



Healing in the Old Testament

Introduction

God created man in His image

Made man to rule

God made men healthy



If God is good and all powerful, then why is there sickness and pain?

God loved us
in man's original state

God loved us
& pursued us
back.

God's love gave
us freedom &
choice

Man rebelled at
the Fall

Result of the fall



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Results of the Fall

Fall

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graph TD; A[Fall] --> B[Separation & death]; B --> C[Pain/Sickness & toil]; C --> D[Broken relationship];
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Separation & death

Pain/Sickness & toil

Broken relationship

Understanding sickness in the OT

Old age Eccl 12:1-7

Weakness

Poor eyesight

Loss of hearing

Loss of teeth

Insomnia

Loss of desires

Increased fear



God inflicts and He heals

Deut. 32:39

I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal

1 Sam. 2:6

The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

Hos. 6:1 Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.



Warnings for Disobedience in Deut. 28

Barren
womb

Pestilence

Wasting
disease

Inflam-
mation

Fever

Boils

Tumours

Scabs

Itch

Madness

Blindness

Confusion

Sores
everywhere

Sickness not
known

Like the heat from the fire that warns us of the danger of the flame, sickness warns us of the effects of sin and eternal death.



Plagues as punishment for sins

Worship of Golden Calf (Exod.32:34)

Refusal to enter promised land
(Num. 14:37)

Grumbling against God for lack of food
(Num. 11:31-33)

Plague of snakes for grumbling against the
Lord (Num.21:8-9)

Rebellion of Korah (Num. 16:47-50)

Worship at Peor with sexual sins
(Num. 25:1-9)

David's pride in the census
(2 Sam. 24:15)

King Jeroboam's idolatry
(1 Kings 12:25-33)

In reply to King Zedekiah's reign hoping
that God will deliver (Jer. 21:7).

Sickness on individuals

Er and Onan struck dead (Gen 38:6-8)

Miriam was struck with leprosy for rebellion (Num. 12:9-16)

Nabal's heart attack for his insolence towards David (1 Sam. 25:37)

Uzzah struck dead for touching the Ark (2 Sam. 6:7)

David's wife Michal became barren
(2 Sam. 6:23)

David's loss of first child for adultery
(2 Sam. 12:14)

Gehazi was struck with leprosy for his
greed (2 Kings 5:26-27)

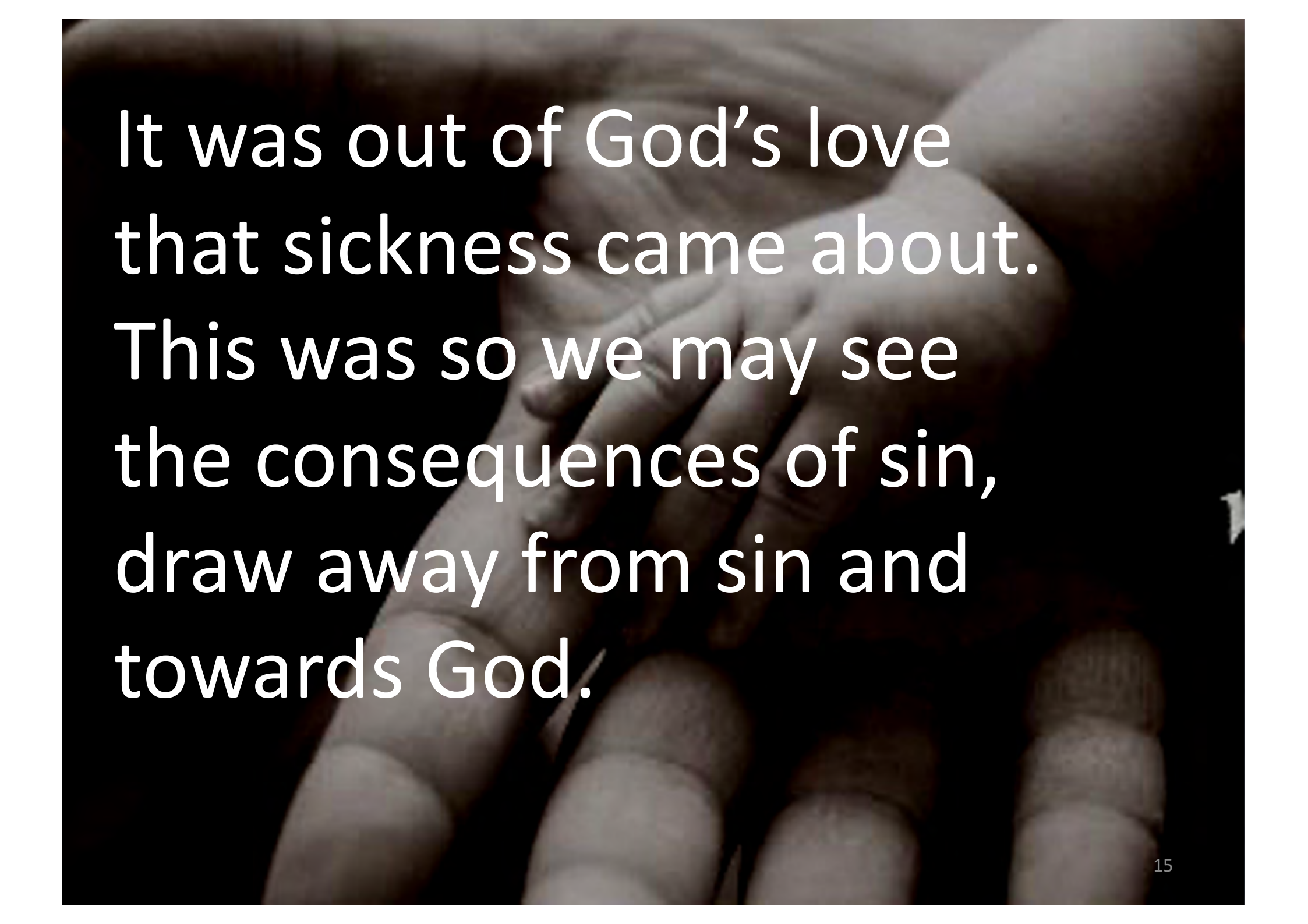
King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for
offering incense (2 Kings 15:5)

King Jeroboam's hand withered for wanting to imprison a prophet of the Lord
(1 Kings 13:4)

King Ahaziah consulted Baal Zebub and not the Lord, so he died from his injuries from a fall (2 Kings 1:1-17)

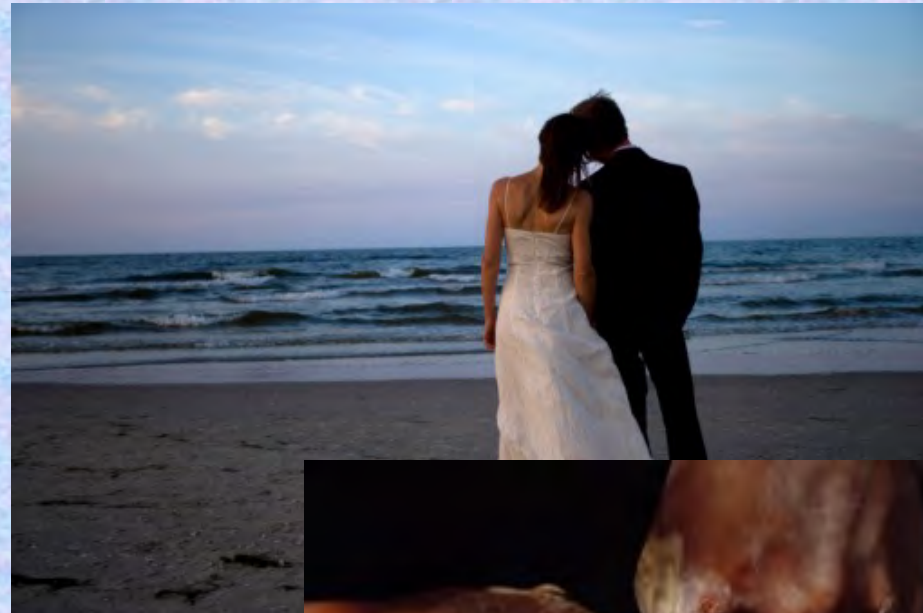
King Jehoram was struck with incurable disease of the bowels by the Lord
(2 Chr. 21:18-19)

King Asa relied on an alliance with Syria rather than God, so God struck him with a disease from head to foot, from which he died (2 Chr. 16:12)



It was out of God's love
that sickness came about.
This was so we may see
the consequences of sin,
draw away from sin and
towards God.

