

DISEASE: A FRIEND OR ENEMY?

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The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan continues to be the battle between Truth and falsehood. It is thus in all phases of man's life on this planet. Man is the great battleground amidst the forces of right and the forces of error. We find that Satan is on the ground floor contradicting, persuading, and seeking to change the Law of God in whatever area of life he finds the opportunity to pervert God's Truths So we find in the field of health that Satan had gained not only a foot-hold, but has fooled the people of God as well as the world. It is strange, but we find God's people in the field of health aligned in almost perfect step with the world. This has happened in almost complete disregard of God's Word as given His distinct people through their Prophet, Ellen G. White. This article will not deal with all that is in error in the health field, but will deal with the point of misunderstanding upon which God's professed people have gone completely astray as a result of this, have misunderstood the whole of the health reform message as given them through Ellen G. White.

Let us take as our beginning a word that is the crux of the whole matter; 'Disease'. Mrs. White states: "It is the duty of every human being, for his own sake and for the sake of humanity, to inform himself or herself in regard to the laws of organic life, and conscientiously to obey them..... It is the duty of every person to become intelligent in regard to disease and its causes. (Ellen G. White, *Healthful Living*, Battle Creek, Mi., Medical Missionary Board, 1897, pg. 19 (paragraph 50))

This next statement from E.G. White is the most important one on health that I have found thus far, and one I wish to make fully understood. "Disease is an effort of Nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the Laws of health." Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, Mountain View, Ca., Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1942. Pg. 127

Let me paraphrase this by substituting a named disease such as a cold, this is an effort of Nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the Laws of health. The Flu is an effort of Nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the Laws of health. Pneumonia is an effort of nature, etc. Cancer is an effort of Nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the Laws of health.

"Disease: A Friend or Enemy?" The actual disease process, the cold, flu, pneumonia, arthritis, cancer, is a friendly effort of Nature, of God, to restore us to health which we lost in disregarding His Laws in regard to our physical bodies, obey and be saved or disobey and be lost.

"It is a sin to be sick, for all sickness is the result of transgression." Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, Mountain View Ca., Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1951, pg. 37.

"A careful conformity to the Laws which God has implanted in our being will insure health, and there will not be a breaking down of the constitution." "God has pledged Himself to keep this machinery in healthful action if the Human agent will but obey His Laws, and cooperate with Him." Ellen G. White, *Healthful Living*, Battle Creek, Mi., Medical Missionary Board, 1897, pg. 22 (para. 64 & 65).

Mrs. White goes on to say that "there are Divinely appointed rules which, if observed, will keep human beings from disease and premature death." Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, Mountain View Ca., Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1963, pg. 49.

To many of the afflicted ones who received healing Christ said, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5:14). 6 Thus He taught that disease is the result of violation of God's Laws, both natural and spiritual...Christ had been the guide and teacher of ancient Israel, and He taught them that health is the reward of obedience to the Laws of God. The Great Physician who had healed the sick in Palestine had spoken to His people from the pillar of cloud, telling them what they must do, and what God would do for them ~7

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God," He said, "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). 'Christ gave to Israel definite instructions in regard to their habits of life, 'and He assured them, "The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.' (Deut. 7:15). "When they fulfilled the conditions, the promise was verified to them." "There was not one feeble person among their tribes." (Ps. 105:37). Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, Mountain View, Ca., Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1940, pg. 824

These lessons are for us. There are conditions to be observed by all who would preserve health. All should learn what these conditions are. The Lord is not pleased with ignorance in regard to His Laws, either Natural or Spiritual. We are to be workers together with God for the restoration of health to the body as well as to the soul. And we should teach others how to preserve and to recover health. For the sick we should use the remedies which God has provided in nature, and we should point them to Him who alone can restore

Mrs. E. G. White received her first visions on health in June 1863, and wrote a health section for *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4, and six more articles for a book she put together and into which she gathered material from current health reform doctors other than S.D.A.'s of her day. This was published under the title "How to Live". The material she wrote was decidedly out of keeping with the accepted medical teachings and practices going on today in the world and in our church health programs. She spoke of disease as being a "friendly effort of nature" to restore health which has been destroyed by the individual due to not living in accord with the physical Law of God. The actual disease form was an effort on the part of the body to rid itself of an accumulation of its own waste products and an accumulation of today's chemicals added to our food and of drug poisons used both in her day and in our day. Though these drug poisons differ from age to age, they are essentially the same in that they all poison the body and prevent nature's efforts to free the system of its encumbrances and thus to stop the cleansing effort and seemingly to "cure" disease. This next quote will be a necessarily long one to establish once and for all this great Truth as to the cause of disease and to establish that "Disease is a friend and not an enemy."

