

# Isaiah 38:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

## Analysis

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The medical instruction "For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil" shows God uses natural means alongside supernatural promises. The fig poultice was a recognized medicinal treatment. This demonstrates that trusting God doesn't exclude using medical wisdom—divine healing can work through natural remedies. The placement of this verse after Hezekiah's psalm shows the means didn't diminish God's credit for healing. Faith and medicine aren't contradictory but complementary.

## Historical Context

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Fig poultices were known treatments for skin conditions and boils in the ancient world. Archaeological evidence confirms ancient Near Eastern medical practices.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's use of natural means teach about the relationship between faith and medicine?

2. What does this passage teach about false dichotomies between trusting God and using medical treatment?
3. How should we view the role of doctors and medicine in light of God's sovereignty over healing?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה יְהוָה אָמַר  
 had said For Isaiah Let them take a lump  
 H559 H3470 H5375 H1690

וְלֹא  
 H5921 upon the boil and he shall recover  
 H7822 H2421

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 7:33** (Parallel theme): And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

**John 9:6** (Parallel theme): When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

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