God depicts his relationship
between God and His people
in various ways



Sickness protected God's people

God sent a plague on Egypt to protect Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 12:17)

Closing the wombs of Abimelech's household protected Sarah (Gen. 20:17)

Jacob became lame to remind him that he needed to rely on God (Gen. 32:32)

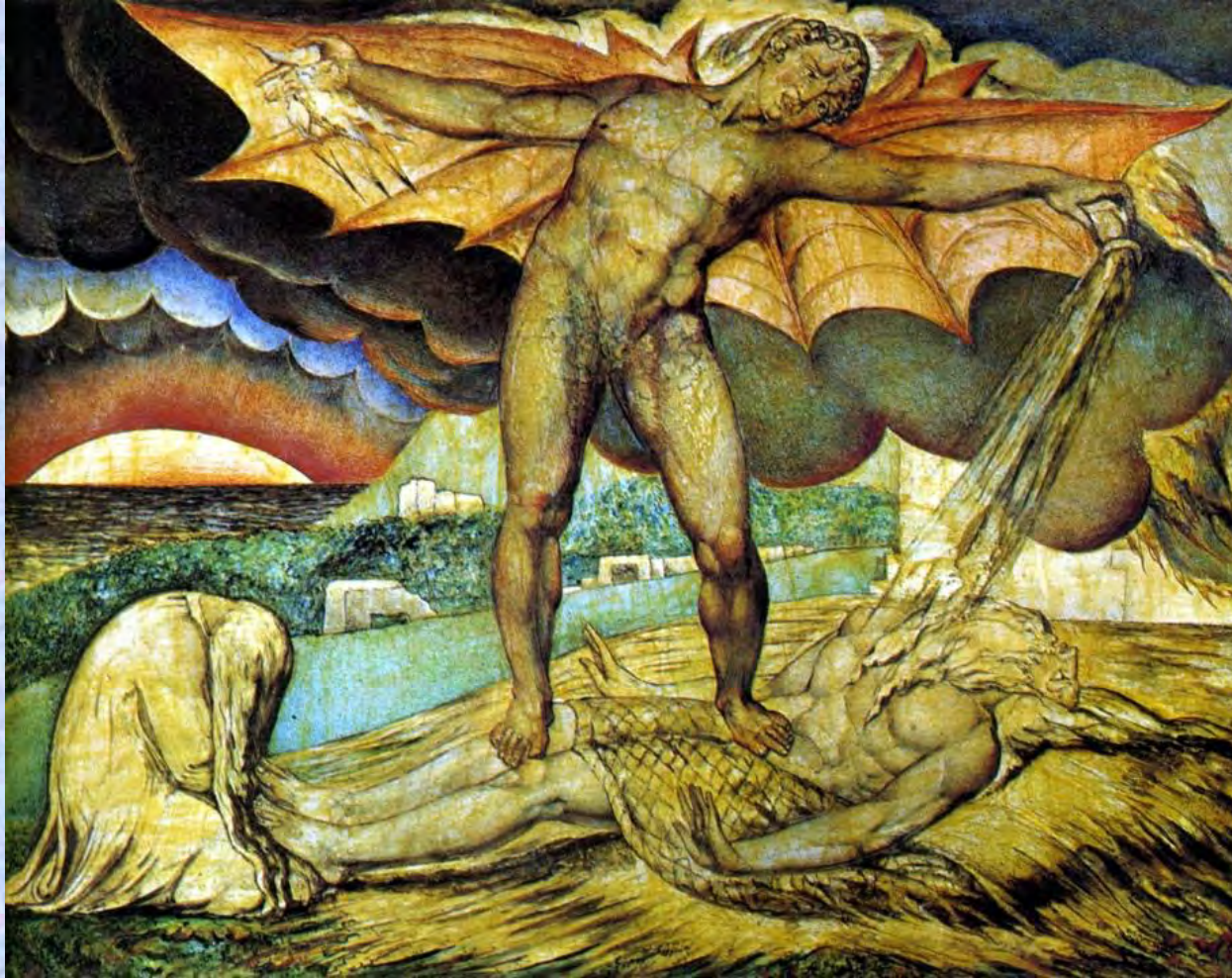
10 plagues on Egypt displayed God's salvation (Exod. 5-13)

God gave the Philistines tumors so they would return the ark (1 Sam. 5:6-12)

God delivered Israel from the Assyrian army by striking many of them dead (2 Chr. 32:21)

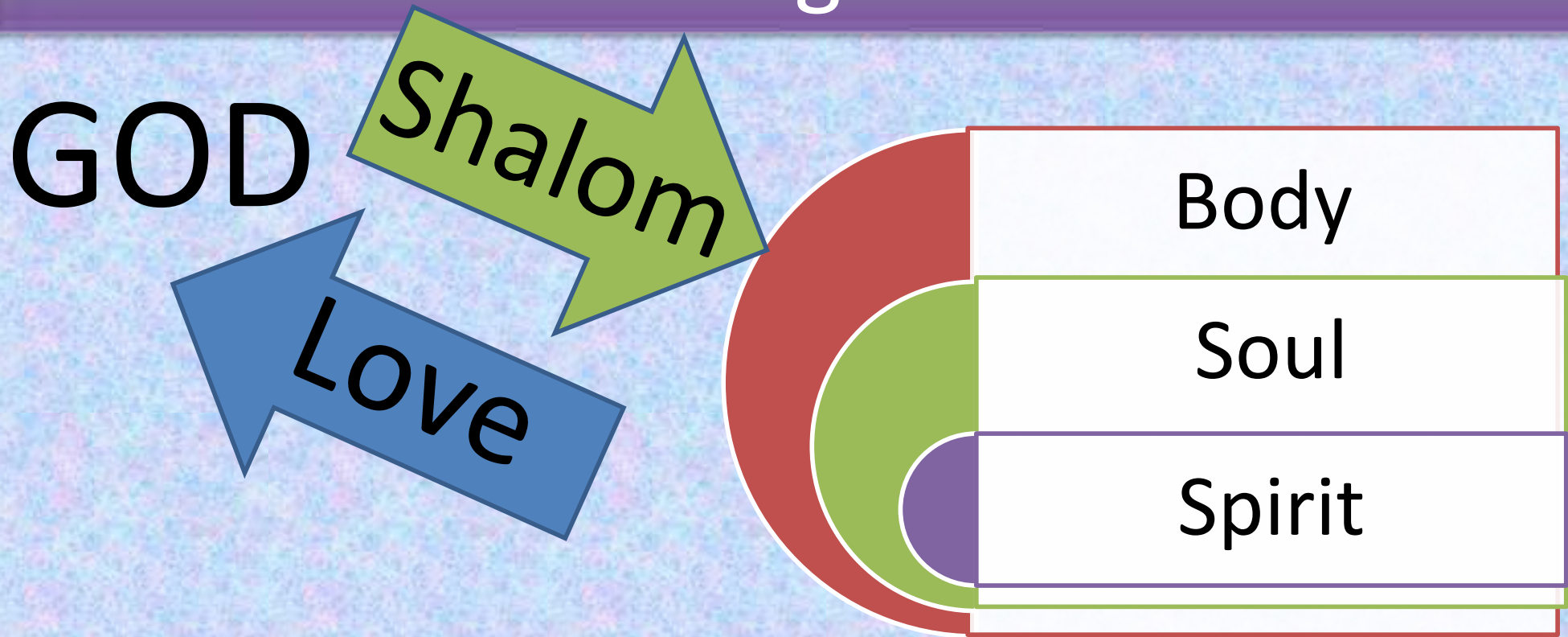
King Abijah died from sickness so as to be spared from violent death (1 Kings 14:10-13)





The adversary as responsible for sickness in Job

Understanding Health in OT



Deut. 6:5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **might**.

