The International Journal of Social Sciences World
TIJOSSW is Available Online at:
https://www.growingscholar.org/journal/index.php/TIJOSSW
Vol. 4 No. 1, January- June 2022, pages: 166~174
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6378073
ISSN **2690-5167**
Growingscholar Publisher

Herbal Theology and Its Application in Papuan Society

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Article history:
Received December,03, 2021; Accepted: February, 01, 2022; Displayed Online: March, 19, 2022; Published: June, 30, 2022

Keywords

Theology of Herbal;

Clinical Healing;

Herbs in Bible;

Papuan;

Abstract

This study aims to describe herbal theology and the phenomenon of its application in the Papuan-Indonesian community. This research is a qualitative descriptive study using a library research approach and a field research approach. The library research technique was used to obtain information about herbal plants in the Bible. In contrast, field research was used to see the use of herbal plants in the Papuan community. This study succeeded in exploring and explaining the herbal phenomena written in the Bible and connecting them with the practice of using herbs to obtain clinical healing in the Papuan-Indonesian community.

1. Introduction

In general, God wants everyone always to experience healing physically and also spiritually (Shelly, 2005) with the aim that we can continue to praise and glorify His greatness. In other words, not everyone can experience physical illness, but they have also experienced a spiritual disease that has been caused by sin. Therefore everyone needs physical healing but also spiritual healing.

However, we also have to have a fundamental belief that what God gives us if we use it with faith will be a blessing, also through the Prayer Service in the healing process for the sick (Ferguson et al., 2010) through this herbal plant starting to open up to the surrounding community who need clinical treatment (by using herbal plants) which is better known as natural medicine, or the leaves that are used.

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2. Materials and Methods

This research uses library research methods and field research (Cf. Westbrook, 1994). The literature research technique was used to obtain information about herbal plants in the Bible. In contrast, field research was used to see the use of herbal plants in the Papuan community.

3. Results and Discussions

Clinical cure

For centuries, humans have tried and processed to find and explore knowledge (Eggermont et al., 2013). One of them is psychology. There is one branch of psychology, namely clinical psychology. Sickness and body weakness is common to all human beings, and of course, everyone has experienced it, whether it's children or adults, without exception. Diseases and body weakness that occur in a person can be ordinary conditions and severe illnesses.

However, illness and body weakness often become vital problems in everyone's life, both physically and spiritually (Kumar & Subramain, 2020; Kusumawati & Purwati, 2021). Therefore, it is only natural that everyone struggles and tries in various ways to get healing from multiple sources, for example: from the results of medical science, medical science, some even still use occult medicine, spiritism and also various forms of herbal medicines, which are available in the form of plastic packages (in capsule form) to those that are packaged in bottles, with the symbol "Herbal", and everything that people do in various ways is a natural thing.

Theologically, disease and weakness of the body can be caused by two things, namely: (1) the fall of man into sin (John 9: 2-3), and (2) because of the sins he has committed (John 5:4) (Cf. Grant, 1971). It is necessary to realize that in addition to the two things that have been mentioned above, diseases and body weaknesses that occur at this time can also be caused by several things, including Other people's mistakes that make other people suffer, also from germs that attack the body or caused by the fatigue felt by our bodies. So it can cause pain. But one thing that needs to be noticed is that anything that can cause people or our bodies to become weak and sick is because of whatever we do or whatever we eat; sometimes, we don't include God as the Protector of our lives. So that in general, God wants everyone always to be able to experience healing physically and spiritually with the aim that we can continue to praise and glorify His greatness. In other words, not everyone can experience physical illness, but they have also experienced a spiritual disease that has been caused by sin. Therefore everyone needs physical healing but also spiritual healing.

Prayer services in the healing process for the sick through herbs are starting to open up to the surrounding community who need clinical treatment (using herbal plants), better known as natural medicine, or leaves that exist in the environment around us. It is for the mission and vision of the service "Development of Herbal Theology Thought" in health services as a means of evangelism that aims to reach everyone so that they believe that what is experienced in our bodies is the result of our unfaithfulness to God. In addition, it is also hoped that in the future, this service can provide a clear understanding to every believer that life is not only related to physical healing but also spiritual health, so that in the end, it will give a transparent experience that healing is God's work in the believer.

