

HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY: THE MIND BODY CONNECTION

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TIME CAPSULE

I received an email in the mail from my professional society. They wanted to put together a time capsule to be opened at the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the association in the year 2083. I thought, what should I suggest to have put in that time capsule? Then I thought, wait a minute, 2083! Where will I be in 2083? Then I thought, how old am I now, and if time would continue, where would I be then? I probably would not be around by then and, so I wrote back and told them to put some asbestosis in that box, so it will survive hell because it will have happened by then. Now some of you theologians out there are saying, hell doesn't happen till after the thousand years, but we know that Peter says that when the Lord returns the elements will melt with fervent heat, and so in essence it happens then.

There was a time capsule placed by Lakefield elementary school in the year 2000 to be opened a hundred years later. We tend to like time capsules, sometimes we make the cornerstone of a building into a time capsule by hollowing it out and putting into it a newspaper of the day it was built. Then when the building is demolished the newspaper is found telling the news about the time it was built.

I remember back when I was in elementary school NASA sent out a space voyager with a space capsule and they were talking about all the stuff they were going to put on this space probe in case "somebody out there" discovered it. I wasn't personally impressed with some of the things they selected to put on that space probe to represent us, but, just to illustrate that we like time capsules.

TIME CAPSULE OPENING

You know, there are 66 books in the Bible; can you think of one of those books that was in essence put into a time capsule? Daniel! Daniel was sealed wasn't it? "But thou, O Daniel shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."¹ Don't publish it, don't send it to your mother, you won't understand it yourself, just put it in a time capsule, prepared for a time when knowledge shall increase. Has knowledge increased? It's hard to keep up in any field! They say knowledge doubles every few years and when you look at the Internet now we have more and more access to a lot of this knowledge.

"And I heard, but I understood not:" said Daniel, "then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" And He said, "Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."² Do we live in the time of the end? How do you know? Signs are all around you say. But how does this verse say we would know that we're in the time the end? We would understand Daniel! So, I'm going to have a little quiz here, Daniel 2, what's the head of gold? Babylon! All right, what are the arms of silver? Medo-Persia! The brass is Greece, the iron Rome, and how about the toes of iron and clay? I'm going to call it modern Babylon, or our day. What is restored at the end of Daniel to God's kingdom? That's correct, "and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed."³ The point is, we understand Daniel so we must be in the time of the end.

And, that stone that is cut out without hands,⁴ isn't that the hope of every Christian, where there'll be a kingdom where God reigns, where His servants do not fight, as he told the Jews. Yes, we hope for that stone, but I'm not here to talk to you about prophecy. The question I have for you is this, why does this

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book, sealed until our time, commence with a cute little human-interest story about a dietary experiment?

THE CHALLENGE: BRAINWASHING

“King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and surrounded the city, the Lord let him capture King Joachim. The King then ordered Aspen, as his chief official, to select from among the Israelites exile some young men of the royal family and of the noble families.”⁵ Daniel was among the best, he must either had been of royalty or of the noble families. He must have been a good scholar and very special. Aspen must have been able to identify him when they came into Jerusalem and picked him and then carted him off to Babylon. What was he going to do in Babylon? Be brainwashed! They needed some Jews to look like Babylonians and to go back home and rule the country. Aspen was to teach them to read and write the Babylonian language.⁶ Now can you think of any times in American history when we've brought people in here and we've told them, okay, you're not to speak whatever language you know at home, you're only supposed to speak English. Don't speak Swahili, German, Navajo, Spanish; whatever... you're supposed to all speak English. It's brainwashing and enculturation, trained to become Babylonians. We want you to forget your past, we want you to become like us--we want you to think like we think!

Is the brainwashing going on today? What is the biggest tool of brainwashing today? Television! Some professors from the local university came to my meetings when I was doing a series in upstate New York. After the meetings I was speaking with one of them and we got to talking about television. At one point he said, “I am a professional hypnotist, and on that television, they use every technique of hypnotism I ever learned, and they use it constantly.”