2 Types of Healing



Natural



Supernatural

God's Promise of Health

Exod. 23:25-26; Deut. 7:12-13; 28:4

Abraham told he would die in shalom
--peace, fullness of life (Gen. 15:15)

Psalms 91-- God will satisfy them with
long life and salvation (yeshua)

Isa. 46:4-- God promised to take care
of men even when they are old



God's Promise of Fertility

The first sickness and healing: Sarah's fertility
(Gen. 1:28; 11:30)

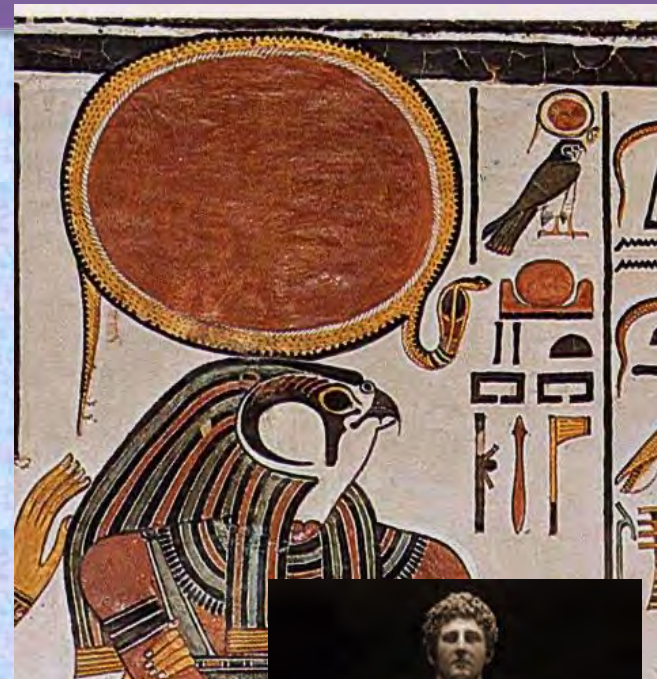
Healed of barrenness: Sarah (Gen. 21:1), Rebekah
(Gen. 25:21) and Rachel (Gen. 30:22)

Manoah's wife gave birth to Samson (Judg. 13:2)
and Hannah gave birth to Samuel (1 Sam. 2:5)



AGENTS OF HEALING IN THE OT

Gods of
Israel's
surrounding
nations



Jehovah Rapha who heals

Exod. 15:26 saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.”



Agents of Healing

Priest - custodians of the law

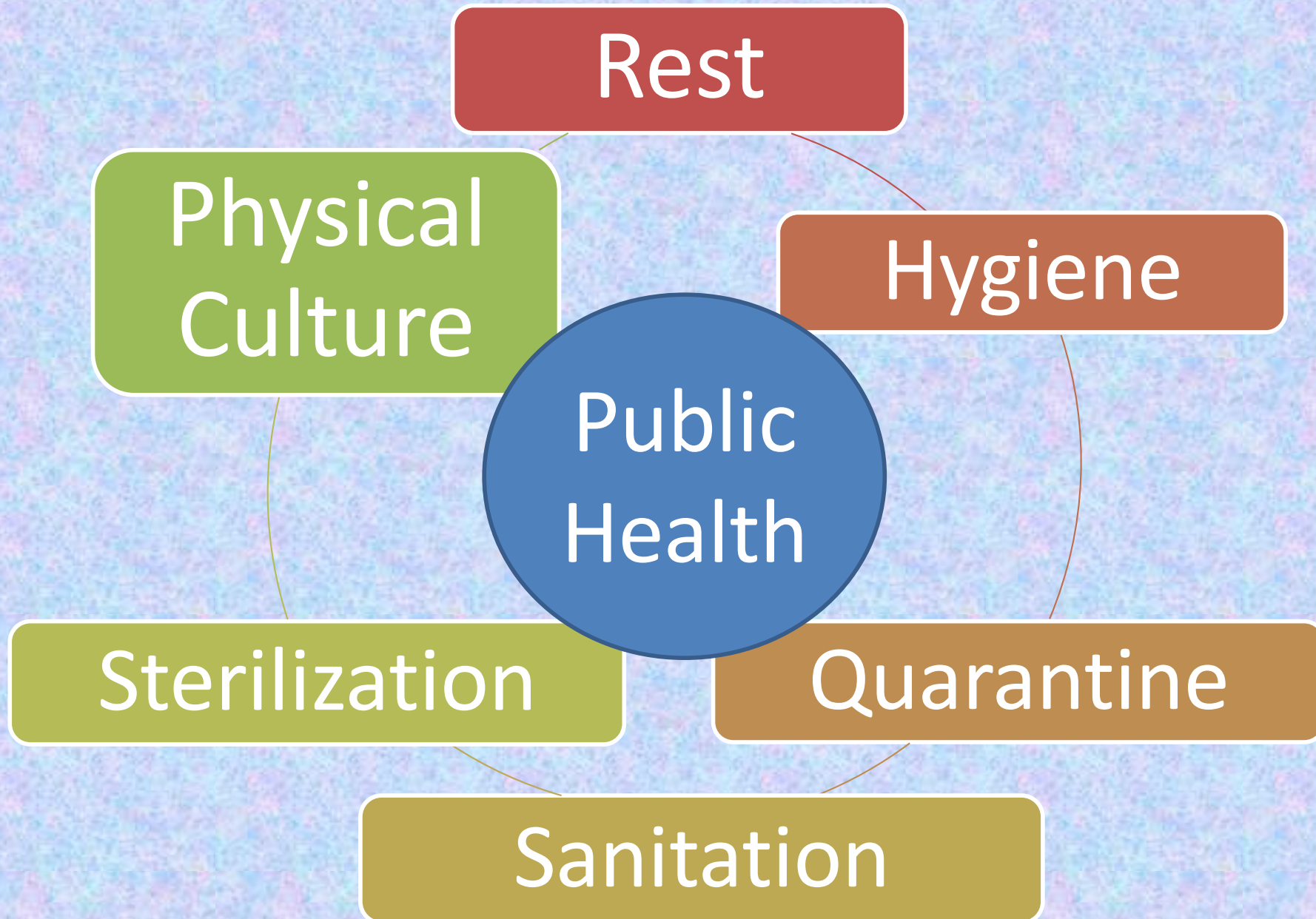
- Public health rules
- Persons suspected of contagious disease quarantined
- Made sacrifices and atoned for one who sinned

Physicians - but not of significance status

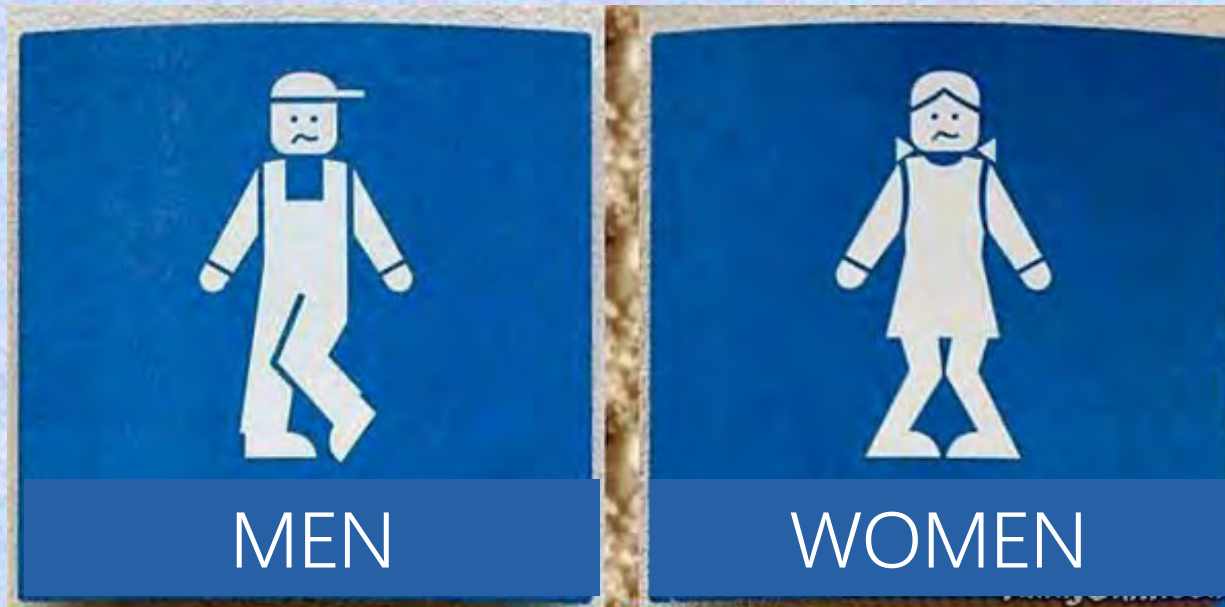
Prophets - draw men back to God

- Guidance led the person to acts of supernatural healing
- Proclamation – declare either healing or death

OBEDIENCE AND HEALING



Sanitation



Sanitation

- The flesh, skin and the dung of the sacrifices were burnt outside the camp
- They buried excrement outside the camp

Quarantine/ Sterilization

- If they touched anything unclean, be they corpses or diseased, they were to wash themselves.
- If suspect of infectious diseases, the subjects were to be quarantined outside the camp