In prayer services to support the stability of faith through clinical treatment, not only emphasizing herbal plants as a means for healing for the sick, but also the most important thing is to bring people to know more about what the Lord Jesus wants in our lives as believers, and also brings everyone to the proper knowledge of Jesus Christ as the source of healing and the only God who can heal us from all sicknesses and infirmities physically and spiritually (Furniss, 1984). Thus healing is

God's mercy towards humans (Matthew 14: 14). When a person allows himself to be the object of God's mercy, then that is the time when His power comes down and touches all diseases.

Because indeed, the origin of psychology is a philosophy and is also a child of medicine. The beginning of this clinical psychology emerged from the end of the nineteenth century, which was caused by the Industrial Revolution and the world war. This world war and industrial revolution are reasonable if we say as one of the causes of the emergence of clinical psychology because this is where many people start to experience psychological and emotional stress. At that time, many people lost their homes and their relatives. On the other hand, psychologists were also directly involved in health and rehabilitation issues for prospective soldiers and veterans during this world war. This was done because many of the veterans experienced mental disorders after the war, and this is where the overlap between the roles of psychologists and psychiatrists began.

However, after this world war, the position of the existence of clinical psychology began to be brighter after reorganizing in 1944 and giving birth to a new division within the organization, namely clinical psychology. From here, clinical psychology is growing and getting more and more places. Being examined, clinical development itself is pretty interesting from time to time, especially in our country. In Indonesia, there are many things that, when examined, also contain clinical aspects. We can find these aspects in various cultures in our country. For example, listening to the sound produced from different Javanese musical instruments, maybe for certain people, will also reduce the burden of thinking and help someone be fresher.

On the other hand, many traditional medicines in our country can overcome clinical disorders in a patient. Clinical pharmacy services are proven to be effective in managing therapy in patients. In addition, these services are also effective in reducing the cost of health services and improving the quality of health services. This is mainly obtained by monitoring prescriptions and reporting drug side effects. This service has been shown to reduce hospital mortality significantly. It was found that pharmacist participation in visits to ICU care wards can reduce up to 60% the incidence of drug side effects caused by errors in medication orders.

As has been written above about the various kinds of herbs offered, with several types of diseases, then that has been stated by Jesus several thousand years ago in His ministry. And the way of treatment that is done clinically is on the condition as follows. First, Diarrhea. Its medical assistance is using ORS (sugar + salt), but if we use herbs, it is enough with the tips of guava leaves and salt or grated young salak water. Second, High heat (usually from the medical "Paracetamol drug"). We can make a concoction in its herbal medicine, red onion + coconut oil + lime juice. They are applied to the child's body while massaged slowly (already practised/done more than 25 toddlers).

Next, the high fever or malaria, usually, a doctor gives chloroquine, quinine. For herbal medicine, it is enough to boil the tapak darah merah putih plant and then drink it while it lasts. There are no sizes and restrictions for drinking. For stomach pain (gastritis), herbs of squeezed turmeric and juice + honey are enough. On the other side, egg yolk can be used to overcome through one potion. Moreover, it is enough to consume mustard greens or cat whiskers and meniran leaves to cure the use of herbs for kidney disease. The herbs can also be used for late menstruation or difficult pregnancy to get a child (fertilizer).

Another herb is massage oil. It is helpful for broken bones or those with sprains, falls or colds for children and people. Herbs to increase stamina is ginseng drink, while for appetite medicine for children, it can use fish oil and turmeric asan herbs. Drugs for high blood can be helped with herbal plants, namely mayana leaves or spinach red + honey and free-range chicken eggs (the yolk).

We know very much about all the diseases that sometimes attack ourselves and others, for this reason, this writing can help people in rural areas who are far from the health centre but do not close the possibility and also for people or people living in urban areas who are concerned with herbal medicine, it can also be used as an alternative remedy for the disease they are suffering from. The

treatment for adding blood can be helped with herbal plants, namely mayana leaves or mera spinach + honey and free-range chicken eggs (yellow).

The Bible discusses types of herbs (Dafni & Böck, 2019). Some are used for beauty, aromatic oils, perfumes, religious rituals, embalming, to cooking spices. But some herbs are used as medicine. Herbs and medicinal plants cannot be separated from agricultural life and the world of plantations. Jesus as a healer also told many parables that were closely related to farm life and the world of plantations. Like sowing and reaping, vineyards, wheat and weeds, fig trees, and so on, Donna Frawley in 'Herbs of the Bible' mentions many Bible characters involved in agricultural and plantation life.

