

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

4.09: GOOD HEALTH

1. THE LORD'S EXCELLENT NAME

"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Psalms 8.

"The things of nature that we now behold give us but a faint conception of Eden's glory. Sin has marred earth's beauty; on all things may be seen traces of the work of evil. Yet much that is beautiful remains. Nature testifies that One infinite in power, great in goodness, mercy, and love, created the earth, and filled it with life and gladness. Even in their blighted state, all things reveal the handiwork of the great Master Artist. Wherever we turn, we may hear the voice of God, and see evidences of His goodness.

"From the solemn roll of the deep-toned thunder and old ocean's ceaseless roar, to the glad songs that make the forests vocal with melody, nature's ten thousand voices speak His praise. In earth, and sea, and sky, with their marvelous tint and color, varying in gorgeous contrast or blended in harmony, we behold His glory. The everlasting hills tell us of His power. The trees that wave their green banners in the sunlight, and the flowers in their delicate beauty, point to their Creator. The living green that carpets the brown earth tells of God's care for the humblest of His creatures. The caves of the sea and the depths of the earth reveal His treasures. He who placed the pearls in the ocean and the amethyst and chrysolite among the rocks, is a lover of the beautiful. The sun rising in the heavens is a representative of Him who is the life and light of all that He has made. All thee brightness and beauty that adorn the earth and light up the heavens, speak of God." Ministry of Healing, 410-412.

"Nothing moves in this world that it does not exert an influence on the universe in some degree. The flight of a bird, the falling of a leaf to the earth, the vibration of a note, anything which causes the least impact, changes the whole universe, as streams that run to the sea and empty themselves into it change the sea, and change the channel from top to bottom. The sea roars and murmurs, and then wipes its brow, and is calm again; but it is never the same sea. The waves striking the shore, and retreating, never leave it as it was." Henry Ward Beecher.

2. A LESSON IN TEMPERANCE

"Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide your heart in the way. Be not among wine bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Proverbs 23:19-21.

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Luke 21:34.

"When we realize the requirements of God, we shall see that He requires us to be temperate in all things. The end of our creation is to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are His. How can we do

this when we indulge the appetite to the injury of the physical and moral powers? God requires that we present our bodies a living sacrifice. Then the duty is enjoined on us to preserve that body in the very best condition of health, that we may comply with His requirements. "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." I Corinthians 10:31. Counsels on Health, 88.

"The work of health reform is the Lord's means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church. Teach the people that they can act as God's helping hand, by cooperating with the Master Worker in restoring physical and spiritual health. This work bears the signature of Heaven, and will open doors for the entrance of other precious truths. There is room for all to labor who will take hold of this work intelligently.

"Keep the work of health reform to the front, is the message I am instructed to bear. Show so plainly its value that a widespread need for it will be felt. Abstinence from all hurtful food and drink is the fruit of true religion. He who is thoroughly converted will abandon every injurious habit and appetite. By total abstinence he will overcome his desire for health destroying indulgences." Testimonies 9, 112, 113.

"The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message, and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advance move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work to do for themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them. He has left this work for them to do. It is an individual work; one cannot do it for another. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Gluttony is the prevailing sin of this age. Lustful appetite makes slaves of men and women, and beclouds their intellects and stupefies their moral sensibilities to such a degree that the sacred, elevated truths of God's word are not appreciated. The lower propensities have ruled men and women.

"In order to be fitted for translation, the people of God must know themselves. They must understand in regard to their own physical frames, that they may be able with the psalmist to exclaim, "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Testimonies 1, 486, 487.

3. THE WOE OF THE DRUNKARD

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." Proverbs 23:29-35.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1.

"Never was traced by human hand a more vivid picture of the debasement and the slavery of the victim of intoxicating drink. Enthralled, degraded, even when awakened to a sense of his misery, he has no power to break from the snare; he "will seek it yet again."

"No argument is needed to show the evil effects of intoxicants on the drunkard. The bleared, besotted wrecks of humanity-souls for whom Christ died, and over whom angels weep-are everywhere. They are a blot on our boasted civilization. They are the shame and curse and peril of every land.

"And who can picture the wretchedness, the agony, the despair, that are hidden in the drunkard's home? Think of the wife, often delicately reared, sensitive, cultured, and refined, linked to one whom

drink transforms into a sot or a demon. Think of the children, robbed of home comforts, education, and training, living in terror of him who should be their pride and protection, thrust into the world, bearing the brand of shame, often with the hereditary curse of the drunkard's thirst. . . .

"The Bible nowhere sanctions the use of intoxicating wine. The wine that Christ made from water at the marriage feast of Cana was the pure juice of the grape. This is the "new wine found in the cluster," of which the Scripture says, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it."

"It was Christ who, in the Old Testament, gave the warning to Israel, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." He Himself provided no such beverage. Satan tempts men to indulgence that will becloud reason and benumb the spiritual perceptions, but Christ teaches us to bring the lower nature into subjection. He never places before men that which would be a temptation. His whole life was an example of self denial." Ministry of Healing, 330-333.

"If I can stop one heart from breaking I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching, Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin into his nest again,
I shall not live in vain." Emily Dickinson.

4. PROSPER AND BE IN HEALTH

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."
3 John 2.

The Christian's Body, the Temple of the Holy Spirit: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

Reaping According to Sowing: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:7-9.

Freedom From Disease: "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee." Exodus 15:26.

Cleansing of Flesh and Spirit: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Eating and Drinking to God's Glory: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31.

"Since the laws of nature are the laws of God, it is plainly our duty to give these laws careful study. We should study their requirements in regard to our own bodies, and conform to them. Ignorance in these things is sin....