Hygiene

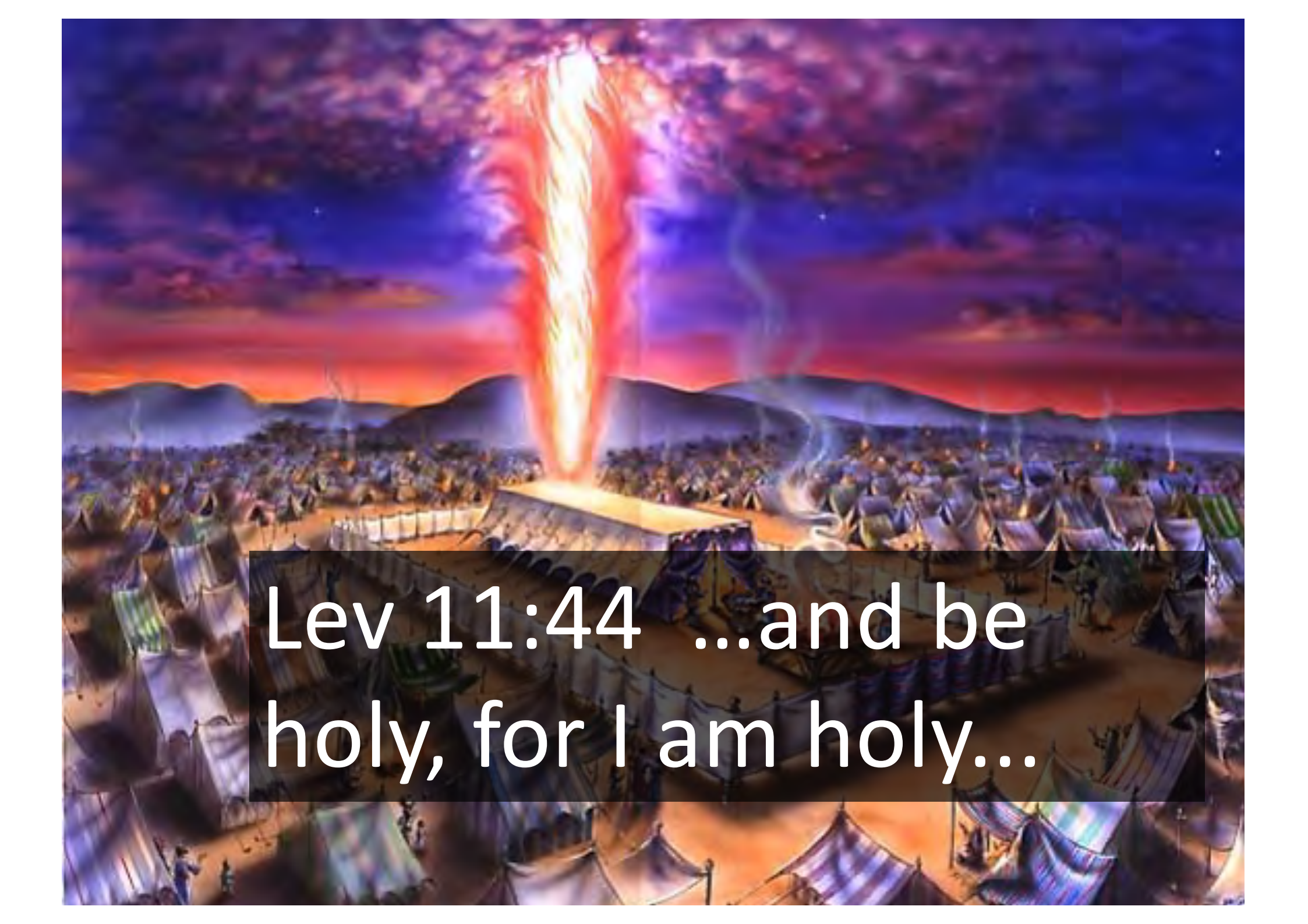
- No blood / fat
- No eating scavenger animals
- Circumcised on the 8th day
- Forbidden from ritualistic sex

Physical Culture

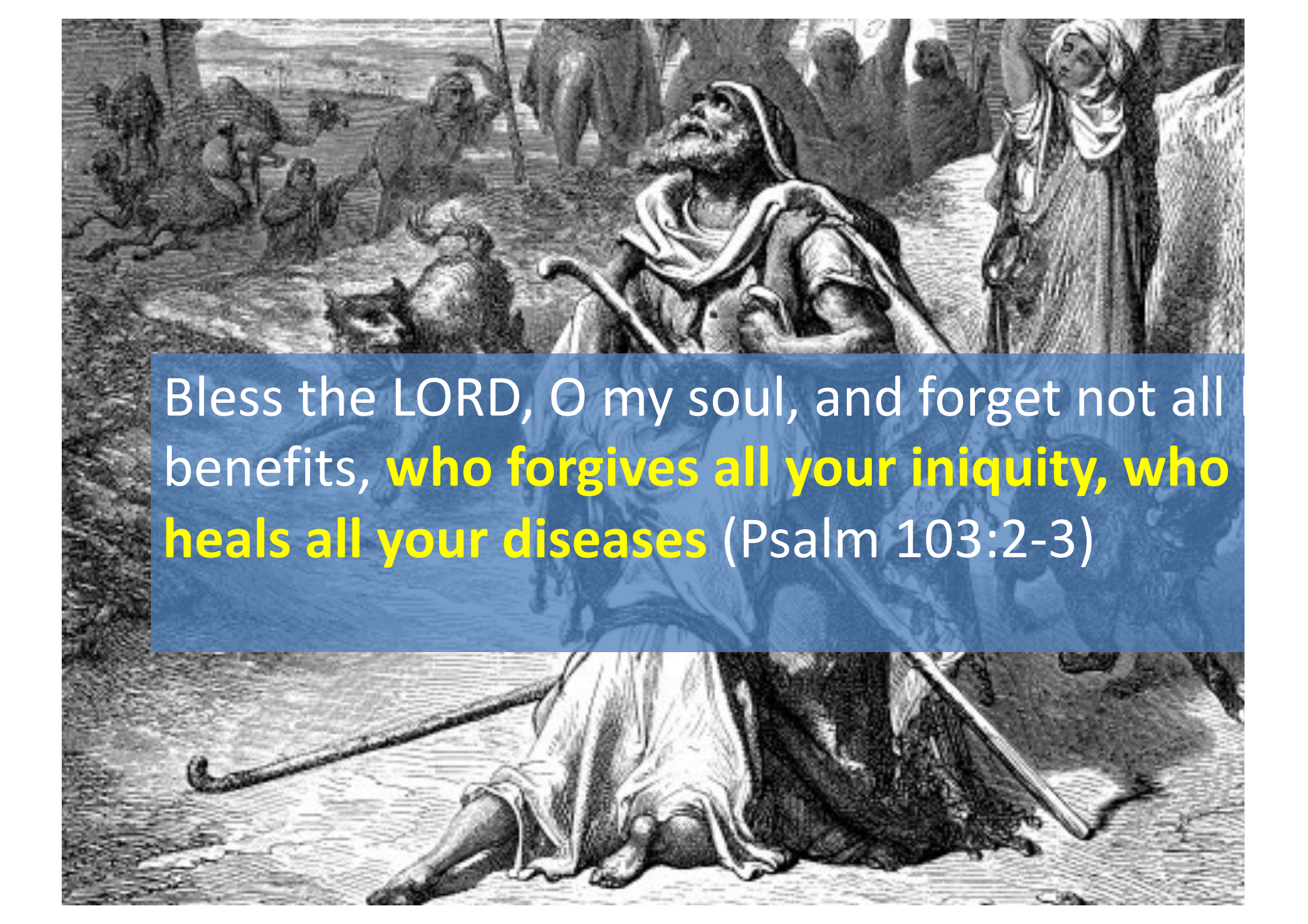
- Stay 2 weeks in a tent during feast of tabernacles
- Present themselves three times a year
- Work six days a week

Sabbath

- Each week they had one day rest
- Sabbatical year (year of rest), Jubilee Year

A dramatic illustration of a fire pillar descending from a stormy, purple and blue sky onto a large camp of tents in a desert landscape. The scene is set at dusk or dawn, with a vibrant orange and red glow on the horizon. The fire pillar is bright and intense, contrasting sharply with the dark, stormy clouds. The camp consists of numerous tents, some with colorful patterns, and a large crowd of people is visible in the distance. The overall atmosphere is one of awe and divine presence.

Lev 11:44 ...and be
holy, for I am holy...

A black and white illustration depicting a shepherd in the foreground, looking upwards with a staff in hand. In the background, a woman is visible, and a flock of sheep is scattered across the landscape. The scene is set in a rural, possibly biblical, environment.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all benefits, **who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases** (Psalm 103:2-3)

REPENTANCE & HEALING

Abimelech made compensation, so Abraham prayed that God would heal his family of barrenness (Gen. 20).