Adam in the Bible is mentioned to care for the Garden of Eden. "*The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and care for the garden*" (Genesis 2:15). Meanwhile, Adam's son, Cain, is mentioned in the Bible as a farmer. King Solomon (1000 BC), who ruled the kingdom of Israel, is very fond of plants. But he has workers to take care of his garden. Meanwhile, the prophet Isaiah (8th century BC) is also said to know about plant cultivation (Isaiah 17:10-11).

Smith (2021) argues that the Apostle Paul (who died 62/64 AD) was also well versed in gardening techniques when he spoke of grafting and pruning in his letters. He was also close to the Gospel writer Luke (died 84 AD). According to history and tradition, Luke is a doctor written by the Church Father Eusebius (260 – 340 AD). Talking about herbal theology means talking about God's work through creation.

When King Hezekiah got a deadly ulcer disease, God used the prophet Isaiah to order the fig wood to be taken, and the fig wood was attached to the prophet Hezekiah's boil. He was healed, and God gave him different age of 15 another year (II KINGS 20:1-11). The book of Revelation is written about the leaves that God used to heal the nations Revelation 22:2. God created man in His image and likeness, in perfection. God wants His people to have healthy bodies (1 Thess. 5:23; 3 John 1:2). God also took the initiative to provide several ways that we can use to maintain and care for our bodies to stay healthy. Plants/herbs are first mentioned in the Bible in the first chapter of Genesis 1:11 God said; Let the soil grow young shoots, plants with seed, all kinds of fruit trees that bear fruit with grain, so that there may be vegetation on the earth" (cf. Psalm 65:11b).

God ordained the Sabbath – so that after we have worked six full days, we can rest on the seventh day (for Christians, it is Sunday), on which day we can worship God and rest. Our bodies are healthy to start activities again the following week with enough rest. God commands that our hearts always be kept cheerful – moods will affect the health of our physical bodies (Prov. 17:22). The Bible as a holy book also contains types of herbs. Some are used for beauty, aromatic oils, perfumes, religious rituals, embalming, to cooking spices. But some herbs are used as medicine. Herbs and medicinal plants cannot be separated from agricultural life and the world of plantations.

Jesus as a healer, also told many parables that were closely related to agricultural life and the world of plantations. Such as sowing and reaping, vineyards, wheat and tares, fig-trees, etc. Throughout the ages, the Hebrews have attributed holiness to many species of plants for worship, feasts, and various provisions contained in the Law relating to their cultivation (Dafni, 2006). Trees and forests are often associated with prayer whose results are to be celebrated, such as the fruits. In hymns and poetry, the existence of plants/herbs symbolizes prosperity, beauty and peace.

In life, Man's life depends on the production of plants and their fruits on grass and herbs, trees, etc., thriving in the Land of Israel in its agrarian society. In the land of Israel, there is a great variety of edible plants growing in Israel's mountains and valleys and even deserts, especially during the spring. The extraordinary beauty of the flowering meadows is often ascribed to the collective name, making it challenging to identify the individual species that may have existed there. And the more than 120 plant species mentioned in the Bible provide an interesting study. However, some have raised complex issues where botanists and theologians do not always name a species by the same name.

Most plant species continue to grow in their wild state in the Holy Land of Israel, such as wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, date palms, and mulberry figs. This distribution pattern of herbs and plants followed the journey of humans at that time. The Levant spanned the eastern Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to the Sinai Peninsula and included modern Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. When humans migrate, they bring cuttings, seeds, and herbs that are necessary for their health or as directed by God.

Types of Plants in the Bible are Often Used along with plants and their uses in beauty, health, ritual, and disease treatment. Among these seven plants, many other plants mentioned in the Bible are still used today. The Bible as a holy book also contains types of herbs. Some are used for beauty, aromatic oils, perfumes, religious rituals, embalming, to cooking spices. But some herbs are used as medicine.

