

Grace Q&A 5

with

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1) You mentioned that Jesus died to take away our sins, but not our sicknesses. Many Christians believe that He also died for our sicknesses, and Isa 53:5 is often quoted. In this verse, how can one not interpret healing as physical healing?

Jesus clearly told his disciples (and us who believe), that we through the Spirit will do greater things than He. Does this not involve physical healing? Jesus obviously healed people physically?

***'By His stripes we are healed'* In what sense?**

***Isaiah is referring to spiritual healing**

***Jesus did not suffer and die to heal our bodies
This was not necessary. He healed many before
the cross**

***And God healed many in OT times; and even
raised the dead**

***The Bible often refers to sin as sickness
needing healing:**

***'I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; heal my soul,
for I have sinned against You"' (Psa.41:4)***

***'When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those
who are well have no need of a physician, but
those who are sick. I did not come to call the
righteous, but sinners, to repentance"' (Mk.2:17)***

'Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger. The Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward. Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment'

(Isa.1:4-6)

**This verse is quoted twice in the
New Testament:**

**1) *'...who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls'*
(1 Pet.2:24-25)**

The context makes it clear that Peter never intended physical healing but spiritual healing

Jesus suffered stripes as punishment for sin not sickness

'...it shall be, if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. Forty blows he may give him and no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother be humiliated in your sight' (Deut.25:2-3)

If Jesus died for our sickness He didn't do a good job. Every person He healed, died. In contrast, forgiveness is complete. No more record of sin. No more condemnation. No more confession of sin. Christ's satisfaction is so perfect, so final, that it leaves no penal liability for any sins of the believer

2) *'When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sickness"' (Matt.8:16-17)*

When Jesus commenced His ministry He announced 'the Kingdom of God has come'. Whilst we are in the kingdom, the kingdom hasn't yet been established on earth. The earth has not been redeemed and neither have our bodies. In the age to come the curse will be removed from the earth and we will have immortal, resurrected bodies

***Jesus' ministry of healing was a foretaste of the coming kingdom. To receive healing is to taste '*...the powers of the age to come...*' (Heb.6:5)**

***Does God heal the sick today? Yes. But not on the basis of the atonement**

***Always? No. Our bodies are not yet redeemed**

***We await this fruit of the atonement, when every trace of the curse will be removed. Then there will be no sickness, pain, suffering, or death**

***If we say by His stripes we are healed and we are not, then we would need to doubt if we are also saved and forgiven**

***This is actually not Christianity, but Christian Science – mind over matter**

***This kind of denial leads to deception**

2) Is there a hell? If so, who will go there?

Was hell only made for the devil and his angels or will there also be people there who didn't choose Jesus?

What is the second death? What about the furnace of fire?

Where will the people be who have not decided for Jesus?

Will they simply cease to exist?

- **Yes, hell is a real place. This is the record of the OT, the gospels, the epistles and Revelation**
- **It was created for the Devil and his angels. But sadly, Christ-rejecters will also go there**
- **It is now the intermediate state for the lost awaiting the day of judgment, the second death**
- ***'Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire' (Rev.20:14-15)***
- ***'But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death' (Rev.21:8)***
- **I believe the Bible clearly teaches the above**

- ✓ **The following points I will now share are not orthodox or traditional teaching**
- ✓ **They are a *departure* from these**
- ✓ **I am not asking you to blindly follow me in these beliefs, but to study to see if they are what the Bible teaches**
- ✓ **We should all be allowed to question doctrines, even if they have been taught for centuries (e.g. salvation by works, purgatory, Arianism, etc.), if we believe the Bible teaches something to the contrary**

a) The question was asked 'who will be sent to hell?' Answer, 'Christ-rejecters'

But can those who have not heard the gospel be said to have rejected it?

The Bible seems to suggest that it is those who have heard and chosen not to believe who will be condemned

'He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God'

(Jn.3:18)

'He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him'

(Jn.3:36)

'For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?'

(Rom.10:13-14)

'If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin' (John 15:22)

Conclusion:

- ✓ **If salvation is by faith in Christ alone and faith comes by hearing the gospel, how can those be saved who have not heard the gospel?**
- ✓ **They cannot be saved by their own works, nor by a general belief in the existence of God**
- ✓ **They cannot be saved by any religion**
- ✓ **The only possibility I can see is that at the end of life they will have a chance to hear and believe the gospel**
- ✓ **But the Bible is silent on this**

b) Will those who are condemned to the lake of fire suffer eternal conscious torment (ECT) or will they cease to exist (annihilation)?