Miriam was struck with leprosy. Then she went through a period of cleansing and isolation before her healing (Num. 12:10-15)

David in Psalm 41 prayed for God to heal him from sickness. He then admitted his sins before God in hope of healing.

Jeroboam's hand was healed after the altar was torn down and the man of God prayed for him (1 Kings 13:6)

Job encountered God, then after his repentance, his wealth and wellbeing was restored to him (Job 42)

If my people

Pray

I will heal their land...

2 Chronicles 7:14

National Level Repentance

Moses told them to make a bronze serpent upon a pole; when they looked at it they were healed (Num. 21:9)

Phinehas killed a man who was yoked with the worship of Baal of Peor through sexual relationship with a Midianite woman, and the plague stopped (Num. 25:8)

After which they repented before the Lord averting further consequences, as of Moses in Exodus 32:31-35 and David in 2 Samuel 24:25

Hezekiah prayed for pardon for the Israelites from the North as they ate the Passover but not cleansed, God heard him and healed the people (2 Chr. 30:20)

Aaron had to carry his censer to make atonement for the people. He ran in the midst of the people and stood between the living and the dead, so the plague stopped (Num. 16:41- 50).



Prophecy using healing



Ezekiel –
Broken
Bones



Hosea –
dressing of
wounds



Ezekiel –
helpless
newborn

HEALING IN THE NATIONS





Naaman's healing

Ben Hadad wanted to know if he would live



Leading the blind Syrian army





King Nebuchadnezzar



Jonah & Nineveh



Luke 4:26-27 and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.

THE BEGINNING OF JOB'S MISFORTUNES (JOB 1:12)

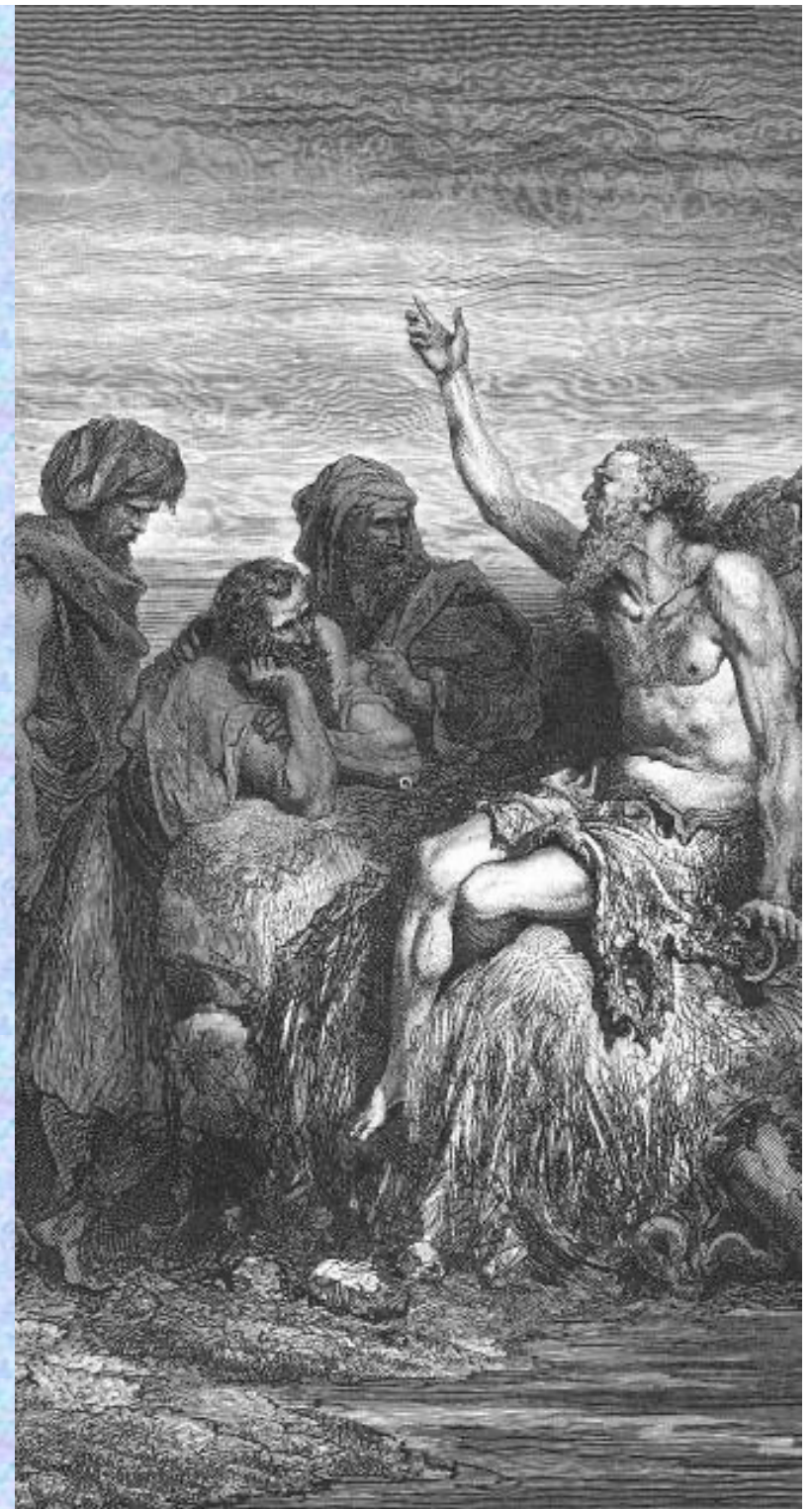
BEYOND JUDGMENT IN SICKNESS & HEALING



Job challenged the retribution theology by attempting to understand the reason behind the suffering of righteous man

The heart of Satan's challenge was that man was not worthy of God's attention

Satan's ultimate weapon was to use sickness, thinking that men would do anything to keep themselves alive





Introducing the adversary of God's people, Satan

Job's sufferings

- Sores from the top of his head to his toes
- Sores covered with worms
- His skin turns black and peels, hardens and cracks
- He has a fever, diarrhea, sleeplessness and constant nightmares.
- Grieving the loss of his children and possessions
- Bitterness of his wife towards him had caused depression to the point of suicide.
- The plight of this righteous man was far from shalom peace and wellbeing.

You must have sinned, so that is why God judged you. Repent and be well!

God is all powerful. He inflicted and He will heal.

How can men compare to the holiness of God? Repent!



You quack counsellors. I liked you better when you were quiet...

God is a bully. I want my lawyer... someone who stands between me and God.

Hey brother, God does speak and He cares and wants to keep us from eternal death, using sickness if needed. We need a mediator, who understands and points you to the right direction and who is willing to pay the ransom that you might have restoration.



