

part 11—*Full of Bread*
Touching Up Our Picture of Health

by Risë Rafferty

We have been looking at the enemy's quest to intercept communion between man and God by creating interference not only in our environments, but also in our own brains. Stress, intemperance, the use of alcohol and drugs, festering emotional wounds and poor lifestyle habits have been found to leave their baneful influence in our neurons. We will continue in this theme by looking at an area of life that impacts us all on a daily basis: food.

As we established earlier in this study, seeking health for health's sake or good food for superior nutrition is a praiseworthy goal. However, when we consider the role of the health message in relation to the three angels' messages, we see a deeper significance.

In a nutshell, I believe food's profound effect stems from its impact on our brains through our neurons, the brain nerves through which heaven wants to communicate with us.

In our study of serotonin and melatonin, we noticed how specific nutrient deficiencies impede the production of these vital neurotransmitters. Certain foods, such as blueberries, appear to have a direct effect upon brain chemistry—in this case, boosting certain neurotransmitter levels.

Dopamine is an important brain chemical crucial for memory, coordination, and feelings of well-being. As we age, our ability to produce dopamine declines. Researchers at Tufts University recently found that feeding aged rats the equivalent of ½ cup of blueberries daily actually reversed their declining memory and poor coordination.”¹

They found that blueberries help the brain maintain its ability to produce dopamine.

In another study published in *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*, researchers in Toronto found how fat can affect the brain. Rats fed a diet in which 40 percent of the calories came from fat “flunked learning and memory tests that didn't faze a group fed standard lower-fat lab food. The scientists theorized that too much dietary fat inhibits your brain's ability to use glucose (sugar), its primary fuel.”²

Overabundant use of processed sugar has also been linked to diminished mental acuity. Children whose diets contain relatively large amounts of sugary foods, for example, tended to score lower on intelligence tests and to fare more poorly in school than their more adequately nourished classmates.

Scientists have also concluded that improper diet contributes to learning disorders.³ Benjamin Lau, M.D., of Loma Linda, California, works with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) children. By changing their diet, eliminating refined sugar and replacing dairy products, many of these children have been greatly benefited.

Accounts of changing the diet in prisons and schools have revealed the practical effect that diet has on the mind, and thus

Accounts of changing the diet in prisons and schools have revealed the practical effect that diet has on the mind, and thus our behavior.

our behavior. Dramatic decreases in aggressive behavior and negative attitudes have been witnessed because of a shift in focus to healthful vegetarian foods.

I find that fascinating. I wonder what other foods influence the mind? Or which ones don't. While I have not found extensive research on how food can strengthen or weaken the spiritual function of the brain, God enlightened us through simpler means years ago.

Hear what the Bible says. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abominations before Me."⁴

The meaning of "fullness of bread" and its influence is illuminated in the following statement: "Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed through the gratification of unnatural appetite, which so benumbed the intellect that they could not discern the difference between the sacred claims of God and the clamor of appetite."⁵ Their unnatural sexual and physical appetites removed spiritual desire and discernment.

When we engage in any form of intemperance, whether in lifestyle habits, or in everyday eating and drinking, we waste our physical energies and weaken moral power. God's call to vegetarianism in these last days is not just to prevent cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and a host of other diseases that have been attributed partially to eating meat. It is for your mind. Butter and meat, for example, "benumb the sensitive nerves."⁶ Overeating blunts "mental and moral faculties."⁷ Using large amounts of sugar, especially with milk, "affects the brain very directly."⁸ Meat eating "beclouds the intellect and blunts the moral sensibilities."⁹ "Anything that lessens physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it

less capable of discriminating between right and wrong."¹⁰

Typically, we enjoy the flavors we were raised on. Indulgence of taste and nourishing the body seem to be at war with each other. Satisfying both seems impossible. But it isn't. Appetite and taste can be educated. The understanding we gained a few months ago in how habit pathways are formed or how they can atrophy reveals to us that change is only a choice away.

I have heard that it takes three months to acquire new tastes and adjust to new ways of eating. Is it worth the effort?

I think so. For me, this perspective on the role of the health message has freed me from languid indifference on the one hand and concern over what I do and do not eat on the other. As Christians, we have noble reasons for living as we do. "Whether you eat or drink," it is time for us to "do all to the glory of God."¹¹

**Dramatic decreases
in aggressive behavior and
negative attitudes have been
witnessed because of a shift
in focus to healthful
vegetarian foods.**

¹ *Health*, March, 2003, p. 87.

² *Natural Health*, Sept 2001, p. 21.

³ *The Incredible Machine*, p. 89.

⁴ Ezekiel 16:49-50.

⁵ *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 162.

⁶ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 48.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

¹⁰ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 346.

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 10:31, NKJV.

