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### **Assignment 3: Rough Draft of the paper (RD)**

#### **Prayer and healing: A Medical and scientific perspective.**

The bible show us the importance of prayer that it can dry the tree, and can do marvelous and move mountains like Jesus did ,he continue to encourage the disciples the power of prayer

The prayer heals, even where medication fail prayer is the solution. That is the reason science and our doctor all over the world believe and they have this saying that they treat but God heals through prayer.

Religious traditions a cross the world believes in healing through prayer. The healing powers of prayer have been examined in triple-blind, randomized control trials on prayer and healing, with one study in each different categories outcome.

Interestingly ,Spiritual meditation have been found to be superior to secular meditation and relaxation in terms of decreases in anxiety and improvement in positive mood, spiritual health, spiritual experiences and tolerance to pain.

We provide a critical analysis of the scientific and philosophical dimensions such research .prayer have been reported to improve out come in human as well as nonhuman species, to have no effect on outcomes ,to worsen outcome and to have retrospective healing effects. For a multitude of reasons, research on the healing effect on prayer is a riddle with assumptions, challenge and contradictions that make the subject a scientific and religious minefield. We believe that a research has led nowhere, and that future research, if any, will forever be constrained by the scientific limitations that we outline.

Keywords: Healing, miracles, prayer, randomized controlled trials, research design

“More things are wrought by prayer

Than this world dream of.”

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson; from Morte d’Arthur)

“Faith can move mountains.”

(The Bible; paraphrase from Mathew 21:21)

This is a serious scientific article that examines conceptual and methodological issues underlying randomized controlled trials on prayer and healing. We do not intend to battle any religion or any religious practice for those who pray, nor do we deny the medical and psychosocial benefits that have been identified to result from religious affiliations and practices.

## INTRODUCTION

Religious practices have been associated with healing for millennia. People pray for good health and for relief from illness. Prayer may result in health and healing through one or more of several mechanisms. We briefly consider these mechanisms.

## MECHANISMS OF HEALING

### THROUGH PRAYER.

*Prayer is a special form of meditation and may therefore convey all the health benefits that have been associated with meditation.*

Different types of meditation have been shown to result in psychological and biological changes that are actually or potentially associated with improved health. Meditation have been found to produce a clinically significant reduction in resting as well as ambulatory blood pressure, {2,3} to reduce heart rate, {4} to result in cardiorespiratory synchronization, {5} to alter levels of melatonin and serotonin, [6] to suppress corticostriatal glutamatergic neurotransmission, {7} to boost the immune response, {8} to decrease the levels of reactive oxygen species as measured by ultra-weak photon emission, {9} to reduce stress and promotes positive moods states, {10} to reduce anxiety and pain and enhance self-esteem {11} and to have a favorable influence on overall and spiritual quality of life in late-stage disease.

[12] Interestingly, spiritual meditation and relaxation in terms of decrease in anxiety and improvement in positive moods, spiritual health, spiritual experiences and tolerance to pain. [13]

Prayer may be supported by varying degrees of faith and may therefore be associated with all the benefits that have been associated with the placebo response.

Clinically significant treatment gains have been observed with placebo in numerous disorders, including anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, tardive dyskinesia, ischemic heart disease, cardiac failure, Parkinson's disease and even cancer, among a host other conditions {14-20}

Relevant to the context of prayer and healing, the placebo response is influenced by personality traits and behaviors such as optimism, [21, 22] response expectancy, [23]

Motivational concordance [i.e., the degree to which the behavioral rituals of the therapy are congruent with the motivational system of the subject [24] and degree of engagement with a ritual. [25]

*Prayer may be associated with improvements that result from spontaneous remission, regression to the mean, nonspecific psychosocial support, the Hawthorne effect and the Rosenthal effect.*

Spontaneous remission is well known to occur in conditions that range from medical disorders [e.g., depression and mania]. Regression to the mean describes improvement that occurs as a result of random fluctuation in the severity of illness; in clinical trials, because patients are usually preselected for greater severity of illness; such fluctuations usually occur in only one direction [i.e., toward improvement]. [26]

Nonspecific emotional support provides psychological benefits through interpersonal contact, such as during diagnostic and rating exercises. Nonspecific support can reduce anxiety, depression, pain and similar constructs.