Herbs and medicinal plants cannot be separated from agricultural life and the world of plantations. Jesus as a healer, also told many parables closely related to agrarian life and the world of plantations, such as sowing and reaping, vineyards, wheat and tares, fig trees, and so on (Stein, 1981). Shewell-Cooper (1988) mentions many Bible characters involved in agricultural and plantation life. Adam in the Bible is said to care for the Garden of Eden. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and care for the garden" (Genesis 2:15). Meanwhile, Adam's son, Cain, is mentioned in the Bible as a farmer.

King Solomon (1000 BC), who ruled the kingdom of Israel, is very fond of plants. But he has workers to take care of his garden. At the same time, the prophet Isaiah (8th century BC) is also said to know about plant cultivation (Isaiah 17:10-11). The Apostle Paul (died 62/64 AD) was also well versed in gardening techniques when He spoke of grafting and pruning in his letters.

Moreover, there are 128 Plants in the Bible. Herbs touched every aspect of life in ancient Israelite society. Shewell-Cooper (1988) mentions these 128 herbs that were part of everyday life in ancient Israel and its neighbours around the Mediterranean. Then to what extent did herbs influence this ancient Israelite society in the third millennium? As we enter the third Christian millennium, we may be ready to revive the medical and spiritual explanations of herbs and plants that have been with us for six millennia. The distribution pattern of these herbs and plants followed the journey of humans at that time. The Levant was around the eastern Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to the Sinai Peninsula and included modern Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. When humans migrate, they bring cuttings, seeds, and herbs that are necessary for their health or as directed by God.

Types of plants in the Bible that are often used by Papuan Society

The following are plants and their uses in beauty, health, ritual, and disease treatment. Among these seven plants, many other plants mentioned in the Bible are still used today (Cf. Jacon, 1993).

1. Silibum (Silybum marianum) — Genesis 3:18

Silybum grew among the shrubs common in Samaria and parts of Israel today. Silybum has been used as a liver medicine for 2,000 years. The liver disease attacks the blood filtering system allowing harmful toxins to accumulate in the body. Silybum contains silymarin. Silymarin is a natural compound with the most promise to prevent liver damage and repair existing damage. It is used for the effects of alcohol, asthma, scarring of the liver, hepatitis, jaundice, kidney and urinary stones, and chronic skin inflammation.

2. Hemp (Linum usitatissimum) — Leviticus 6:10

Hemp is commonly used as a fibre for linen. Linen is one of the oldest textiles in the world. The earliest pieces of cloth identified as linen are from eastern Turkey. It is thought to date back 9 thousand years. Ancient Egyptian murals and papyrus depict the growth of flax, spinning flax thread, and weaving the yarn into linen. The mummy remains of Pharaoh were bound in a finely woven fabric that is still difficult to imitate today.

The three main nutritionally significant components in flax are alpha-linolenic acid, dietary fibre, and polyphenols. Alpha-linolenic acid slows blood clotting, prevents inflammation, relieves colitis, arthritis, stomach ulcers, inhibits and prevents tumour growth, and boosts the immune system. The polyphenols in flaxseed are very useful in preventing breast and colon cancer. It is also used for arthritis, respiratory infections, cancer, skin inflammation, heart disease, and rheumatism.

3. Garlic (Allium sativum) — Numbers 11:5–6

Garlic is believed to increase virility. The Jews relied on the herb as directed in the book of Genesis to reproduce. The use of garlic to increase virility may be more than just folklore or an exciting ritual. Garlic has a high content of free amino acids dominated by the amino acid arginine. Arginine is used by the cells lining the walls of arteries to produce nitric oxide, which facilitates blood flow to the penis. Without nitric oxide, erection is impossible. It is also used for chest pain, cancer, colds, diabetes, flu, high blood pressure, and infections. Garlic juice is prescribed to treat intestinal infections, respiratory ailments, snakebites, and anxiety.

4. Turmeric (Curcuma longa) — Song of Solomon 4:14–15

Humans have used turmeric for thousands of years. Turmeric is a natural dye for leather, silk, wool, and cotton fabrics. The dried turmeric rhizome is used to flavour dishes. It is used either whole or ground. In addition, the rhizome also produces a yellow-orange essential oil which is used in spices and perfumery. Turmeric powder is an antioxidant. It is also used for inflammation, flatulence, arthritis, respiratory tract infections, increased urine rate, ulcers, cough with phlegm, sore throat, rheumatism, and cancer.

