We are all In Him. Christ takes our loving concern personally.

There are many examples of praying for one another and how effective it is:

Num. 16:

Moses and Aaron – in the story about the mob who wanted to stone them, after the popular Korah and his followers had been swallowed up in a hole that God opened up. God was so upset with the mob that He ordered Moses and Aaron to get far from them. But what did Aaron do? It is one of the most striking examples I can think of –where someone stood in the breach for their enemy—between them and God – and God honored that incredible attitude.

Numbers 16:41-50 (note especially verses 47-48)

41 On the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." 42 Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. 43 Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting.

44 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. 46 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun."

47 *Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped.*

49 Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. 50 So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.

Would you pray for atonement for your enemies? Would you stand between the living and the dead among those being struck with a terrible plague by the Living God? That's what God wants us to do, for that is HIS nature. He had his own SON BE the atoning sacrifice between us and death.

Of course Moses had done that earlier for Aaron and all Israel after the golden calf incident.

Exodus 32:7-14; Deuteronomy 9:8-9, 12-20, 23-27, etc.; Psalms 106:23

Psalm 106:23

Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one ***stood before Him in the breach*** to turn away His wrath, lest He destroy them.

Ezekiel 22:29-31- God says He will pour out His judgments on the land partly because there were no people standing in the gap, in the breach, as Moses had for Israel, as Aaron had for those God was killing with a plague....

Ezekiel 22:29-31

29 The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.

30 *So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.* 31

Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

When was the last time you prayed for your country itself, perhaps America, or for your country Australia, or Kenya, or Canada, or whatever country you live in – “to stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it...”?

Our Creator says we are to also pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and to “honor the king” (or President, Prime Minister) – 1 Pet. 2:17.

When was the last time you truly, on your knees, sighed and cried, for the abominations in the land before God? (Ezekiel 9:4-7) When was the last time we prayed for the sick, the infirm, with as much zeal as we would if WE were the ones told we have cancer?

When we pray for one another, the wording from Yahweh in James 5, is so that “you may be healed.” I like to picture this, when I pray for you, as presenting you, or raising you up to, the throne of grace of the Almighty.

There’s something very interesting about praying for others. In Job’s case, the restoration of Job’s blessings did not really start until he did something – in Job 42:10.

Job 42:7-10

And so it was, after the LORD HAD spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. 8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; *and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly;* because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD COMMANDED them; for the LORD HAD accepted Job.

10 *And the LORD restored Job's losses* when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the LORD GAVE Job twice as much as he had before."*

This is intercessory prayer – the kind of prayer that probably has more impact with Yahweh than almost any other kind of prayer we can offer: for it is totally self-less. It's standing in the gap –kind of prayer. Is it possible God is more willing to heal someone who did something foolish when someone as noble as you can find the time and heart to pray for that foolish person and that you ask God to show His mercy? Perhaps because of YOU, God will. That's basically what Job 42:8 says. God said He would listen to Job. Perhaps we can learn from that.

I really feel if enough of us will apply these pointers, we will see God begin to restore healing to His church in a powerful and dramatic way – and far, far more frequently than we are seeing now. With all the prophesied pandemics coming – we surely will want that hedge around us, or healing provided when we do get sick.

Pray for us too. Pray that Yahweh continue to guide and inspire me with these messages to share as well. And please pray for our fledgling group of 200 in Kenya, scattered into 5 smaller groups – and if you can help support them financially, I thank you in advance.

So – learn to thank God in and for all things, even before we see the healing take place.
--Stop pointing the finger, stop the gossip, and start honoring Christ by honoring His body
--Pray fervently for one another, as you would your own child, so that you may be healed.

If this message has made you think, I pray you will share it with others.
Until next time, this is your brother in Christ, Philip Shields.