FOOD ON THE LESSON PLAN

Part of Daniel's training involved food, “and the King appointed them a daily provision of the King's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so, nourishing them three years, that at the end

thereof they might stand before the king.”⁷ Three years training, three years on a certain diet, three years of brainwashing, and then they're supposed to stand before the king. And what was the food like? High in saturated fat and cholesterol, inebriating, nothing but what the King would have. Is this the best food for young men who are going to school?

Very interesting is the effect of rich food on the brain. You'd like the oxygen in your brain to be fairly high, maybe somewhere around ninety five percent. This helps you study better, to be able to do your taxes. But do you know what happens when we eat a high fat meal? Within six hours the oxygen in the brain falls below seventy percent, what's more it does not return to normal for three whole days!⁸ Wow! That's a long time. Better not eat a high fat meal within three days of taking a test, you won't perform your best. But who only eats one high fat meal a day? The next day another high fat meal is eaten, and you just went back down again and it's going to be yet another day before you return to normal. What is the moral of the story? Some people have never had a fully functioning brain! Be careful, don't point any fingers, and don't name any names.

“GIVE ME MY BRAIN BACK!”

I shared this topic as a talk at my local church. One of the ladies sitting in the back said to herself, “That's me!” Right then and there she decided to go on Daniel's diet. Six weeks later she pulled on my sleeve, and said, “I'd like to tell you something, when I heard you give that talk, you know, about the brain not functioning well on certain foods, I decided right then and there that I would go on Daniel's diet. I've lost 30 pounds, and as much as that is wonderful, what I'm even happier about is that I now have my brain back. Now when you and the others are out there preaching I don't go to sleep I listen and I learn. Thank you for giving me my brain back!”

CAMPOREE GONE TOO FAR

How far is it from Jerusalem to Babylon as the crow flies? I have pulled it up on Google Maps and it's 554 miles. But Daniel and his friends did not fly like birds straight across that distance,

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they went up the sea shore, up the Fertile Crescent, as they call it, where there's green plants and came down the river to Babylon. Historians tell us they probably walked 1,400 miles! That's a long trek and it wasn't exactly a Boy Scout outing, this was more or less a death march. Now I got a question for you, what do you think a bunch of Pathfinders or Boy Scouts would do to a table loaded with deserts and other unhealthy foods after a 1,400-mile trek? They'd devour it, wouldn't they?! But not Daniel! When he got to Babylon and he saw all the food, he "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings meat nor with the wine which he drank."⁹ Daniel had a purpose, he knew who he was, and since he knew who he was and had an inkling of his commission he felt it was more important to take care of himself than to indulge appetite. A lot of people don't know who they are, they eat to feel good about themselves, they eat just because they're worried, they're sad, they're happy, they become emotional eaters, they've lost their purpose and they end up defiling themselves.

THEY DRINK AND FORGET THE LAW

Maybe Daniel had been reading proverbs 31, "It is not for Kings to drink wine, nor for Prince's strong drink, lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted."¹⁰ Now, can you think of somebody in the Bible who drank alcohol and did pervert the judgment of the afflicted? King Herod! That's correct. Herod had a birthday party where all his guests drank wine and when they drank wine their minds were not working very well, and while their minds were not working very well, he had a young lady come out and dance before them, and then he offered the lady half of his kingdom. She came back and said, I want the head of John the Baptist in a platter. At that point Herod should have said, "Well, it's not mine to give, you must go ask him." But instead, because he had made this promise, and because all his guests were drunk and didn't protest, he went out and had that head removed and given to the lady, and he regretted it the rest of his life. Now can you think in modern times of somebody who drinks the wine and forgets the

law? Have we heard of the wine of Babylon? Does Babylon forget the law? They certainly do.