5. Myrrh (Commiphora) — Esther 2:12 and Matthew 2:10–11

The wise men gave myrrh to the Child Jesus, who foretold how He would suffer and die. In Mesopotamia and Greco-Roman, myrrh was a panacea for almost every human ailment. It starts from earache to haemorrhoids. There are 135 types of myrrh found throughout Africa and Arabia. This plant grows mainly in arid areas. Winifred Walker, in his book 'All the Plants in the Bible' asserts that the myrrh mentioned in the Old Testament comes from a small plant that grows between sand and rock. In the New Testament, its light brown or black sap is collected and sold in golden spiral pieces so that it is sometimes referred to as the 'tear' or 'pearl' of a small tree.

Myrrh was sold as a spice or ingredient of anointing oil used in temples or as an ointment to purify the dead. Its stems and leaves were used for incense and perfumery in liturgies in Eastern churches used for pain relief, beauty, respiratory infections. , cough with phlegm, and high cholesterol.

6. Frankincense (Boswellia sacra) — Matthew 2:10–11

The wise men brought the newborn Jesus three gifts. Gold to acknowledge his kingdom, frankincense to acknowledge his holiness or divinity, and myrrh to symbolize the hardships and sufferings he will endure. Frankincense is used for dysentery, gonorrhoea, fever, and polyps.

7. Mustard (Brassica) – Luke 17:6

The Lord answered, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this fig tree, 'Help you and get planted in the sea, and it will obey you." (Luke 17:6). One of Jesus' most famous parables is that of the mustard seed. This may be because mustard grows in abundance in Palestine. Currently, mustard seeds have been studied for their anti-cancer properties. In particular, mustard seeds contain an organosulfur compound called allyl isothiocyanate. In animal studies, this mustard seed powder inhibits the development of bladder cancer.)

8. Salmon Fish Oil

Salmon has long been known as a type of fish rich in vitamins and minerals needed by the body. Some of the essential minerals in salmon include selenium, potassium, and vitamin B-12. Another thing that is considered the most useful in salmon is le acid Omega-3 fatty acids, and salmon oil extract are added to Evobrain children's honey to complement the nutritional needs of children.

9. Gotu kola

Gotu kola is currently widely produced as a herbal medicine for the treatment of various diseases; another benefit is improving the digestive system's performance.

10. Albumin

Albumin is a type of protein that can support the growth of new cells. This albumin protein is commonly found in snakehead fish meat (Brantsma et al., 2005). Albumin from snakehead fish is very appropriate to stimulate the growth of body cells, especially brain cells.

11. Temulawak

Temulawak tastes bitter, but you don't need to worry because, in this product, the bitter taste of temulawak has been neutralized by the sweet taste of honey. Temulawak has been used since ancient times to increase appetite in children because appetite plays an essential role in meeting the nutritional needs of children.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the development, there are (1) Understanding of Herbal Theology, which is very high because through the healing process using herbs and manually it is done, so they understand that God is mighty in doing all things (2) Through the clinical healing process makes them believe that without God's help in the healing process which is based on each other's faith, everything will not be possible to be recovered from the sick. (3) through writing this dissertation, the author hopes for patients who have been helped to always rely on the Lord Jesus and all of His creation in the form of plants called (herbs) (4) Indeed, not all herbs can and are appropriate to be used as treatment, because there must be a match and there is no match. (5) of the hundreds of people who have been served and only 49 people who can be met, it turns out that they experienced extraordinary healing from God. And there are still many who cannot be found because some of the tasks in the regions follow the family, so they can be met by using only communication tools for hearing the conditions experienced. They also said that the healing experienced was because the Lord Jesus intervened through our faith.

Suggestion

Based on the discussion and conclusion of the research findings, the following suggestions are put forward. First, the Papuan people need to civilize God's creations (herbs) that have been provided. Second, the community needs to acknowledge that God has given wisdom to humans in managing natural products (herbs) for the good of humans. Lastly, don't say we can't if we don't want to try and do it. When we are in pain, we rarely put the Lord Jesus first, but what we remember is the hospital or health centre.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the editorial board of The International Journal of Social Sciences (TIJOSSW) for preparing double-blind peer reviewers and for publishing this article.

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