"I was shown that more deaths have been caused by drug taking than from all other causes combined. If there was in the land one physician in the place of thousands a vast number of premature mortality would be prevented. Multitudes of physicians, and multitudes of drugs have cursed the inhabitants of the earth, and have carried thousands and tens of thousands to untimely graves.

"Indulging in eating too frequently, and in too large quantities, over taxes the digestive organs, and produces a feverish state of the system. The blood becomes impure, and then diseases of various kinds occur. A Physician is sent for, who prescribes some drug which gives present relief, but which does not cure the disease. It may change the form of disease, but the real evil is increased ten fold. Nature was doing her best to rid the system of an accumulation of impurities, and could have, had she been left to herself aided by the common

blessing of Heaven, such as pure air and pure water, a speedy and safe cure would have been affected.

“The sufferers in such cases can do for themselves that which others can not do as well for them. They should commence to relieve nature of the load they have forced upon her. They should remove the cause. Fast a short time, and give the stomach a chance for rest. Reduce the feverish state of the system by a careful and understanding application of water. These efforts will help nature in her struggles to free the system of impurities. But generally the persons who suffer pain become impatient. They are not willing to use self denial, and suffer a little from hunger. Neither are they willing to wait the slow process of nature to build up the overtaxed energies of the system. But they are determined to obtain relief at once, take powerful drugs, prescribed by physicians. Nature was doing her work well, and would have triumphed, but while accomplishing her task, a foreign substance of poisonous nature was introduced. What a mistake! Abused nature has now two evils to war against instead of one. She leaves the work in which she was engaged, and resolutely takes hold to expel the intruder newly introduced into the system. Nature feels this double draft upon her resources, and she becomes enfeebled. Drugs never cure disease. They only change the form and location. Nature alone is the effectual restorer, and how much better could she perform her task if left alone to herself. But this privilege is seldom allowed her. If crippled nature bears up under the load, and finally accomplishes in a great measure her double task, and the patient lives, the credit is given to the physician. But if nature fails in her effort to expel the poison from the system, and the patient dies, it is called a wonderful dispensation of Providence.” Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Washington, D.C., Review and Herald Publishing Assoc. Vol. 4, 1945, 133 & 134.

This should establish to Seventh-Day Adventists once and for all this great Truth, that disease is doing a friendly work to cleanse their system of excess waste material, that is, (the body) was not able to expel the waste through its normal channels of elimination such as the lungs, the pores of the skin, the kidneys via the bladder, and the bowels.

"Many are living in violation of the laws of health, and are ignorant of the relation their habits of eating, drinking, and working sister to their health. They will not arouse to their true condition until nature protects against the abuses she is suffering, by aches and pains in the system.” {2SM 451.2} {CD 304.5}

God, through the friendly effort of nature, is doing His work and needs our understanding and cooperation. The aches and pains are nature’s warnings, the fever is nature's efforts to expel poisons, the running nose and coughing up from the lungs, of mucus material is nature's effort of expelling poisons. We then have our duty to perform to aid nature in these efforts.

