

## SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE SCIENCE OF NUTRITION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURES

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We are what we eat. That, of course, is quite true from a physical point of view. All our food comes from the ground. Even if we eat meat the original source of the food was the earth for "All flesh is grass." (Isa. 40:6) In the original creation the animal kingdom was noncarnivorous, and during the millennial reign of Christ on earth (Isa. 65:25) all animal life will again become vegetarian.

In eating our food we are really eating the earth and we are told that man was to eat of it "in sorrow" (Gen. 3:17) all the days of his life. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3:19)

But the ground from which we derive our food has been cursed by God and we are told that it was cursed for man's sake. It was the ground (adamah) or top soil that was involved, not the planet, earth (eretz). This curse will remain upon the land until our Lord returns to establish His kingdom. (Rev. 22:3) As a result of this judgment, the earth was to bring forth thorns and thistles. (Gen. 3:18) The crown of thorns (Matt. 27:29) was a symbol of the curse.

### Effects of God's Curse

Merson Davies<sup>1</sup> has pointed out that thorns are evidence of arrested growth in the branches. This is proved by the fact that they often disappear as a result of improved agronomy. The wild apple, for example, is a thorny plant but with proper cultivation the thorns disappear completely, and the same is true of the pear and the plum tree as well. Marie Stopes<sup>2</sup> has stated that "in the cactus the leaves are all reduced to needle-like spines."

It is also interesting to note that, according to the Geological Society of London<sup>3</sup> the earliest forms of cactus (Cactareae) are found in the Pleistocene, that is the time when man first appeared. Hugh MacMillan<sup>4</sup> has stated that "not one indisputable thorn or thistle has been found in the older rocks." These observations would indicate that the Divine judgment in Eden must have occurred comparatively recently.

The pappus in thistles is an abortive form of the calyx which has been changed into hairs so that it can be blown about in all directions and

thereby add to man's labor in the cultivation of the soil. Arrested development in the vegetation would, therefore, appear to have been the result of the Divine judgment, and since all the ground has been cursed all of our vegetation must have come under the same influence to a greater or less extent.

The curse upon the serpent was of a similar nature in the arrested development of its limbs (Gen. 3:14) as a consequence of which it was compelled to crawl on its belly. The loss of speech in the animal creation may well have been due to the same cause and we are reminded of the fact that the serpent spoke in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1) before it was cursed. Moreover, the story of Balaam's ass (Numbers 22:28) illustrates the fact that the function of speech is still dormant in animals.

Dr. Gertrude Himmelfarb<sup>5</sup> has quoted Buffon to the effect that in the orangutan "the tongue, and all the organs of voice, are exactly the same as in man, and yet this animal does not speak: the brain is absolutely of the same form and proportion, and yet it does not think." It would appear, therefore, that there is a missing link somewhere between the organ of speech and the brain which, if the two were connected, would enable this creature to speak. Some faculty may have been arrested in the development of the orangutan and in other animals as well.

The wings of birds which are incapable of flight are another example of abortive structures or what MacMillan<sup>6</sup> has described as "frustrated design." There are no such elements in man, however.

Darwin<sup>7</sup> stated that "rudimentary organs will speak infallibly with respect to the nature of long-lost structures." His idea was that the so-called vestigial organs were once required by our ancestral forms in the course of evolution but that they are no longer needed by the organism today. Wierdersheim, the German anatomist, listed 180 of these structures in the human body. But with the increase of knowledge it has been found that every one of them has an important function. There are, indeed, no vestigial remains in nature but there is evidence of arrested or abortive development.

In this connection it is well to remember the importance of trace elements in the diet. Small amounts of copper are essential for the metabolism of iron in the hemoglobin. Unless sheep and cattle receive a little boron in their diet they develop pining disease and die like a love sick girl. The amount of these trace elements which

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is necessary in order to maintain health is very small.

As a result of the curse man has been compelled to till the soil with hard labor in order to produce enough food to live ever since he was expelled from the Garden of Eden. Cultivation of the land has usually been combined with animal husbandry which provides a natural enrichment of the soil.