"NONE OF THESE DISEASES"

There is a book on the market that talks about the benefits of following Biblical health principles, it's called, "None of These Diseases."¹¹ On the back cover it has this to say, "With over 1 million copies sold, 'None of These Diseases' has become a classic, now completely revised and updated for a new generation it shows how to obtain extra ordinary medical benefits simply by heeding the word of God." Daniel followed these and he benefited! It's because everything follows the law of the universe and that is "cause and effect", "be not deceived God is not mocked for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."¹² Oh, now sometimes we sow things we don't want to harvest, and we pray for crop failure, and God is sometimes very kind and gives us crop failure, but all in all we reap what we sow. A lot of times we have something bad happen to us, "oh I got sick," "well it just happened to me", but in reality, if we looked at the true law of cause and effect we'd find that there was something that actually started the ball rolling, something we did to bring it on ourselves.

HEALTH VERSUS DISABILITY SCALE

An understanding that helps us to realise what we can do to solve the problem more readily I call the health versus disability scale. Every decision we make in lifestyle puts us somewhere on this continuum, increased indulgence at one end, at the other end increased health, at this end increased strength, at the other end increased disability, every decision we make puts us somewhere along the scale. When I was in medical school the dean came out and wanted to encourage all the students, he told us a little bit about when he was a medical student. He said he made sure that every decision he made supported his goal of being a good student and if the decision came to go play tennis or to go and study books and he needed to study, right then and there he would make the decision to study, that way every decision put him somewhere closer or further away from his goal. The same is true of

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every diet or lifestyle decision we make in life. If we want to be free of disease, every decision we make must support that goal.

TONGUE TIED

Have you ever heard of the musical group, Canadian Brass"? They are one of the best brass groups in the world. Imagine how fast their tongues go when they play classical pieces! They're often featured on the front of important magazines like "The Brass Herald". They came to Andrews University one year and when they arrived there was a reception in progress in their honour. Before the concert they were to give, they were offered punch and cookies and other sweets, but they turned it all down. They said, "If we drink your sugary punch, and eat your sugary sweets, we will not be able to tongue our notes like you'd like to hear them tongued, and our concert will be a disaster!" If sugar does that to their tongues, just think what that kind of diet does to the sensitive nerves of the brain!

Sugar has also been shown, in research, to really affect the brain of children. Children who eat more sugar have less function of the frontal lobes of their brains.^{13, 14} The frontal lobes are where we make important decisions, like decisions about salvation and decisions about good and bad. Your frontal lobes are what distinguish you from a monkey; it's a distinction you want to maintain! Studies show that children eating more sugar demonstrate more behaviour problems;¹⁵ they also discovered that children eating more sugar usually had one grade letter lower in their grades than those who didn't eat high sugar foods and soft drinks.¹⁶

Sugar affects the brain, so does meat for that matter, "eating much flesh will diminish intellectual activity. Students would accomplish much more in their studies if they never tasted meat."¹⁷ Daniel must have known something about this. It would seem, that Daniel had insights that go far beyond the average.

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVES

You know, Daniel was a captive of the Babylonians. Babylon has always been the arch typical enemy of God. It came in from the north and invaded Jerusalem. Babylon has always

been the headquarters for false religions as well and it takes that role in Revelation. Daniel was a captive of the Babylonians, the question we have to ask ourselves is, are we captives of the Babylonians today, in philosophy, or in our lifestyle and diets? You see there's the perverted diet of rebellious Babylon, and then there's the Biblical diet. "Thousands are continually selling mental and moral vigour for the pleasure of taste."¹⁸ How do you decide how much food you should eat? Oh, if it tastes good, eat more! Right? On the other hand, we have the Biblical diet, "then God said, I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it they will be yours for food and you will eat chocolate bars,"¹⁹ Oh, wait a minute, did I misquote? "And you'll eat the plants of the field."²⁰ God gave us an excellent diet in the beginning, you see, our brains have to be clear, our brains have to be able to receive the signal from God, that's the way God speaks to us. "The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which heaven can communicate with man and affect his innermost life.... To make a success of the Christian life, the development of sound minds and sound bodies is of the greatest importance."²¹ Daniel was known for his connection with God. God was able to speak to him as we see in some of those prophecies we cited at the beginning.

