

6 VERSUS 2: RESTORING GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR DIET

Nutritional science has long promoted eating six small meals per day as a way of boosting the metabolism and maintaining energy levels. However, scientific studies have also been found to support God's original plan for the human diet. The principles firmly outlined in Sister White's book *Counsels on Diet and Health* - including the value of maintaining a five hour break between meals and restraining from snacks - are now gaining special attention in the medical world.

From her chapter entitled *Regularity in Eating*, we read:

"After the regular meal is eaten, the stomach should be allowed to rest for five hours. Not a particle of food should be introduced into the stomach till the next meal. In this interval the stomach will perform its work, and will then be in a condition to receive more food." {CD 179}



Interestingly, it takes around three hours for the body to consume all the energy contained within a meal. Thus, allowing a five hour window between meals means that for at least two whole hours, your body is drawing energy from its fat stores. Yet the ramifications of this lifestyle extend beyond the obvious benefit of weight loss alone. Professor Naveed Sattar from Glasgow University points to the stress which snacking brings upon the liver and pancreas, when blood sugar and fat levels remain at a higher level throughout the day.¹ For these reasons, Professor Stephen Atkin from Hull York Medical School similarly states: "the ideal would be not to snack at all".²

Furthermore, Sister White highlights the importance of eating one's meals at the same time each day. She declares:

1 Simone Cave, "Snack attack: 'Grazing' used to be king, but now experts say it slows metabolism, and can cause tooth decay and diabetes," *Daily Mail Australia*, 29 June 2010, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1290401/Snack-attack-Grazing-used-king-experts-say-slows-metabolism-cause-tooth-decay-diabetes.html#ixzz4A0HFTcgk>

2 Ibid.

"In no case should the meals be irregular. If dinner is eaten an hour or two before the usual time, the stomach is unprepared for the new burden; for it has not yet disposed of the food eaten at the previous meal, and has not vital force for new work." {CD 179}

Dr Gad Asher, from the Weizmann Institute, describes this principle as "a daily calendar, telling the body what to expect, so it can prepare for the future and operate optimally."³

Moreover, in outlining the value of routine meal times, Dr Oz explains: "when you eat meals at different times rather than on a regular schedule, your body goes into stress mode."⁴ Confused as to when it will next receive food, the body releases cortisol (the stress hormone). Since high cortisol levels lead to spikes in insulin, this in turn "causes inflammation and can increase the risk of many cancers."⁵

In addition to these health risks, one is likely to identify with Sister White's warning that if the "time [of eating] is delayed, the vitality of the system decreases, and finally reaches so low an ebb that the appetite is entirely gone." And further, that "if food is then taken, the stomach is unable to properly care for it. The food cannot be converted into good blood." {CD 179}

As highlighted in the previous edition of *Parchment*, good blood is the basis of a healthy mind. And it is our mind which connects us with our Creator. To this end, the simple practice of allowing the stomach to rest, and restraining from snacks, provides a most positive starting point for the purification of our blood, minds and spiritual lives. Keeping in mind that by this simple witness, the words of Paul might be manifest; that "whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God". 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Amen.

3 Catharine Paddock, "When you eat could be as important as what you eat," *Medical News Today*, 17th March 2016, <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/308011.php>

4 Dr Oz, "5 Wrong Turns That Can Lead to Cancer," *The Dr Oz Show*, 4 April 2011, <http://www.doctoroz.com/article/five-wrong-turns-can-lead-cancer?page=1>.

5 Ibid.