But in 1840 Liebeig, the German scientist, introduced the modern fertilizers which are now so widely used. Rogation Days which come before Whitsuntide were once a time of prayer and fasting for Divine blessing on the crops. It was the custom in those days for the parish priest to bless the land at this time in order to insure a bountiful harvest.

However, with the advent of modern fertilizers the peasants discovered that they got just as good results with the fertilizers, if not better, than they did with prayer and fasting, as a result of which supplications to God and the priestly blessing were eventually discarded. Thus science has replaced faith in the cultivation of the soil.

#### **Water, Air, Sunlight and Life**

Water is absolutely essential to life. Some organisms can live without oxygen but no creature can exist without water. About 70% of the human body is water and 70% of the surface of the earth is covered with water. Water is a very simple compound, composed of H<sup>+</sup> and OH<sup>-</sup> ions, acid and alkali, in equal proportions, thus forming a perfect neutral solution. There is no indisputable evidence that water exists on any other planet.

Air is also essential to life, both animal and vegetable, with the possible exception of the few anaerobic forms. With the birth of an infant the air enters its lungs and the child begins an independent existence. It is well recognized that the first few minutes after birth are of vital importance. Unless respiration is started immediately irreparable damage may be caused to the brain. Air is the only element necessary for life that is not derived from the soil. It is truly amazing that man, the destroyer, should pollute the land and water and air all of which are essential for his own survival.

Perhaps sunlight should be mentioned as another extraterrestrial essential to life. This element is necessary in the photosynthesis of the vegetation which is eventually consumed by the animal kingdom, including man. But, although sunlight is needed to provide our food, we do not actually consume these rays.

In a recent paper by Jon Tinker,<sup>8</sup> it has been shown that "the relative atomic stabilities of different elements determine their cosmic abundances which can be checked by analysis of

meteorites. The earth's crust follows the same cosmic pattern, and any human tissue is approximately similar." Thus we see that from a physical point of view man is indeed only the dust of the earth composed of the same elements in the same relative proportions as the rest of the universe.

The cash value of the elements in a human body would be about \$3.50 at today's prices. None of the radioactive elements except potassium-40 is present to any great extent and none of the precious metals except for minute traces of silver which are found especially in the thyroid and tonsils. Gold is present in sea water but it is never found in marine organisms or in man.

Very frequently one hears people complain today of lack of energy. Since we are what we eat physically and since our bodies are derived from the earth, it may well be that as a result of vandal cropping and improper cultivation of the soil we are not getting out of the earth what is needed to sustain life at its maximum level. The solution to all our physical and mental ailments may eventually be found in the soil. We are reminded of the tree of life whose leaves will be "for the healing of the nations." (Rev. 22:2)

But man is much more than just a lump of clay. Man was created in the image of God, three in one and one in three: body, soul and spirit. (1 Thess. 5:23) It is well to remember that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4) Spiritual nourishment is just as important as our daily food, if we are to attain to our full stature in the image of God. The Word of God has an important role in the science of nutrition.

#### **Milk, Honey, Lentils and Alcohol**

At the time of Moses the land of Canaan was flowing with milk and honey. Milk contains all the necessary ingredients to maintain life, protein, fat, carbohydrates, mineral salts, vitamins and water. Honey is composed largely of glucose and has no other particular food value. The sugar, however, gives us a quick pick up of energy and is a supplement to the essential elements of life by adding CO<sub>2</sub> to the bloodstream. Intravenous glucose is widely used in medicine today in the treatment of serious illness.

The story of Daniel (Dan. 1) in the court of Nebuchadnezzar shows the value of lentils, a small bean common in Egypt, in the treatment of one's complexion. Lentils may, indeed, be one of nature's own cosmetics, and they have been used in the treatment of acne. It would be interesting if some active principle in the lentils could be isolated and perhaps used to improve the complexion and for the treatment of this distressing complaint of adolescence.