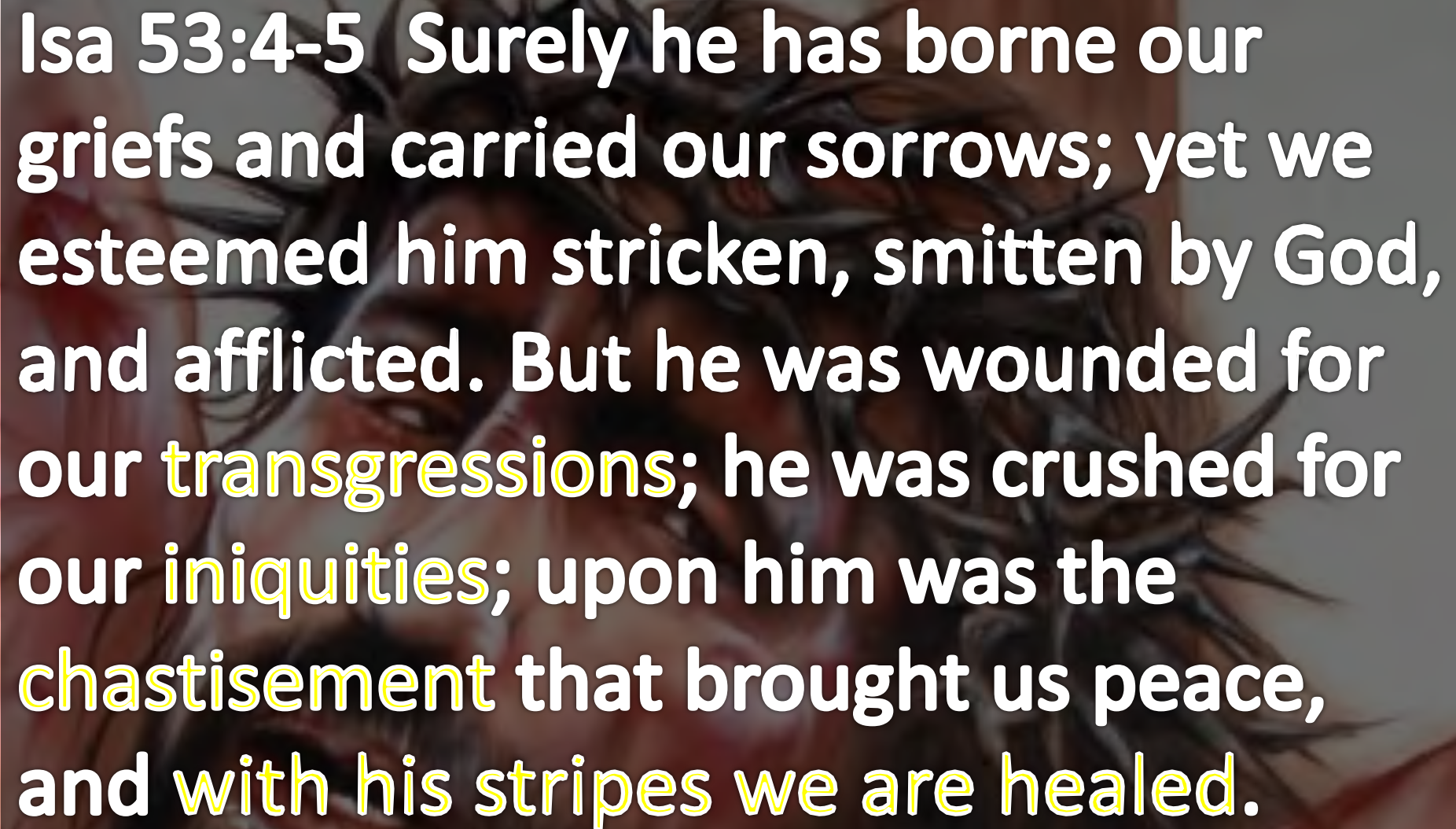
- If God is all powerful and just, when He allowed righteous men to be inflicted with sickness, there must be a higher purpose.
- We might not know the reason but even a greater good would come out of the sickness.

OUR SUFFERING SERVANT, REDEEMER & HEALER



Jesus suffered
on the cross

Sickness was because of the Fall and sin. Jesus became the guilt offering once and for all that breaks the power of sin in our lives, restoring us to shalom peace.



Isa 53:4-5 Surely he has borne our
griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we
esteemed him stricken, smitten by God,
and afflicted. But he was wounded for
our transgressions; he was crushed for
our iniquities; upon him was the
chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.

Does Isaiah 53 speak of atonement for sin or physical healing?

Atonement for Sin

Believers will face physical death but not spiritual death

Christ came to die for our sins—not for sickness (1 Cor 15:3)

If atonement and healing were integrated, then if we fall sick, we would doubt our salvation

Philip applied Isaiah 53 to Christ's atonement for sin when speaking with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8)

Jesus quoted Isaiah 53 in Matthew 8:14-17 by using the Greek term for *take away* and not *carried*

Peter's quote of Isaiah 53 referred to spiritual healing

Physical Healing

Matthew 8:14-17 applies Isaiah 53:4 to physical healing

1 Cor 15:3 refers to complete future deliverance from sin and sickness

Sickness closely links with effects of our fallen nature, but God forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases

Healing and atonement of sin are not the same, yet as sins are atoned for, healing and restoration comes

The root word for *heal* in Isa 53:5 (*rapha*), could mean healing physically or spiritually

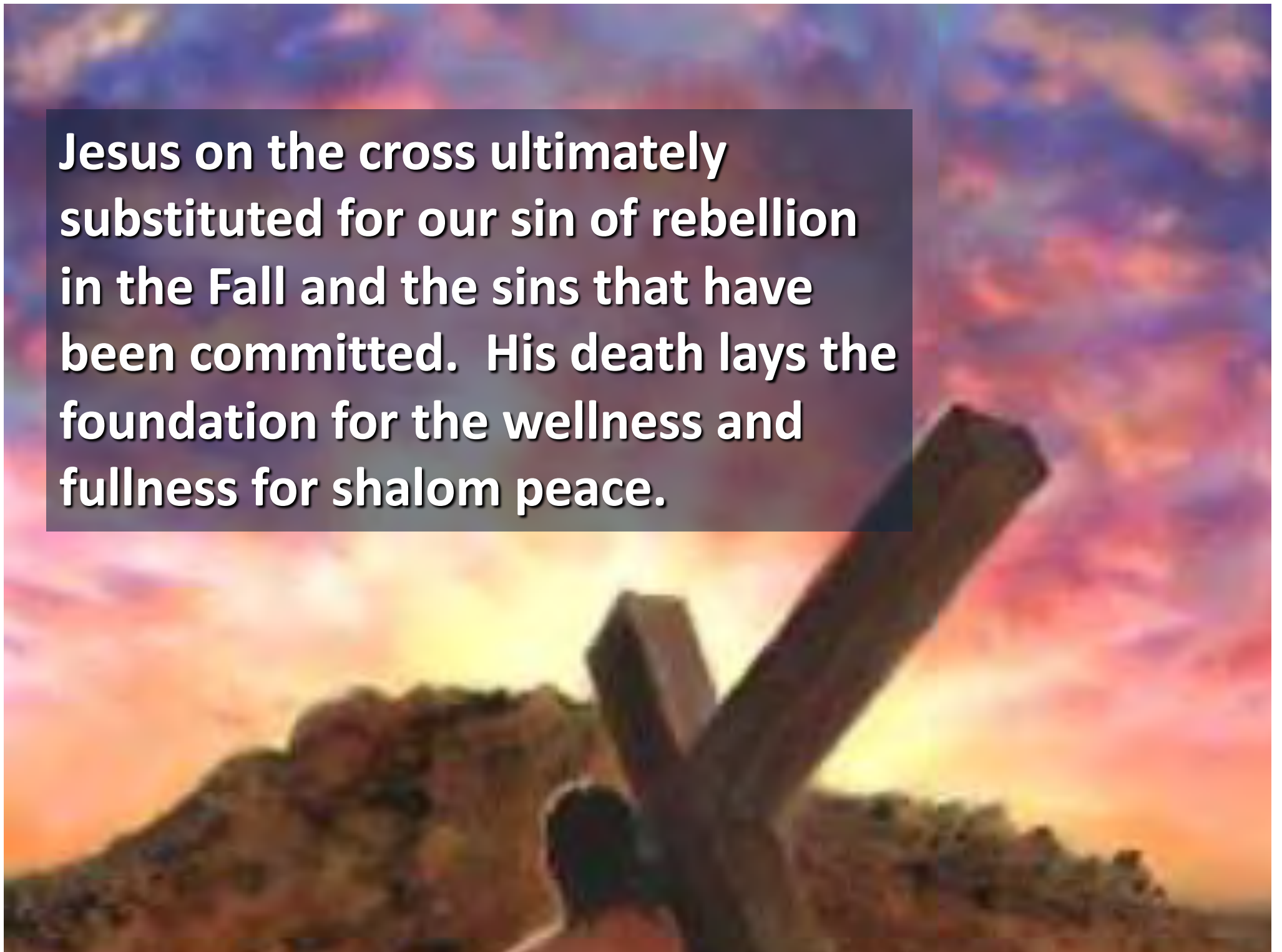
The word *griefs* in Isa 53:4 (*choliy*) is used mostly of physical healing

Job	Suffering Servant
Job is “my servant” (Job 1:8; 2:3)	God praises the Suffering Servant as he does Job (Isa 42:1)
Job is “stricken” of God (Job 19:21)	The people consider the Servant to be “stricken” of God (Isa 53:4)
Job is chastised by the Almighty (Job 5:17)	The same “chastisement” is predicted of the Servant (Isa 53:5)
Job is “despised” by compatriots (Job 19:18)	The Servant is despised and not esteemed (Isa 53:3)
Job’s friends “forget” him and his brethren “stay away” from him (Job 19:13-14)	The Suffering Servant’s compatriots “hide their faces” (Isa 53:3)
Job is “smitten” on the “cheeks” (Job 16:10)	The Servant also is “smitten” on the “cheeks” (Isa 50:6, 53:4).
Job records his experience as, “They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face” (Job 30:10, cf. Job 17:6)	The Servant does not hide his face from “spitting” (Isa 50:6), which is a rare word (3x) that only occurs in Job (2x) and Isaiah.

