

## ***Sabbath School Today*** **With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

### ***Health and Healing*** **Lesson 5: “The Environment”**

Dear *Sabbath School Today* Readers:

As a contribution to this quarter's subject, “Health and Healing,” we would like to offer a two-part article by Robert J. Wieland, “Healthful Living and the ‘Latter Rain.’” Rather than discuss subjects such as “global warming,” we herewith present the “environment” in the context of the cosmic Day of Atonement, and the Good News inherent in the 1888 “most precious” message that prepares us for the coming of Jesus. Following are excerpts from the article. You may read or download it at: [Healthful Living and the Latter Rain](#)

Or, if you would like to receive the PDF file via e-mail, reply to this message with the words “Healthful Living.”

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#### **How Do the Unique Truths in the 1888 Message Impact Health Reform Today?**

The message of healthful living has always been a part of “the third angel’s message” since our denominational beginnings in the 1840s. It has also had a prominent part in the special truths that “God in His great mercy” showered upon us in the 1888 message.

From our beginnings as a people, the reason for a health message was not so much the desire to live longer and enjoy pleasure more free from suffering, as to maintain clarity of mind to comprehend the truths in the “Adventist” idea of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. That sanctuary message was what made the Adventist message unique and appealing to “the remnant” who revered the Bible.

The idea of “cleansing” came to be thought central to living in the antitypical Day of Atonement. Tobacco was seen as “the filthy weed,” and its use “defiling.” The emphasis on giving it up was not so much fear of lung cancer or high blood pressure or all the other physical ills that follow its use today, but it was this idea of “cleansing.”

Abundant Scripture was found on the evils of drunkenness, and total abstinence easily became the idea of “cleansing” in the abandonment of alcoholic drinks. In the early literature of the church less is said about the physiological detriments of such intemperance than is the case today. Their use was largely viewed in the light of the Most Holy Apartment ministry.

Thus from the 1844 era to that of 1888, the health consciousness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was concentrated on a preparation for the second coming of Christ, not a longevity motivation as is the popular emphasis on “health” today. The concern

that transcended all was getting ready for the soon-coming close of probation. That idea of a possible better motivation arrived with the proclamation of the 1888 message.

The primary purpose of “health reform” from the beginning has been to enable God’s people to think clearly and follow Jesus Christ in His final atoning ministry. Their minds are to follow Him in His Most Holy Apartment. It makes sense to realize that preparing for translation without seeing death will involve a firmer grasp of what our Lord is doing in His closing ministry. That work is not identical with what was His work in the First Apartment.

It stands to reason that if someone is not interested in what His Lord and Savior is doing, he cannot benefit from that special ministry which is progressing just now. “None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict” (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594). In our early days, this was recognized: “You need clear, energetic minds, in order to appreciate the exalted character of the truth, to value the atonement, [1] and to place the right estimate upon eternal things. If you pursue a wrong course, and indulge in wrong habits of eating, and thereby weaken the intellectual powers, you will not place that high estimate upon salvation and eternal life which will inspire you to conform your life to the life of Christ; you will not make those earnest, self-sacrificing efforts for entire conformity to the will of God ...” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 66). That special work now going on is preparing a people for the close of probation and translation at the coming of the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

### **The Third Angel’s Message In Verity Is Good News!**

Those who will have a part in the closing up of the great controversy between Christ and Satan will be those who “overcome even as [Christ] overcame” (Rev. 3:20). Not merely as a personal honor, but because the Lord Jesus *needs them*. He will seat them in His “senate” or heavenly “parliament.” They will “sit with Me on My throne,” He says.

Let’s forget about the personal honor involved, forget about our own crown. Let’s be concerned that we can have a part in crowning *Him* “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The issue that’s back in the shadows here is a great world church, a Bride-to-be, who has yet to “make herself ready” for “the marriage of the Lamb.” Perhaps we’ve learned enough in our attempts to study about health reform to realize that it does have something important to do with that Bride *making herself ready*.

—Robert J. Wieland

#### **Endnote:**

[1] “To value the atonement” means to “comprehend the ... width and length and depth and height—and to know the love [*agape*] of Christ” revealed at His cross (Eph. 3: 18, 19).