Spontaneous remission and regression to the mean may occur coincidental to prayer. Nonspecific psychosocial support related to prayer may arise in group prayer settings. Improvements in contexts are true improvements. In contrast, in randomized controlled studies on the efficacy of prayer as a treatment, related improvements that are not true improvements may also occur; explanation for such improvement include the Hawthorne effect refers to change that occurs as a result of the act of the observation or measurement,[27,28] whereas the Rosenthal effect refers to change resulting from observe or rate expectancy.[29]with regard to the former, the comforting environment of the study setting or the conscious or unconscious wish of the patient to please may result in the report of less symptoms than actually exist.

With regard to the former, the comforting environment of the study setting or the conscious or unconscious wish of the patient to please may result in the report of less symptoms than they actually exist. With regard to the latter, the tendency of the rater to expect symptom attention across time may result in the attachment of lower significance to reported symptoms.

## **Prayer may result in benefits that:**

### **Due to divine intervention.**

Although the very consideration of such a possibility may appear scientifically bizarre, it cannot be denied that, across the planet, people pray for health and for relief of symptoms in times of sickness. Healing through religious rituals, healing at places of pilgrimages and healing through related forms of intervention are well-established traditions in many religions.

## **DIVINE INTERVENTION AS A**

### **MECHANISM OF HEALING**

## **THROUGH PRAYER**

*Meditation, the placebo response, regression to the mean, the natural cause of various illnesses, nonspecific emotional support, the Hawthorne effect and the Rosenthal effect have all been studied. What about divine intervention as a mechanism of recovery of health through prayer? This has also been seriously investigated.*

*Astin et al. [30] Conducted a systematic review of the literature on the efficiency of any form of distant healing as a treatment for any medical condition. A total of 23 trials involving 2,774 patients met the inclusion criteria and were subjected to analysis. Of these studies, 13[57] yielded statically significant treatment effects favoring distance healing, nine show no superiority of distance healing over control interventions and one showed a negative effect for distance*

healing. The methodological of many of the studies, however, made it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the efficiency of distant healing. Of note; Astin et al. [30] define a distance healing to include spiritual healing, prayer, and any form of healing from a distance, affected as a conscious act that seeks to benefit another person. Therapeutic touch and Reiki were both included in the definition; as both of this may elicit an expectancy response, [31] it become even harder to draw definitive conclusions about the literature that Astin et al. [30] examined.

In another system review, Crawford et al. [31] examined the quality of studies of hands-on healing and distance healing that was published between 1955 and 2001. There were 90 identified studies of which 45 in laboratory settings. Crawford et al. [31] reported that 71 of the clinical settings and 45 in laboratory studies reported positive outcomes; and that the overall internal validity for the studies on distant healing was 75 for the clinical investigations and 81 for the laboratory investigations. Major methodological problems of the identified studies were an inadequacy of blinding, dropped data in laboratory studies, unreliability of outcome measures, infrequent use of power estimations and confidence intervals and lack of independent replication.

In the present article, they present a purposive, qualitative review of the scientific literature on possible paranormal healing through prayer.

They critically evaluate scientific and religious implications of such research.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**The currently accepted gold standard for the investigation of the efficacy of medical interventions is the double-blind, randomized control trial. Most recent studies on prayer and healing have adopted this design. In such studies, commonly, a group of intercessors pray for health of patients who are randomized to the intervention group. These patients they do not know that they are being prayed for and the person who are praying do not come in contact with the patient whom they pray.**

**Medical outcomes are compared with outcomes in patients randomized to the control group whom are not prayed for. Finally and importantly, the medical treatment team is also blind to the prayer group status of individual patient. Thus, these studies are triple-blind.**

**In this purpose review, they illustrate the nature of the research in the field by presenting one human and one nonhuman study on improved outcomes associated with prayer, one study showing no difference between prayer and control conditions, one study suggesting that prayer may have a retrospective healing effect. We then provided a detailed, critical evaluation of the scientific and theological implications of research.**