The above comparisons between Job & Suffering Servant are taken from Andrew Perry, “The Suffering Servant of Isaiah and the Suffering of Job” at <http://www.christadelphian-ejbi.org/presentations/job.pdf>

Job	Suffering Servant
Job claims that what has befallen him was “not for any violence” in his hands (Job 16:17)	This phrase occurs once elsewhere in Isaiah 53:9, “because he had done no violence”
Job asserts that his prayer was pure (Job 16:17)	No guile was found in the Suffering Servant’s mouth (Isa 53:9, cf. Job 31:5)
Job says that upright men are astonished or appalled at what has happened to him (Job 17:8)	“Many were appalled at thee” (Isa 52:14)
Job says that the mockers will not be “exalted” (Job 17:4)	The Suffering Servant himself is the one who would be exalted (Isa 52:13)
Job wants someone to “contend” with him (Job 13:19)	The same question is posed by the Suffering Servant: “Who will contend with me?” (Isa 50:8)
Job complains that he is being eaten by moths (Job 13:28)	In contrast, the adversaries of the Suffering Servant would be eaten by moths (Isa 50:9)
Job rests his case with God (Job 16:19)	So does the Suffering Servant (Isa 49:4)

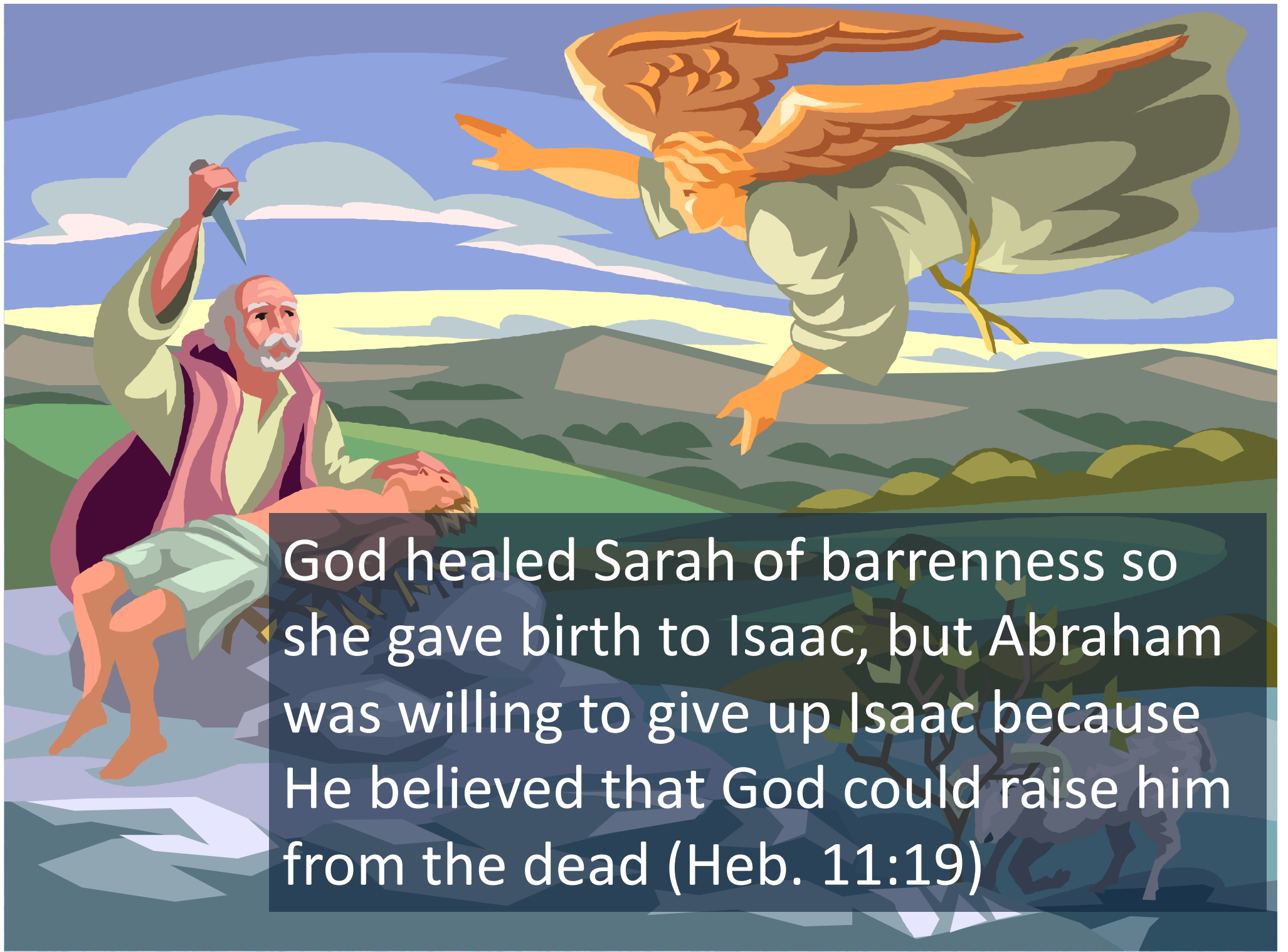
Jesus on the cross ultimately substituted for our sin of rebellion in the Fall and the sins that have been committed. His death lays the foundation for the wellness and fullness for shalom peace.