Ever since the days of Noah (Gen. 9:21) man has consumed alcoholic beverages to excess. If taken with food the alcohol is absorbed slowly, but when taken on an empty stomach it is rapidly injected leading to a high alcoholic content in the blood. As the majority of alcoholics stop eating almost entirely when they go on a spree this may lead to delirium tremens and eventually to irreparable mental deterioration. Food containing thiamine, that is vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, is necessary to protect the nervous system from the effects of alcohol.

During the days of prohibition no beverage in the U.S.A. could be sold with a content of more than 1/2 of 1% of alcohol according to the Volstead Act. But freshly baked bread may have an alcoholic content up to 3 or 4 per cent. As the bread dries out, however, the alcohol soon evaporates.

No one knows when he begins to drink whether he will end up as an alcoholic or not. One out of nine casual drinkers becomes an alcoholic. The earmark of an alcoholic is that when he takes one drink he cannot stop drinking. This is true even after 20 or 30 years of abstinence. The modern idea is that alcoholism is a disease, something like an allergy. No doubt it is harder for some people to drink moderately than it is for others, but from a spiritual point of view we recognize that alcoholism is sin and that only the grace of God can save a drunkard. Lint and Schmidt<sup>9</sup> have shown that the number of alcoholics in a community is directly proportional to the total amount of alcohol consumed in that area. Rather than seeking to treat the alcoholics as an isolated group, every effort should be made to reduce the total consumption of alcohol and thereby decrease the number of alcoholics.

Tea and coffee are usually regarded as harmless non-intoxicating beverages and no doubt they serve a useful purpose. Some people get a quick pick-up from the small amount of caffeine in these beverages. But it is well to remember that both tea and coffee contain the astringent principle of tannin which is used to make leather out of the hides of animals.

"Dust thou art" and, as we have seen, each one of us is physically a part of the earth and "the earth is the Lords." (Ps. 24:1) But the earth is growing old. According to the principle of uniformity the earth and the universe will continue for millions of years until they finally burn out. But God has said that "the earth shall wax old as a garment." (Isa. 51:6) With the population explosion there just isn't enough land to go around so that every one may live in comfort. There are no more continents to plunder. "Nevertheless we . . . look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13)

### References

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- <sup>3</sup>Geological Society of London. 1967. The fossil record. London, p. 271.
- <sup>4</sup>MacMillan, Hugh. 1882. The ministry of nature. Macmillan & Co., London, p. 109.
- <sup>5</sup>Himmelfarb, Gertrude. 1959. Darwin and the Darwinian revolution. Chatto and Windus. London, p. 142.
- <sup>6</sup>Macmillan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 98.
- <sup>7</sup>Darwin, Charles. 1956. The origin of species. J. M. Dent & Sons, London, p. 460.
- <sup>8</sup>Tinker, Jon. 1971. Measuring the elements in man. *The New Scientist*, September 30, p. 728.
- <sup>9</sup>Lint and Schmidt. 1971. *Additions*. Summer, p. 13.

## A GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL "KIND" (MIN)†

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*The biblical term **min** ("kind") is examined with regard to its etymology, form, and usage. It is shown that **min** is a strict classificatory term denoting definite "units of creation" and not a term signifying merely that "like begets like." The article concludes with a general analysis of the Mosaic lists of clean and unclean animals as a preliminary to an investigation of the taxonomic extent of the **min**.*

### Introduction

Christian evolutionists contend that the phrase "after its kind" merely expresses the fact that life reproduces its overall pattern by embryos, seeds, or fruits<sup>1,2</sup> Though this is of course true, in

addition, the "kinds" or *min* are distinct entities which did not result from any evolutionary process but are the direct "units of creation."

### The Etymology of Min

The term *min* has been associated with the Hebrew *manah*,<sup>3</sup> to distribute by number, order, or class of things.<sup>4</sup> Some scholars associate it with *temunah*,<sup>5</sup> i.e. form or representation, from the root meaning "to think out." Others claim it has an Arabic root meaning "split" or "division."<sup>6</sup>

†This article is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Jacobus Johannes Duyvené de Wit (1909-1965), late Professor of Zoology at the University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

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