

Should Nazarene Yisraelites Visit Medical Doctors?

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Taught Live at B'nai Yahshua Synagogue of Broward County

3-14-09

Should Believers go to Doctors?

Physicians are referred to about a dozen times throughout the Bible. The only verse that could be taken out of context to teach that one should not go to physicians would be 2 Chronicles 16:12. "In the thirtieth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness he did not seek help from the YHWH, but only from the physicians." But this particular case involved Asa's whole outlook on life in his later years (that of turning his back on Elohim at an earlier point in his life). His sin? NO trust in YHWH. TOTAL trust in doctors. Lack of balance!!! Are your medical views in, or out of balance, one way or the other?

There are many verses that speak of using "medical treatments" such as applying bandages (Isaiah 1:6), oil (James 5:14), oil and wine (Luke 10:34), leaves (Ezekiel 47:12), wine (1 Timothy 5:23), and salves, particularly the "balm of Gilead" (Jeremiah 8:22). Also Luke, the author of Acts and the Gospel of Luke, is referred to by Paul as "the beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14). If visiting doctors was somehow sinful, Rav Shaul would not have travelled with Luke and had him as a ministry partner!

Mark 5:25-30 relates the story of a woman who had trouble with continual bleeding, a problem that physicians could not heal even though she had been to many of them and had spent all of her money on them. Coming to Yahshua, she thought to herself that if she but touched the hem of His garment/His tzitzit, she would be healed, and she was. Yahshua never rebuked her for visiting doctors all her life!

Yahshua, in answering the questioning Pharisees as to why he spent time with sinners said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (Matthew 9:12). Yahshua clearly recognizes the need and validity of doctors, comparing the physical realm's need for doctors', with the spiritual realm's need for HIMSELF as THE Spiritual Healer of all of mankind! Moreover based on Matthew 9:12 we see that:

1) Physicians are not Elohim and should not be viewed as such. They sometimes can help, but there will be other times when all they will accomplish is the removal of money.

2) Seeking physicians and using "earthly" remedies are not condemned in Scripture, but rather seem to have been used throughout Scripture.

3) Elohim's intervention in any physical difficulty should be sought (James 4:2; 5:13). He does not promise us that He will answer the way we will always want (Isaiah 55:8-9), but we have the assurance that all He does will be done in love and thus in our best interest (Psalms 145:8-9).

So, should Nazarene Yisraelites go to doctors? Elohim created us as intelligent beings and gave us the ability to create medicines and learn how to repair our bodies. There is nothing wrong with applying this knowledge and ability towards physical healing. Doctors can be viewed as Elohim's gift to us, a means

through which Elohim brings healing and recovery. At the same time, our ultimate faith and trust is to be in Yahweh, not doctors or medicine. As with all the difficult decisions we face in life, Elohim promises to give us wisdom when we ask for it (James 1:5), so we know how to pursue all available venues of healing.

Does YHWH Heal Today?

Isaiah 53:5, which is quoted often and again in 1 Peter 2:24, is a key verse on healing that is often misunderstood and misapplied. “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). The word translated “healed” can mean either spiritual or physical healing. However, the contexts of Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2 make it clear that it is speaking of spiritual healing. First Peter 2:24 says, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” The verse is talking about sin and righteousness BOTH SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS, not sickness and disease BOTH PHYSICAL CONDITIONS. Therefore, being “healed” in both these verses is speaking of being forgiven and saved, not physically healed, although healing IS part of the atonement based on Psalm 103:1-2.

The Bible does not specifically link physical healing with spiritual healing. Sometimes people are physically healed when they place their faith in Moshiah, but this is not always the case. Sometimes it is Elohim’s will to heal, but sometimes it is not. The Apostle John gives us the proper perspective: “This is the confidence we have in approaching Elohim: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of Him” (1 John 5:14-15). Elohim still performs miracles. Elohim still heals people. Sickness, disease, pain, and death are still realities in this world. Unless the Yahshua returns, everyone who is alive today will die, and the vast majority of them (Nazarene Yisraelites included) will die as the result of a physical problem (disease, sickness, injury). It is not always Elohim’s will to heal us physically forever.

Ultimately, our full physical healing awaits us in heaven. In heaven, there will be no more pain, sickness, disease, suffering, or death (Revelation 21). We all need to be less preoccupied with our physical condition in this world, and be a lot more concerned with our eternal spiritual condition (Romans 12:1-2). Then we can focus our hearts on heaven and when we will no longer have to deal with any physical problems, or doctors, Revelation 21:4, “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Cosmetic Surgery

The Bible doesn’t specifically address a Nazarene Yisraelite having plastic surgery, or cosmetic surgery. There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that plastic surgery in and of itself is wrong. However, there are several things that one needs to consider before deciding whether, or not to have these procedures. Altering one's body is unnatural, and there are always risks of potential side effects – both physically and mentally. No one should allow themselves to be put "under the knife" without thoroughly researching all alternatives, risks, and side effects involved with the surgery. A person also needs to fully understand his or her motivation for desiring the surgery. For many who were either born with, or later acquire physical deformities, it is natural to want to fit into society and feel "normal." There are also cases of slight

abnormalities that would cause someone to feel very uncomfortable with themselves, such as a very large or misshapen nose. **But many, if not most, plastic surgeries are done as attempts to meet emotional voids in physical ways, to attract attention, or to seek approval from others.**

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the most commonly performed cosmetic procedures include breast augmentation/lifts, liposuction (the removal of body fat), facelifts, eyelid lifts, buttock and other body lifts, leg vein treatments, Botox/fat injections, and nose and face reshaping. **Approximately two million people subject themselves to these kinds of procedures each year, shelling out money and sacrificing time and comfort. When the motivation of a person undergoing surgery is that of vanity, he or she has become his or her own idol.** The Bible warns us not to be vain or conceited (Philippians 2:3-4) and not to draw attention to ourselves by the way we look (1 Timothy 2:9). Another concern would be the cost. Most insurance companies do not cover costs associated with cosmetic surgery, so the expenses would all come out of the patient's pocket. **This is a major consideration because most people have families that have needs to be taken care of and the expense of plastic surgery should never come before the needs of the family. The Bible also tells us that we need to use wisely the money that Elohim has entrusted to us (Proverbs 11:24-25; Luke 16:10-12).**

The most important thing to do before making the decision to undergo plastic surgery would be to consult YHWH about the issue. The Bible tells us that Elohim cares about every worry and concern that we have, so we should take our problems to Him (1 Peter 5:7). Through the wisdom and guidance of the Set Apart Spirit and the Word of Elohim, we have the ability to make decisions that will please and honor Him. **"Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears YHWH, she shall be praised" (Proverbs 31:30).** Even the most skilled surgeon cannot hold back the hands of time and all cosmetic surgeries will eventually have the same result – aging. Those lifted body parts will sag again and those cosmetically altered facial features will eventually wrinkle. **It is far better to work on beautifying the person underneath "that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in Elohim's sight" (1 Peter 3:4).**