



Daniel's Fitness Test

In the life of the prophet Daniel we see a good example of the benefits one may receive by following the teachings of the Bible on healthful living. Because he was a captive in the Babylonian takeover of Israel Daniel was forced to submit to the living arrangements king Nebuchadnezzar had commanded. At the risk of his own life Daniel requested that he and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be tested for ten days to prove that the diet they preferred was superior to the one commanded by the king. Their request was granted, and at the end of the ten days the results were plainly visible. Daniel and his three friends did better on a vegetarian diet than their counterparts who had eaten the flesh foods, desserts, and wine from the king's table ([Daniel 1:1-16](#)).



For the next three years Daniel and his friends stayed with their diet and studied hard, for they had been enrolled in the king's school to develop counselors for king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of their training the king himself examined them and found them to be ten times wiser than all the counselors in his realm ([Daniel 1:20](#)). Of course it was God's blessing that gave them such success, but His blessing was the result of their faithfulness to what He had commanded regarding their physical health ([Daniel 1:17](#)).

We too may live longer and better by obeying the health laws of the Bible. God gives us counsel about our health because He loves us, and wants us to enjoy some of the benefits from following Him right now ([3 John 2](#)).

Today the Lord wants to help you by lifting your burdens. He wants you to be healthy and happy right now. "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." [John 10:10](#). The Creator of Adam and Eve knows what is best for us. By following His laws of health we may thrive. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." [1 Corinthians 10:31](#).

But there is a greater reason for following God's laws of health in the Bible than just the good it will do our bod-

ies. Jesus paid a great price for our salvation and blessing. When He died on the cross He purchased us back from the devil with the price of His own blood. We now belong to Him and should conduct ourselves accordingly ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)).

You know that God has a commandment that says, "You shall not murder" ([Exodus 20:13](#)). Some think that refers only to taking a gun and shooting some enemy, but it means not only that you shouldn't kill other people—it means you shouldn't kill yourself either. I believe my mother would have lived much longer if she had followed proper health habits. One of the habits she had that contributed to her death was smoking. Today it is common knowledge that smoking shortens your lifespan. In other words, smoking is committing slow suicide. Today we know there are 29 different cancer-producing chemicals in the smoke of every cigarette. Cigarette smoking contributes to heart diseases, strokes, various forms of cancer, emphysema, premature births, poor circulation, and shortness of breath.

Some people who would really like to quit smoking think they can't quit. To those people I would ask, "Is the power of tobacco greater than the power of Jesus Christ?" Of course not! "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." [Philippians 4:13](#).

Other habits, such as drinking alcohol, are ways people commit slow suicide. The Bible has some very serious things to say about the alcohol habit. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whosoever is led astray by it is not wise." [Proverbs 20:1](#). Alcohol is deceptive. It is addictive. It destroys brain cells. It dramatically affects our ability to reason ([Proverbs 23:31-33](#)). The Bible teaches us to abstain from alcoholic beverages, and thus, by principle all other addictive substances.



Some will take one or two verses in the Bible that seem to suggest that a little wine is okay, however a closer study of the Bible reveals: The Bible uses the word "wine" to refer to two distinctly different grape bever-

ages, one unfermented and the other fermented. The Hebrew word “yayin” in the Old Testament, and the Greek word “oinos” in the New Testament can mean either the fresh, unfermented juice of the grape, or the fermented intoxicating drink. Many are tempted to drink, but it is a dead end path. My own grandfather, aunt, and brother-in-law died in their forties from drinking related illnesses. There is no addiction stronger than God. If you wish to be you can be set free (1 Corinthians 10:13)

When God delivered His people from Egyptian bondage He brought them out into the desert to Mt. Sinai. There He gave them laws to govern their society including health laws, which included a promise: “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes; I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.” Exodus 15:26. The result of following of following God’s health laws: “there was not one feeble person among their tribes.” Psalm 105:37.

Studies have been conducted on the diseases of Egypt. Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California, conducted some magnificent studies on health and disease in the ancient world. As a result researchers performed autopsies on Egyptian mummies. From these autopsies we learn they had the same diseases we do today such as arteriosclerosis, tooth decay, obesity, heart disease, and cancer.



The Bible health laws can be depended upon to bring lasting health and strength. Some of God’s laws have to do with the kinds of foods we choose to eat. In the beginning God gave an abundant diet to Adam & Eve. He filled with world with delicious fruits, grains and nuts. These foods were God’s original diet for mankind (Genesis 1:29). People thrived on this diet. Adam lived to be 930 years old even after sin.

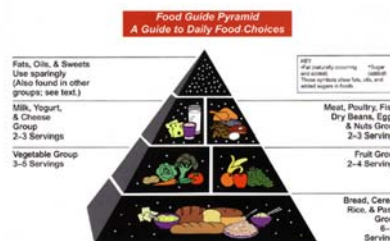
Extremely long life was the normal thing until after the flood. Seth, the son of Adam, lived to be 912. The longest-lived man was Methuselah at 969. Noah lived to be 950. The flood was such a devastating experience. No words can adequately portray the destruction that took place. Everything living thing upon the earth died. Even vegetation was swept away and piled many feet deep. This is where our coal beds come from.

Inside the ark, however, life was preserved. God had instructed Noah to take with him two of every unclean type of animal, and seven of every clean type of animal (Genesis 7:2). After the flood God permitted man to eat flesh food, but He said it would result in a shorter life span (Genesis 9:3-5). As man began to include flesh food in his diet the life span declined just as God had warned. The Bible records that Abraham lived to be only

175 years old. His son Isaac lived to be 180. His son Jacob lived to only 147 years. And Jacob’s son, Joseph lived only to 110 years of age. By the time David came on the scene mankind’s years averaged about 70 (Psalm 90:10).

In the time of Moses God told His people to stay away from unclean flesh foods (Leviticus 11). To be fit for food animals had to chew the cud and have a split hoof. Fish had to have fins and scales, and birds must be game birds—no birds of prey or scavengers. In addition God forbade the eating of animal fat and blood (Leviticus 3:17). It is often in the fat and blood of meat that disease is transmitted and produced in the people who eat it.

In recent years a new Food Pyramid has been released for schools and health educators. Instead of large portions of meat and dairy products being suggested as with the old pyramid, the new recommendations are for large portions of fruits, grains, nuts and vegetables.



The Lord would never deny us anything that was truly good for us. He only forbids things that hurt us. “No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.” Psalm 84:11.

Someone may remember that the apostle Peter once had a dream in which the Lord told Peter not to call any food unclean. Peter’s dream was only a parable that instructed him not to call the Gentiles unclean (Acts 10:9-16, 28).

In addition to all the Bible says about food there are seven other laws of health. 1) Water—Revelation 22:17; 2) Sunshine—Malachi 4:2; 3) Sleep—John 11:12; 4) Exercise—1 Timothy 4:8; 5) Abstinence—Daniel 1:8; 6) Trust in God—Proverbs 3:7-8.

Jesus told His disciples the most important health secret of all. “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” John 1:12. “The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.” Luke 18:27. The same Jesus who healed the diseases and weaknesses of man can help you live a new and better life.

¹ <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/JulianDate.html>