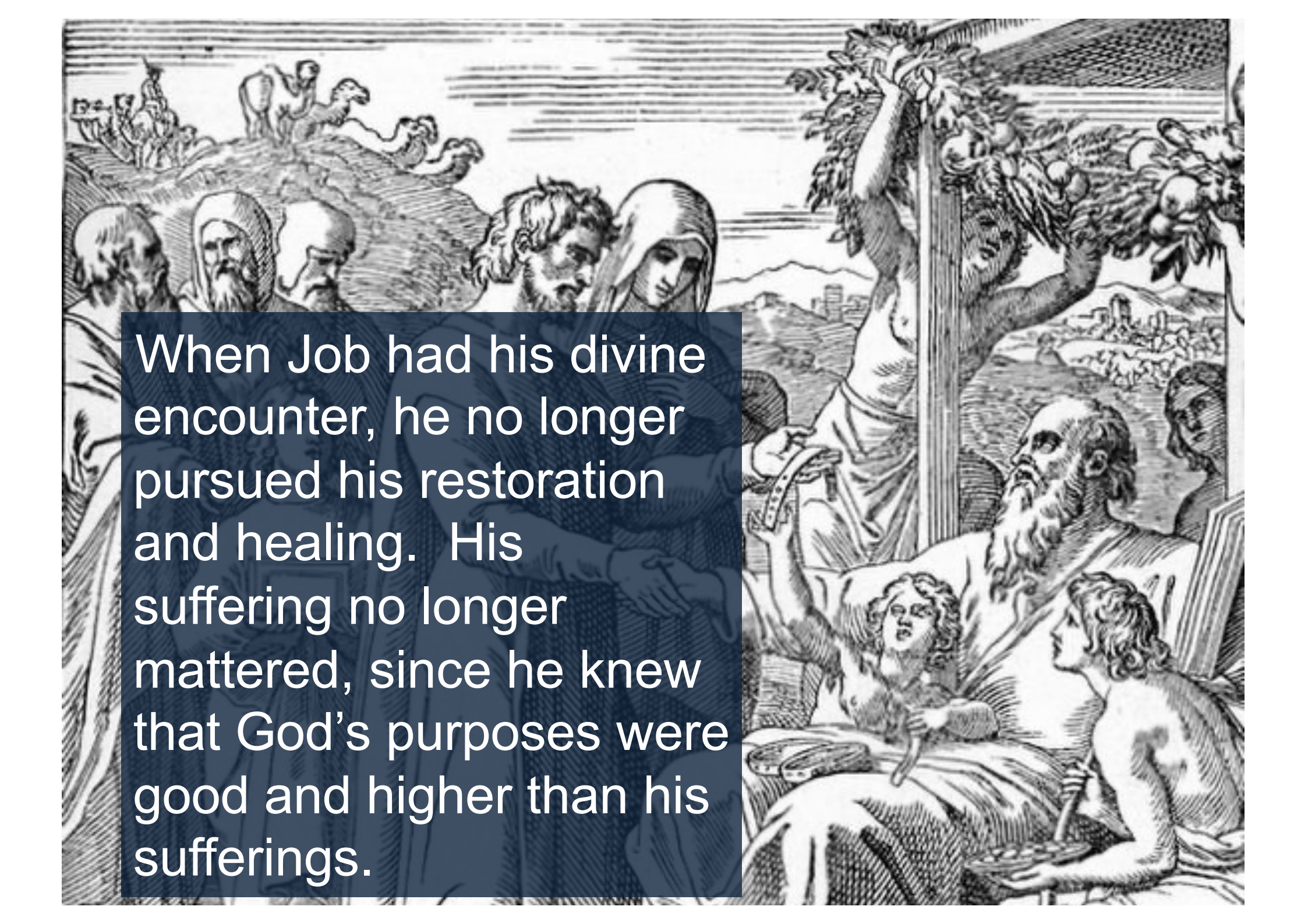
Satan lost his challenge



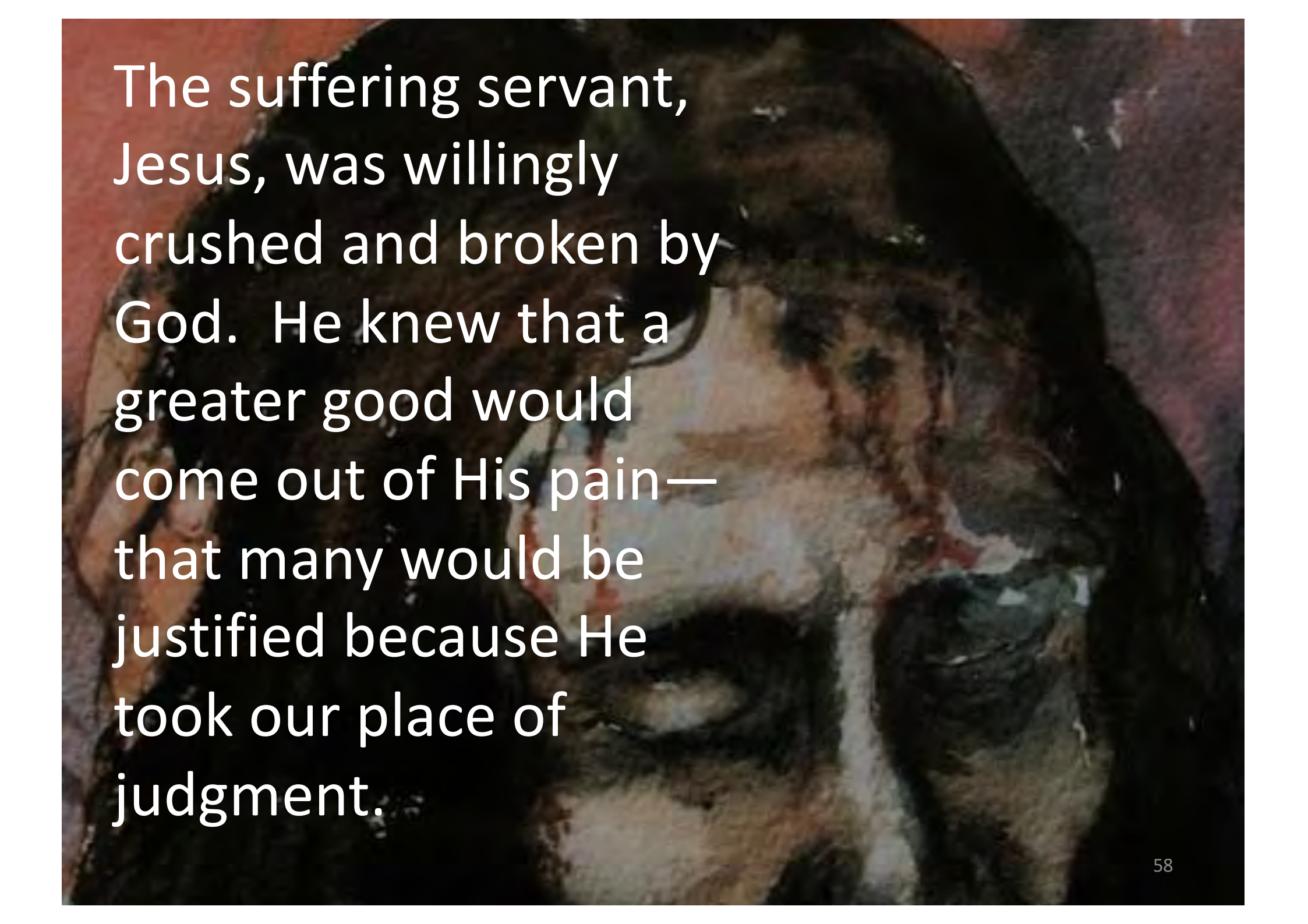
Satan used the weapon of sickness with the accusation that man will do anything to keep his life.



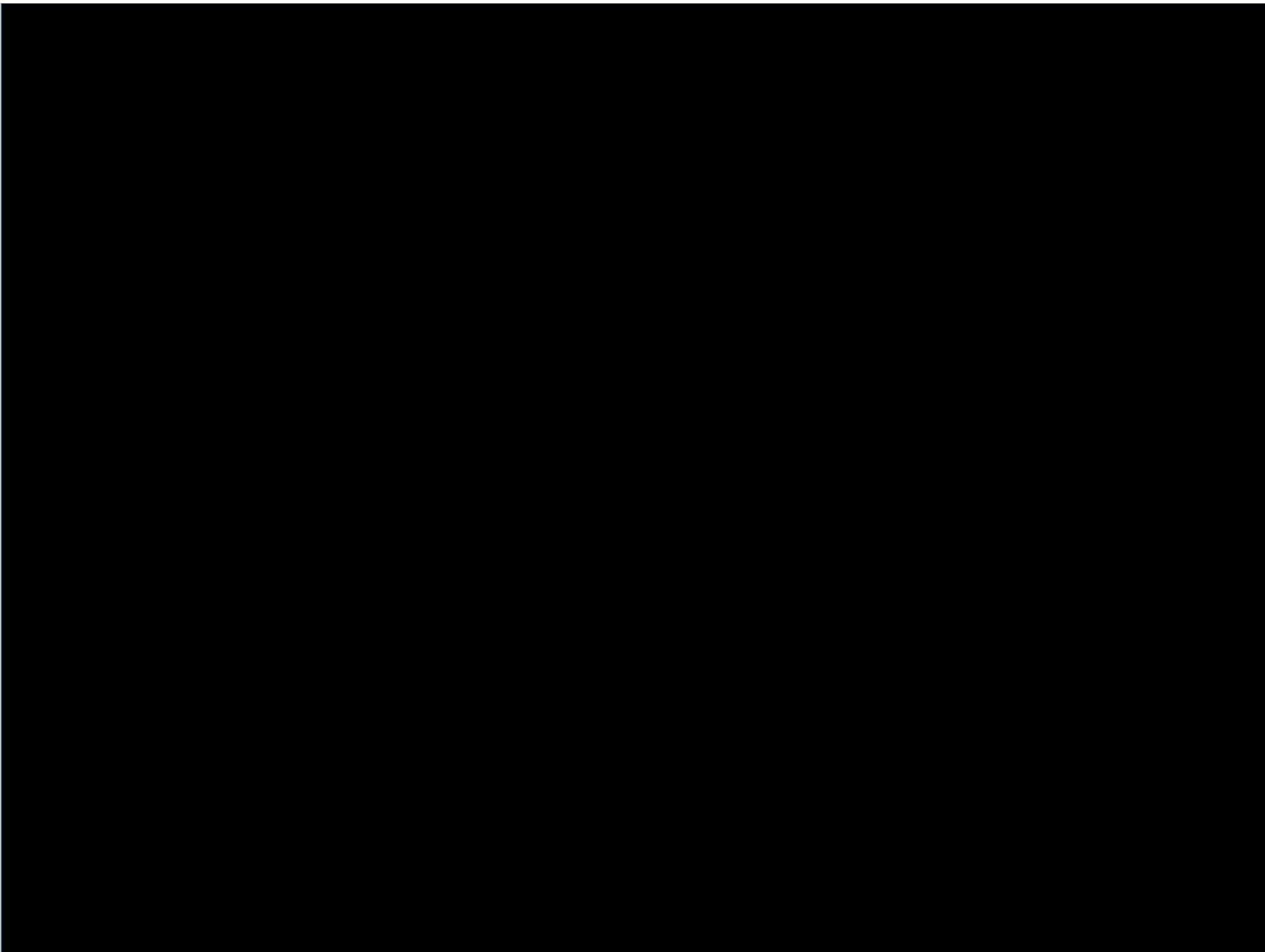
God healed Sarah of barrenness so she gave birth to Isaac, but Abraham was willing to give up Isaac because He believed that God could raise him from the dead (Heb. 11:19)



When Job had his divine encounter, he no longer pursued his restoration and healing. His suffering no longer mattered, since he knew that God's purposes were good and higher than his sufferings.



The suffering servant,
Jesus, was willingly
crushed and broken by
God. He knew that a
greater good would
come out of His pain—
that many would be
justified because He
took our place of
judgment.



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