"When men and women are truly converted, they will conscientiously regard the laws of life that God has established in their being, thus seeking to avoid physical, mental, and moral feebleness. Obedience to these laws must be made a matter of personal duty. We ourselves must suffer the ills of violated law. We must answer to God for our habits and practices. Therefore the question for us is not, "What will the world say?" but, "How shall I, claiming to be a Christian, treat the habitation God has given me? Shall I

work for my highest temporal and spiritual good by keeping my body as a temple for the indwelling of the Holy, Spirit, or shall I sacrifice myself to the world's ideas and practices?" Testimonies 6, 367, 370.

A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. The standard of virtue is elevated or degraded by the physical habits. Excessive eating of the best of food will produce a morbid condition of the moral feelings. And if the food is not the most healthful, the effects will be still more injurious. Any habit which does not promote healthful action in the human system degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers. Counsels on Health, page 67.

5. GOD HONORS LOYALTY

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 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 countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

"And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Daniel 1:8-20.

"The prophet Daniel was an illustrious character. He was a bright example of what men may become when united with the God of wisdom. A brief account of the life of this holy man of God is left on record for the encouragement of those who should afterward be called to endure trial and temptation. .

"The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of these Hebrew youth, and His blessing attended them. He "gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." At the expiration of the three years of training, when their ability and acquirements were tested by the king, he "found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

"The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. It presents a lesson for all, and especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and

intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God, and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life." Signs of the Times, Sept. 28, 1882.

6. ABIDING BY THE STUFF

"And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them. Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away, and depart. Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day." I Samuel 30:21-25.

"With great rejoicing, the victors took up their homeward march. Upon reaching their companions who had remained behind, the more selfish and unruly of the four hundred urged that those who had had no part in the battle should not share the spoils; that it was enough for them to recover each his wife and children. But David would permit no such arrangement. "You shall not do so, my brethren," he said, "with that which the Lord hath given us.... As his part is that goes down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarries by the stuff; they shall part alike." Thus the matter was settled, and it afterward became a statute in Israel that all who were honorably connected with a military campaign should share the spoils equally with those who engaged in actual combat." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 694.

"The matter of caring for our aged brethren and sisters who have no homes is constantly being urged. What can be done for them? The light which the Lord has given me has been repeated: It is not best to establish institutions for the care of the aged, that they may be in a company together. Nor should they be sent away from home to receive care. Let the members of every family minister to their own relatives. When this is not possible, the work belongs to the church, and it should be accepted both as a duty and as a privilege. All who have Christ's spirit will regard the feeble and aged with special respect and tenderness.

"God suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and the Lord places upon the members of every church a personal responsibility to care for them. We are not to lay our responsibility upon others. Toward those within our own borders we are to manifest the same love and sympathy that Christ would manifest were He in our place. Thus we are to be disciplined, that we may be prepared to work in Christ's lines.

"The minister should educate the various families, and strengthen the church to care for its own sick and poor. He should set at work the God-given faculties of the people, and if one church is overtaxed in this line, other churches should come to its assistance." Testimonies 6, 272.

7. WELLS OF SALVATION

"And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD;

for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Isaiah 12.

"Christ has opened a fountain for the sinful, suffering world, and the voice of divine mercy is heard, "Come, all you thirsting souls; come and drink." You may take of the water of life freely. Let him that hears say, Come; and whosoever will, let him come. Let every soul, women as well as men, sound this message. Then the work will be carried to the waste places of the earth. The scripture will be fulfilled, In that day the Lord shall open fountains in the valleys, and rivers in the desert, and "with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation." Isaiah 41:18; 43:19, 20; 12:3. Testimonies 6, 86.

"The flowing of the water from the rock in the desert was celebrated by the Israelites, after their establishment in Canaan, with demonstrations of great rejoicing. In the time of Christ this celebration had become a most impressive ceremony. It took place on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people from all the land were assembled at Jerusalem. On each of the seven days of the feast the priests went out with music and the choir of Levites to draw water in a golden vessel from the spring of Siloam. They were followed by multitudes of the worshipers, as many as could get near the stream drinking of it, while the jubilant strains arose, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Then the water drawn by the priests was borne to the temple amid the sounding of trumpets and the solemn chant, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." The water was poured out upon the altar of burnt offering, while songs of praise rung out, the multitudes joining in triumphant chorus with musical instruments and deep-toned trumpets.

"The Savior made use of this symbolic service to direct the minds of the people to the blessings that He had come to bring them. In the last day, that great day of the feast," His voice was heard in tones that rang through the temple courts, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "This," said John, "spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." John 7:37-39. The refreshing water, welling up in a parched and barren land, causing the desert place to blossom, and flowing out to give life to the perishing, is an emblem of the divine grace which Christ alone can bestow, and which is as the living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul. He in whom Christ is abiding has within him a never-failing fountain of grace and strength. Jesus cheers the life and brightens the path of all who truly seek Him. His love, received into the heart, will spring up in good works unto eternal life. And not only does it bless the soul in which it springs, but the living stream will flow out in words and deeds of righteousness, to refresh the thirsting around him." Patriarchs and Prophets, 412.

IF LIFE BE BRIEF

If life be brief, make all its days more sweet
For those who touch our lives; fill full the cup
With nectar rare for those who come to sup
With us. Let none seek other draft more meet.

If life be brief, then treasure every throb
Of loving hearts; shed sunshine far and near
On lives deep shadowed, filled with fret and fear;
Each moment soothe some grief and stay some soul.

If life be brief, then champion thou the weak
Whose cause is just, and stand with him alone
If need demands. Let not thy heart be stone
When justice fails and Might treads low the meek.

If life be brief--still, moments stretch to days!
Then fill each hour with tender love and thought
For others' care and zeal. Thy life, so wrought,
Shall make thee live in others' lives always.

If life be brief, count all thy days in deeds,
Not years. The sum of life is work well done;