

What The Bible Teaches on
HEALTH and HEALING
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Chapter 2: What does the Old Testament teach about illness and healing?

What does the OT teach about illness and healing?

(a) Before the Law

(1) Genesis 20:1-18

The first reference to healing in the Bible was King Abimelech. This was when Abraham pretended that Sarah his wife was only his sister, thus endangering her honour in order not to endanger his own life. King Abimelech added her to his harem, but God protected her from being molested and also punished Abimelech by preventing all the women in his household from having children. We do not know for how long this lasted, but they were all healed when he realised his error and turned to God, and Abraham prayed for his family.

(b) According to the Law

(1) Exodus 15:26; Deuteronomy 7:12-15; 28:60

On condition that Israel kept the laws of God, He promised to ensure that they would not be visited by any of the diseases with which He afflicted the nation of Egypt in judgement. He also declared Himself to be their Healer.

(2) Numbers 12:1-15

Aaron and Miriam had spoken against Moses because he married an African woman. Moses in his meekness did not defend himself but God decided to intervene on his behalf. He punished Miriam

by afflicting her with leprosy. Moses prayed for his sister and she was healed, but she first had to spend seven days isolated outside the camp.

(3) Deuteronomy 32:39

God speaking through Moses declares Himself as the only one who can bring either wounds or healing to His people.