ESSENTIAL BLOOD FLOW

Now let's talk a little bit about the heart. You have many arteries in your heart which need to stay wide open. If these stay wide open, then you can have good blood flow to the heart muscle and it stays healthy. If the coronary arteries, start to get blocked, say eighty percent, and you go running somewhere you might feel some heaviness in your chest. If they get ninety percent blocked, the pain will come sooner, if they're ninety-five percent blocked, you might feel heaviness in your chest with just walking around your house. Ninety-nine percent blocked and you might feel heaviness in your chest just thinking stressful thoughts. Well, I have lots of reserve, 80% blockage before you get symptoms. Incidentally, we cannot detect blockages in your heart blood vessels on a

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simple electric heart monitor (ECG or EKG) till the blockage has exceeded 75% occlusion!²²

That's the heart, what about the brain? Well, you know if you have atherosclerotic plaque in your heart you probably have it in your brain and other places as well. There're certain blood vessels that are very important to the brain, like the anterior cerebral artery, the artery that comes up in the front of your brain and feeds those important frontal lobes. What is so important about the frontal lobes? The frontal lobes of your brain are where you do your higher thinking, where you distinguish right from wrong, where your conscience resides. Without them you lose your moral compass. Now there is something very important you are going to want to know about the arteries feeding your frontal lobes. If these arteries get blocked by just 20% percent, then your frontal lobe function starts to suffer.²³ The frontal lobes will no longer be working like they're supposed to. We need to make very sure we keep our arteries clean. Did you know that the caffeine in just one cup of coffee will shut down the blood flow to your brain by 30%?²⁴ What is the effect of that? Just one cup of coffee can make you more likely to share information with others that you would otherwise have been careful to have kept confidential.²⁵ What's the moral of that story? Don't let coffee make a monkey out of you!

SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION OF DANIELS DIET

"Yes, but what can I do now?" you may be asking yourself. I've spent my whole life eating high cholesterol and high fat foods, not exercising and I do all kinds of stuff that will destroy my body, so what do I do now? Is it reversible? Do I need a bypass in my head? Well, it's interesting; we think that with our modern medicine that all we need is a bypass! Oh, my doctor, he's the best in the world, and my insurance has no deductible. All I have to do is to show up there and they usher me right into surgery. Well it's good to have insurance, but we have a duty to take care of ourselves. Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn Jr. M.D. of the Cleveland Clinic has shown on angiography, x-rays of the blood vessels, that these blood vessels can be opened back up with lifestyle changes alone, no angioplasty, no stent, no bypass surgery, simply

good lifestyle changes. What's his diet and what does he do? Well, he's written a whole book on this called, 'Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease' but he says the optimal diet consists of grains, legumes (that's beans), vegetables and fruit, with less than ten to fifteen percent of its calories coming from fat—a fairly low-fat diet. Does this sound like Daniel's lifestyle? Yes indeed, Daniel's diet would keep the blood vessels of the brain and of the heart wide open! Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn goes on to say that this diet minimizes the likelihood of stroke, obesity, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and cancers of the breast, prostate, colon, rectum, uterus, and ovaries!²⁶ Wow, did Medicare ever promise anything like that? How about private insurance? No, this is really the best insurance program, isn't it? We take care of ourselves and then we don't need to show up at the hospital to get work done on our blood vessels or anything like that.

PILLS ARE NOT THE ANSWER

Probably two-thirds of the western world have high blood pressure or hypertension as it is called. Some diagnosed, and some not. The majority of them are on some kind of pill to try to fix the problem. They did a study on people with hypertension. They decided to scan the brains of people coming down with high blood pressure to see what they would find. They compared people with hypertension to ones who were not having high blood pressure problems. The researchers discovered that the ones with high blood pressure had 10 times the incidence of Alzheimer's lesions in their brains—white matter lesions, 10 times the incidents.²⁷ They followed them over time, and said okay, let's see if we can stop this accumulation of white matter lesions and so they gave them pills to bring their blood pressure down, and then they scanned their brains again. The researcher discovered something very interesting, fixing the blood pressure with pills did absolutely nothing to slow the rate at which white matter lesions were accumulating in their brains!²⁸ In order to stop that process, you'd have to change the lifestyle that was causing both the high blood pressure and causing the white matter lesions. Taking good care of ourselves is the very

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best way to keep our brains clear and so this is of utmost importance.