## RESULTS

**Improved outcomes associated with prayer.**

**Cha et al [32] studied 219**

**Consecutive infertile woman aged 26-46 years, who were treated with in vitro fertilization**

**Embryo transfer in Seoul, South Korea. These women were randomized into distance prayer and control groups. Prayer was conducted by prayer groups in USA, Canada and Australia. The patients and their providers were not informed about the intervention.**

**The investigators, and even the statisticians, did not know the group allocations until all the data had been collected. Thus, the study was randomized, triple-blind, controlled and prospective in design.**

**Cha et al.[32]found that the woman who had been prayed for had nearly twice as high a pregnancy rate as those who had not been prayed for[50 vs.26;p<0.005].Furthermore,the women who had been prayed for showed a higher implantation rate than those who had not been prayed for[16.3vs.8percent ;P<0.001].**

**Finally, the benefits of prayer were independent of clinical or Laboratory providers and clinical variables. Thus, this study showed that distance prayer facilitates implantation and pregnancy.**

**Lesniak [33] described a study on the effect of intercessory prayer on wound healing in a nonhuman primate species. The samples comprised 22 bush babies (*Otolemur garnettii*) with wounds resulting from chronic self-injurious behavior. These animals were randomized into prayer and control groups that were similar at baseline.**

**Prayer was conducted for four weeks .Both groups of bush babies additionally received L-tryptophan.**

**Lesniak [33] found that the prayer group animals had a greater reduction in wounds size and greater improvement in hematological parameters than the control animals. This study is important because it was conducted in a nonhuman species; therefore, the likelihood of a placebo effect was removed.**

#### ***Absence of benefits with prayer***

**Aviles et al. [34] examined cardiovascular outcomes related to prayer: In this study, 799 coronary care unit patients at discharge were randomized to intercessory prayer or no prayer conditions. Prayer was conducted by five persons per patient at least once a week for 26 weeks.**

**Patients were considered to belong to a high-risk group if they were 70 years old or older or if they had any of the following: diabetes mellitus, previous myocardial infarction, cerebrovascular diseases or peripheral vascular disease. The primary end point of the study was any of the following: death, cardiac arrest, and hospitalization for cardiovascular disease, coronary revascularization or an emergency department visit for cardiovascular disease.**

By the end of 26 weeks, a primary endpoint had occurred in 25.6 of patients in the primary group and in 29.3 of patients in the control group. The difference was not statistically significant.

The results remained not significant when data were analyzed separately for high and low-risk patients. Thus, this study showed that, as delivered in this study; intercessory prayer did not influence the 26-week outcome after discharge from a coronary care unit.

Other recent randomized controlled trials have also reported negative results. For example, Krucoff et al. [35] reported no benefits with offer site prayer in patients [n=748] undergoing percutaneous coronary interventions and Astin et al. [36] found that neither remote prayer delivered by professional healers nor remote prayers delivered by nurses with no training or experience in distance healing resulted in benefits to patients (n=156) with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome defining opportunistic infections.

## **A lesson on Prayer**

### **From the landscape.**

By John A. Beck

In the last week of his life,

Jesus observed in his

Disciples an attitude

Toward prayer that would

Not do.

Crossing from Bethany to Jerusalem, Jesus had cursed a fruitless fig tree to teach a lesson about the failure of the Jerusalem religious establishment. But the lesson was nearly lost on his disciples who were consumed by the rapid and unexpected withering of the fig tree. They were “amazed.”

Their wonder left the large lesson about the failed temple leadership unclaimed, and it laid bare a weakness in their perspective on prayer. In response, Jesus lifts their eyes from the fig tree to the horizon for a lesson on prayer drawn from the landscape. We have that lesson in Matthew 21:18-22.

The geography of the text.

Three elements of geographical play a role in Jesus' lesson on prayer: [1] his route of travel; [2] The mountain that the disciples could move; and [3] the sea they could move it to.

Like many of Jesus lessons, this one occurs while he and the disciples are travelling. The journeys of Jesus during Passion Week include two daily trips between Bethany and Jerusalem. In the evening, he would walk from Jerusalem to Bethany where he stayed at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. In the morning, he would leave Bethany and walk to Jerusalem where he spent the day teaching in the city.