- ✓ **The orthodox view is ECT**
- ✓ **This is hard to accept, both in terms of our own feelings and also what we would like to believe God is like, especially as revealed through His Son, Jesus**
- ✓ **But to deviate from it we need a higher authority than our feelings or an attempt to create God in our image**
- ✓ **We need to know what the Bible teaches**
- ✓ **So what does it say about the fate of Christ-rejecters?**

- **First it is clear that the judgment is eternal separation from God. There is no reprieve. The Bible speaks of 'eternal fire' (Matt.18:8; 25:41), 'eternal punishment', (Matt.25:46), 'everlasting destruction' (2 Thes.1:9), etc.**
- **It is uncertain if those in hell now are in a state of conscious torment over their rejection of Christ**
- **But the question is, 'will they be eternally tormented in the lake of fire?'**
- **The Bible uses terms such as 'perish' and 'destroy' to describe the state of those in the lake of fire. This is translated from the Greek word *apollumi* = to destroy, die, lose or perish**
- **It is translated in other places in reference to killing, e.g. Matt.2:13; 12:14**
- **Jesus used this word in Matt.10:28:**

- ✓ *'And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell'*
- ✓ **That which is killed, destroyed or perishes is reduced to non-existence**
- ✓ **The Bible teaches that only God inherently has immortality (1 Tim.6:16) and this is given to those who believe the gospel and receive Christ**
'...has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel' (2 Tim.1:10)
- ✓ **Those who are saved receive the gift of immortality and will never die, as Jesus promised**

- ✓ **Those who reject Christ will die, perish, be ruined, destroyed, i.e. they will be reduced to non-existence (Jn.3:16; Rom.2:12; 6:23; 8:13; 2 Thes.1:9; 1 Cor.15:18; 2 Pet.3:9; etc.)**
- ✓ **If something is said to die, be ruined, be destroyed and perish how can it be said to remain alive and continue to exist?**
- ✓ **Hell is the intermediate state for those who reject Christ and this may be a place of conscious torment and suffering**
- ✓ **But hell is to be cast into the lake of fire. The main purpose of fire is not to torment or cause pain but to consume – to destroy. God is a consuming fire. The wages of sin is not suffering or torment but death, destruction**
- ✓ **The term *gehenna* is a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew *ge-hinnom* = the Valley of Hinnom**

- ✓ **When the Israelites fell into idolatry they worshipped Molech and passed their children through the fire here. It later became a rubbish dump where the garbage and sewage was brought from the city and burnt**
- ✓ **The fire never ceased to burn here**
- ✓ **Jesus used this word and picture to illustrate the furnace of fire: *'...where "their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched..."'* (Mk.9:48)**
- ✓ **This is a quote from Isa.66:24, where the dead bodies of God's enemies are consigned to the city's rubbish dump to be eaten by maggots and burned. *'And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh'***

- ✓ **The fire and maggots will not cease until their work of destruction is complete.**
- ✓ **Remember, our God is a consuming fire, consuming all that is impure before Him**
- ✓ **This fire, which will destroy the wicked also destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah**
- ✓ ***'...Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire' (Jude 7)***
- ✓ ***'...and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly...' (2 Pet.2:6)***

- ✓ **The only ones who will suffer conscious torment eternally in the lake of fire is Satan and his angels. Remember, it was prepared for them: *'The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever'* (Rev.20:10). (Note: the beast and the false prophet are demonic beings – Rev.17:8; 13:11; 16:13).**
- ✓ **Whilst Christ-rejecting humans will be cast into the lake of fire, their fate is not conscious suffering but destruction. The devil and his angels, however, for whom the lake of fire was prepared will be tormented for ever and ever.**

3) How come there is one Holy Spirit who 'guides us into all truth' and that ALL Christians are given, yet there are innumerable 'Christian' groups not all having/preaching the same truth (there can only be one truth)?

- ✓ **Jesus said the Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. Our journey into all truth is an ongoing process, not an instant destination**

- **He has given special teaching gifts to lead us into the truth: 'And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph.4:11-13)**
- **There are obstacles which hinder us in our journey into 'all truth' which must be overcome. E.g.: a) false teaching and false teachers; b) misguided loyalty (to traditions, denominations, leaders, etc.); c) a temptation to preach what is popular rather than what is true**

- ✓ **Our unity is around the essentials of the God's Word, not the non-essentials: 'In essentials unity. In non-essentials liberty. In all things charity' (Augustine)**