THE LIGHT ON HEALTHFUL LIVING HELPS CLEAR THE LENS

In the Christian walk, it is by beholding that we become like Jesus.²⁹ We have a problem though, we see through a glass darkly.³⁰ I am here to testify that the light on healthful living helps clear the lens a bit.

HEALTH FOR SPIRITUALITY, AND SPIRITUALITY FOR HEALTH

So, what we've been talking about thus far is how the health of your body affects your spirituality, mostly through the health of your brain. Now we're going to turn it around and talk about how spirituality affects your health.

They've done studies on people who go to church in the Carolinas. They looked at those who weekly attended religious services, versus those who did not. The researchers discovered that people who do not attend religious services have an eighty-seven percent higher risk of dying of all causes.³¹ Those who went to church lived longer, to 83 years; those who didn't go to church lived to be only 75 years old. Another study looked at blood pressure. They discovered people who go to church regularly have consistently lower blood pressure than those who do not.³²

BLUE ZONES

Have you seen the November 2005 National Geographic article entitled, "How They Live Longer"? The magazine took up the question of what makes people live longer, they looked around the world for groups of people who had exceptional longevity and they found the Sardinians in Italy, the Okinawans in Japan, and the Adventists in southern California all lived longer. They noted that only the Adventists were not losing their longevity edge, meaning, it seemed like the others were not going to live as long a time. They came to this conclusion when they saw the younger generation of Sardinians and Okinawans eating out of crinkly bags. They looked at what they felt were the reasons these people were living longer. For the Adventist, this

was their list: they don't smoke, they put family first, they're active every day, keep socially engaged, eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and beans, observe the Sabbath, and have faith. I thought that was an interesting list for this magazine to come up with. In one of their articles they mentioned that, "Adventists also observe Sabbath on Saturday socializing with other church members and enjoying a sanctuary in time that helps relieve stress."³³ What an interesting comment by a worldly magazine.

FORGIVE TO LIVE

Down in Florida, at the Florida Hospital, there's a group that does a seminar on forgiveness. The seminar lasts about 6 weeks and during this seminar people learn how to receive and give forgiveness. It's a workshop. They found people were feeling so much better after this workshop they wanted to study it in terms of its impact on their physical health, and so they studied their blood pressure. They found that people who came in to this seminar with high blood pressure were very likely to have their blood pressure returned to normal after the seminar.³⁴ It's interesting how forgiveness relates to health, even Isaiah points this out, "the inhabitants shall not say I'm sick, the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."³⁵ Interesting the connection between forgiveness and being well!

In another study they looked at death after surgery, not a desirable outcome, but they found that elderly patients were 14 times less likely to die after heart surgery if they found comfort in their religious faith, and were socially active. On the other hand, those who did not find any strength or comfort from religion were three times more likely to die after surgery.³⁶ Sounds like, before surgery, they better screen people and find out what their religion is like, well, that probably wouldn't be ethical, but is very interesting to note the impact and for elective surgery maybe a course in faith in God or forgiveness would be a good prerequisite, that is if we are going to be truly scientific.

Well, that brings up an important point, that if religion helps dramatically in medical care it would be wise to identify the best religion, right? The religion that has the greatest impact or has the best outcomes, that brings the

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longest, happiest life, that gives the best health! How would we know? How do we know what is the best religion, that gives the best results? Well, here's an interesting comment from James, "Pure religion", that sounds good, "and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."³⁷ A religion that helps others, not a self-centered religion—don't spend time studying your navel, spend time helping others. Does it work? Did the studies show any benefit from this? They sure did. We call it, "living to give". Mortality was significantly reduced for individuals who provided support to friends, relatives, neighbors, and their spouse, on the other hand, receiving support had no effect on mortality.³⁸ Just sitting back and taking it all in doesn't help. Helping others has the biggest benefit. We need to reach out of ourselves, even in the time of our own difficulty perhaps, remember Elijah? He came to the woman who was out gathering sticks for her and her son's last meal and he asks her if she had anything to eat. She tells Elijah that she and her son are about to eat their last meal. He tells her to feed him first and then everything will be ok. And when she fed him first, reaching out in the time of her own great need, she was benefited!