This daily commute meant that Jesus walked the well-worn path that climbed over the mountain of olives. We know the most likely location of the path because we know something about the ancient travel and routes preferences.

People in bible time's walk in traveling. This meant that they selected route avoided that avoided the more rigorous elevation changes, since those cause their thighs to burn with each step of the climb. In this case, the route of choice between Bethany and Jerusalem would have gone through the saddle in this extended ridge of Mount of Olives. It is important to start here because if we know the route Jesus took, we will know what was in view a long that route. This will help us identify both the mountain and the sea that became part of Jesus 'lesson on prayer the morning he cross from Bethany to Jerusalem.

### Identifying the mountain

Given Jesus 'location in the mountainous terrain of Judea, many mountains were in view. But he has one particular mountain in mind and used a demonstrative pronoun to designate it:

"This mountain". Had we been there, this would have been enough language to know the mountain in which he pointed. But neither Jesus nor Mathew provides a specific place-name. This is rather typical of Mathew. He regularly makes reference to specific mountains without using their proper names. His reference rising terrain with phrases like: a "high mountain" (Mathew 4:8; 17:1), a "mountainside" (5:1), "this mountain"

(17:20), and "the mountain "where Jesus directed the disciples to meet him.

*The Herodias is the only mountain in view that had a history of being moved-a fact Jesus alludes to in his lesson. Herod directed his builders to move part of the mountain adjacent to the her odium in order to provide materials to create an artificial slope ,which run from the circular hall down to the base of the Herodium.*

Pitched at 32 degrees, this slope gave the herodium the symmetry not found in the natural world and created a structure unique to the Hellenistic Roman World .With it high elevation, unique shape, distinctive architecture, and history of being moved, The Herodium is the most likely referent of this" mountain" in Mathew 21:21.

### Identifying the sea

**When Mathew refer to a” sea “or “lake, “it is almost always the sea of Galilee. But this connection would not make sense in this case, as Jesus was delivering his lesson from the Mount of Olives in Judea, far from the Sea of Galilee.**

**The one inland lake that is view from his teaching location was the Dead Sea, located just east of the Herodium.**

**Because of the Dead Sea’s high chemical content, the aquatic life we typically associate with an inland lake is nonexistent. This lifeless quality may have played a role in a recommendation offered in the Mishnah (traditional rabbinic writings) for Jews who happened upon an unholy object in the Holy land: The rabbis directed that utilizes with pagan figures on them and any wood associated with pagans worship should be discharged into the Dead Sea.**

### **The lesson on prayer**

**This is the geography Jesus integrates into his lesson on the effectiveness of prayer. He chooses the Herodium not only because it was easily seen from the Mount of Olives, but also because of what it symbolized for the disciples.**

**Places have connotations; we think about certain things when we visit a place, and hearing its name mentioned makes us feel in a certain way. Some public places, like the Lincoln memorial, create very positive and respective-filled thoughts and feelings.**

**After these men marveled at a sudden withering of a fig tree, Jesus call for them to lift their eyes from the tree to the horizons, to the mountain that symbolized what needed fixing in the World.**

**If they would pray in faith, they could accomplish so much more than cursing a fig tree to wither. They could ask that the Herodium and all it represented be thrown into the place where all pagan objects belong-the Dead Sea-and it would happen.**

**And that brings this lesson from the land scape to the block on which we live. It is easy to focus on the ground level and marvels over the accomplishments of an organization or person greater in stature than us. We get caught up with the withered tree, feeling that accomplishments like this are beyond us.**

**Perhaps these words come into our lips: “if only I could...”and that is when Jesus taps us on the shoulder and lifts our eyes from the fig tree to the horizon. He points to the real challenge out there -our Herodium-and invites us to think differently about prayer than we have before.**

**Perhaps the biggest obstacle standing in the path of the church and the advance of God’s kingdom is not what is out there on the horizon but what is within us. When we underestimate the power of faith-filled prayer. We leave Heroudiums standing in our culture which need to be retired to the Dead Sea. Jesus ‘words are meant for us as well.**