“The only hope of better things is in the education of the people in right principles. Let physicians teach the people that restorative power is not in drugs, but in nature. Disease is an effort of nature to free the system from conditions that result from a violation of the laws of health. In case of sickness, the cause should be ascertained. Unhealthful conditions should be changed, wrong habits corrected, then nature is to be assisted in her effort to expel impurities and re-establish right conditions in the system.” {CH 90.1}

We need to understand physiology and teach it to our children from the earliest dawn of their reason, that they might understand the cause of disease. If we, when we become ill, understood that we have brought this illness upon ourselves and seek out the ways in which we have been disobedient to God's laws and correct our living habits and re-establish right conditions by our understanding and right actions, we would get well without taking medication or drugs of any sort. It is vital that we cease to treat disease as an enemy. We must

understand that "Disease" is the cure, the effort of nature to cleanse itself. This cannot be too often repeated for it is not understood in any way by our current (contemporary) doctors. We get sick and do not know the cause. In fear we turn to the doctors and receive their treatments and they have been brainwashed in their education.

A friend of mine once told a medical doctor, in one of our sanitariums, after the doctor had caused a patient to become unconscious, that he (the doctor) by virtue of his education was totally unfit to care for the sick. This he repeated again and the doctor being a Christian, left almost running down the hall. The doctor returned in about a half an hour and apologized stating that our S.D.A. doctors use entirely too many drugs. I believe that all drugs are too many and that we as people need to become educated on how not to use drugs and learn to assist nature in her friendly efforts.

Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing, Mountain View Ca., Pacific Publishing Association, 1942 ll. hq 127

We need to do our research on this so that we might no longer be following the world. That we might cease being the tail and become the head. We have a great truth in the true Health-reform and God's people will not be formed until they become intelligent and obedient in-regard to health reform in its true sense.

Let it ever be kept before the mind that the great object of hygienic reform is to secure the highest possible development of mind and soul and body. All the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, are designed for our good. Obedience to them will promote our happiness in this life and will aid us in preparation for the life to come I have been shown that the principles that were given us in the early days of the message are as important and should be regarded just as conscientiously today as they were then.

It would be well for all S.D.A.'s to read for themselves the entire works on health as they appear in Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4, starting with page 120 entitled, "Health". And also read the chapters by Mrs. White in How To Live and Ministry of Healing. These books are available in photo static reprints. The end result of a comprehensive study of health, as presented by the "Spirit of Prophecy" is worth the effort expended and the key to that study is to understand what has been presented here; that disease is a friend to be cooperated with not an enemy to be fought against. Health in most cases can be regained and maintained with a proper understanding of the principles being lived out in life. If these health principles were understood and followed by God's people in their entirety, then the coming of the Lord would be hastened. It could be that this is the reason that He has not completed His work on this earth as of now. He is not going to take an unperfected people back to heaven with Him. Nor can we become complete people as long as we are not a well people. It is true; we appear healthier people than the world is, but only a shade healthier. There are in many places throughout the world, many people who live well beyond 100 to 150 years old in a healthy state. We must at least have that capability, though I do not want to have to live on this planet for that many years.

Disease then, we find, is a friend and not an enemy. It is to be cooperated with –and not fought against with drug action. When we fight disease, we are fighting God in His friendly efforts to restore health to our systems.

“The violation of physical law, and the consequence, human suffering, have so long prevailed that men and women look upon the present state of sickness, suffering, debilitation,

and premature death as the appointed lot of humanity . . .” Ellen G. White, {Fundamentals of Christian Education 23.2} (1923)

Many persons complain of Providence because of the discomfort and inconvenience, which they suffer, when this is the sure result of their own course. They seem to feel that they are ill treated of God, when they themselves are alone responsible for the ills, which they endure. Are these ills visited upon the race through God’s providence? –No! They exist because the people have gone contrary to his providence, and still continue rashly to disregard his laws The souls and bodies of people are fast becoming corrupted, a mass of disease. This would not have been the case if those who had claimed to believe the truth and lived out its sacred plank principles. There is a divinely appointed connection between sin and disease. Sin and disease bear to each other and the relationship of cause and effect. Sickness and premature death do not come without a cause. {Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods (1926) 197.7}

What I am trying to say in this manuscript is so contrary to the general understanding that I have had to resort to lengthy quotes from the "Spirit of Prophecy" to establish my facts and show that E.G. White is the author of these ideas and not this writer. I think that she makes her point. Disease is a friend at work to keep the body alive and not an enemy trying to destroy it.

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