THE ULTIMATE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE

You know, this is all about the ultimate law of the universe. There are different levels of detail of the law. Remember, one time when Jesus was walking among men, they asked Him about the law, and he said that the law is, love the Lord your God with all your soul and your neighbours as yourself. Another time they got on him saying, you're making yourself God, and He said haven't you read in your law, ye are all gods?³⁹ Wait a minute, that's from Psalms not from the "law". Actually, the Jews thought of the whole Old Testament as the law, so yes, it was the law! So there are different sized definitions of the law, but if we get down to the most basic definition, it would be "the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven;"⁴⁰ that's the ultimate law, it's expressed a number of ways, "God loveth a cheerful Giver"⁴¹, "it's more blessed to give than to receive"⁴², "the Son of man came not to be

ministered unto but to minister and give his life a ransom for many"⁴³, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."⁴⁴, it's the law of life for the universe.

"In heaven itself this law was broken, sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer the covering cherub desired to be first in heaven,"⁴⁵ and we know the result, sin! Selfishness, Insensitivity Neglect--SIN! And these return upon the actor with more force than upon the receiver. When we are selfish and insensitive, when we neglect, we suffer worse health, it affects our whole being, for, again, whosoever will save his life, will lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake in the Gospels the same shall save it.

LIVE TO GIVE

This is talked about in Isaiah 58 where we find that God tells us what to do to have good health. Does it say run a marathon? No. It says some interesting things like... "deal thy bread to the hungry" and "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house". Wait a minute God, I haven't vacuumed yet, they haven't either, don't worry, "when thou seest the naked cover him, then thine health shall spring forth speedily." Our health is dependent on helping others. Any amount of volunteering, in one study, reduced mortality by sixty percent, even among weekly attendees at religious services.⁴⁶ While we pointed out that it is good to come to church every week, and it shows up in benefits in blood pressure and in mortality, coming to church is not where we should stop, we also need to help other people. Do things for others, and then the mortality drops even further. People who get involved benefit even more, because, "it is more blessed to give than to receive"⁴⁷. "The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves quickens the circulation of blood and induces mental and physical health."⁴⁸ You want to know what to do for your nerves; do you want energy to flash through your nerves? How about if you have congestive heart failure? Doing good to others has a dramatic impact on our own health, it's part of the prescription for recovery.

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PURPOSE IN HIS HEART

Well, back to Daniel, "Then said Daniel to Melzar, prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days, and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink, then let our countenances be looked upon before thee and the countenances of the children that eat of the portion of the Kings meat, and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."⁴⁹ Let's have a case control study here, let's just do a comparison, 10 days, you guys eat what you're going to eat, and we will eat pulse and drink water. Well! Would you be willing to risk your future on a 10-day experiment? ... a 10-day trial of your diet, your lifestyle for 10 days? What would your diet do for someone with diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure? Would it cure them or give them diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure? And whom do you think looked better, or worse in 10 days; you think Daniel really looked better? Or do you think all the others looked a lot worse? Or both?

Why only 10 days? Why not one hundred days? It would be three years before he'd stand before the King. Well, in a lot of programs, 10 days is definitely enough to make a dramatic difference! Reversing diabetes, reversing coronary artery disease, especially angina, 10 days can make a dramatic difference! I've seen a difference in three days in some people.

DETAILS OF DANIELS DIET

What kind of diet was Daniel asking for anyway? What is pulse? Well, if we look in today's English version it says, "test us 10 days he said give us vegetables to eat and water to drink." Vegetables and water! Back to the original diet! Good food!