**“Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree but also you can say to this mountain,Go,throw yourself into the**

**sea, 'and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.'"(Mathew 21:21-22)**

## **Mathew 21:18-46 Lessons by Dr.Bob**

### **Utley -You Tube**

#### **Mathew 21**

**The overall picture the impact of Mathew 21**

**The curse of the fig tree 21:18-22**

**Parable of rejection**

**Jesus had special prayer 2 miles away Mary's home and on his way to Jerusalem**

**He was hungry, and saw a fig tree and wanted to pick some fruits ,but when he came to it there were no fruits, fig tree have been the symbol of overall out well religious but inside they had no fruits, many leaves but no fruits.**

**The disciples were witness on what happened.**

**How fig tree withered at once, Jesus stress that if you have faith you will do great not geographical locally but prayer is unlimited, the more we believe and pray the more great work is done.**

**Mathew 21:21**

**GNT-Jesus answered, "assure you that if...**

**21 Jesus answered," I assure you that if you believe and do not doubt, you will be able to do what I have done to this fig tree.**

**And not only this, but even you will be able to say to this hill, "Get up and be thrown yourself in the sea, 'and it will.**

# Study

## David Guzik::Study Guide for

### Mathew 21

#### The beginning of Jesus 'last week

##### A.The triumphal entry.

###### 1. Mathew 21:21

The lesson of the fig tree.

Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it,

“Let no fruit grow on you ever again.”

Immediately the fig tree withered away.

a. *He was hungry:* Some wondered why Jesus would be hungry in the morning leaving the home of Martha and Mary. Spurgeon speculate it was to have time with His Heavenly Father, and took no time to eat.

I “He was perfectly human and therefore physically hungry, for hunger is a sign of health.”

(Morgan)

b. *Let no fruit grow on you ever again:* In a dramatic way, Jesus performed one of His few destructive miracles. His curse made the fig tree to wither away.

I. It is worth noting that the two destructive miracles of Jesus (this and the events that ended in the destruction of the herd of pigs, Mathew 8:30-32) were not directed towards people.

C. found nothing on it but leaves:

This explains why Jesus did this destructive miracle. Essentially, the tree was a picture of false advertising, having *leaves*, but no *figs*. This should not be the case with this particular fig tree, which customarily did not bear leaves a part from figs.

I “The first Adam came to the fig tree for leaves, but the second Adam look for figs.”(Spurgeon)

ii. In this second acted-out-parable, Jesus warned of coming judgment upon an unfruitful Israel. It showed God’s disapproval of people who are all leaves and no

fruit. "The story is clear and simple, and its points obvious, that what counts is not promise but performance."(France)

2. (Mathew 21-20-22) How did Jesus do this?

And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, how did the fig tree

Withered and said to them, "assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the Sea, 'it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer,

Believing, you will receive."

A.How did the fig tree wither away so soon?

Jesus explained that this miracle was a result of a prayer made in faith (if you have faith and do not doubt).He then encouraged His marveling disciples to also have this kind of faith, trusting that God would hear them also.

B.And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive:

This promise of God's answer to the prayer of faith was made to the disciples,

Not to the multitude. This is a promise to those who are following Jesus.

I nothing is too big for true faith to obtain, but that faith must have a promise to learn upon."

(Poole)

ii we can only believe in a thing only when we are in such a union with God that his thoughts and purpose can freely flow into us,

Suggesting what we should pray for, and leading us into that point where a perfect sympathy is and understanding between us and the divine mind.

Faith is always such the product of such a frame as this."(Meyer).

Following the study of my research have evidence that science support the scriptures, many through the practical which was done in various hospitals ,two groups of patient it's those whom they were prayed for one month and those who were not prayed for. The results were amazing because the once who they were prayed for had improved healthywise while the other group there was no improvement. This show us prayers do great when it comes to sickness.

It has been proven by science that prayer bring peace ,healing, peace of mind both to the sick and those with different challenges in life, the same science have proven that distance prayers serve the same purpose it heals.

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**Prayer and healing: A**

**Medical and scientific**

**Perspective von randomized**

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