I have a picture of a banner sign I saw on the internet with somebody in a local parade marching down the street with their poster, "16 Reasons to Be A Vegetarian." Can you think of 16 reasons to be a vegetarian? This is just the public parading this; they're out there marching. The question I have is this, has Daniel been unsealed to the general public? At one time a French politician was reviewing his army, which was marching off, and all of a sudden, I guess he must have been daydreaming or something, he popped up and said, oh, I better catch up with

my army, after all I am their leader! Has the world passed us by, while we sleep?

Daniel, did he do well on his tests at the end of three years? Have you ever been graded on the curve? In medical school we were basically graded on the curve, if somebody did really, really well, it kind of pushed the rest of class down in their grades. Daniel scored ten times wiser, ten times better, I mean, this blows the curve. I wonder if anybody else got any grade.

Was Jesus tested on diet and appetite? Well, remember He was led out in the wilderness after His baptism, and after fasting for forty days, Satan comes to Him all hungry and looking Him over says, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."⁵⁰ It sounded like a good idea, except for the little "if" in there. And Jesus caught that, of course. Jesus wasn't there to use His power to take care of Himself. A lot of times we use our power to indulge self.

Now in the Bible, we recognize that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,⁵¹ but there was not a lot to write about Daniel's short comings, about all his faults, I mean, he's one of the few people about whom no sin is recorded. Do you suppose his diet had something to do with his integrity, with this standing up against the devil, even when the Babylonians were trying to brainwash him?

BOOT CAMP

"The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of thousands, when, if they had conquered on this point they would have had moral power to gain the victory over every other temptation of Satan." This sounds like boot camp, right? Saving Private Ryan, boot camp! If they conquer on this point! What's our test? The Sunday law, right? Well, when that comes along it's too late! Our test is initially on appetite, "But those who are slaves of appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character and as we near the close of time Satan's temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful!"⁵² How does Satan make food more addictive today?

DANIEL AND THE TIME OF TROUBLE

Now there are some other things that Daniel is known for besides his good diet, he spent a

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night with some big kittens didn't he, he got thrown to the Lions! This was his time of trouble, a time of difficulty for Daniel. Do you suppose that his diet had something to do with his making it through his time of trouble? Did you know he mentions a time of trouble for us also? "And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time."⁵³ "Never was since there was a nation"! How many millions died under Hitler in Germany? 16 million? How many died under Stalin under communism? 75 million? How many died under religious persecution during the dark ages? 150 million. But this time of trouble, predicted by Daniel pales all these into insignificance. Do you suppose that Daniel's diet has something to do with us making it through our time of trouble?

Daniel's three friends, had their big test at the golden image. This was their time of trouble. When the entire world was bowing down to the image, these three vegetarians remained standing.

"Those who have had the light upon the subject of eating and dressing, with simplicity, in obedience to physical and moral laws, and who turn from the light which points out their duty

will shun duty in other things. If they blunt their consciences to avoid the cross which they will have to take up to be in harmony with natural law they will, in order to shun reproach, violate the Ten Commandments."⁵⁴ Is appetite a test for us? Very much so! Which comes first, the test on the commandments or a test on appetite?

BURDEN OR BLESSING

So, is Daniel's diet another burden, or is it really an inestimable a blessing?

In summary, Daniel is a prophetic book, sealed until our time, not to be opened until the time of the end. Why did God start a book that would be opened in our time with a cute little human-interest story about a dietary experiment? Because God wants us to have clear minds and sound constitutions so we can understand the prophecies of Daniel and survive during the last days!

How many want to remain loyal to their Saviour Jesus Christ during the time of trouble just upon us? How many want to adopt Daniel's diet to assist you in remaining loyal to their Saviour Jesus Christ during the time of trouble.

¹ Daniel 12:4, King James Version of the Holy Bible.

² Ibid 12:8,9, King James Version of the Holy Bible.

³ Ibid 2:44, King James Version of the Holy Bible.

⁴ Ibid 2:45, King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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