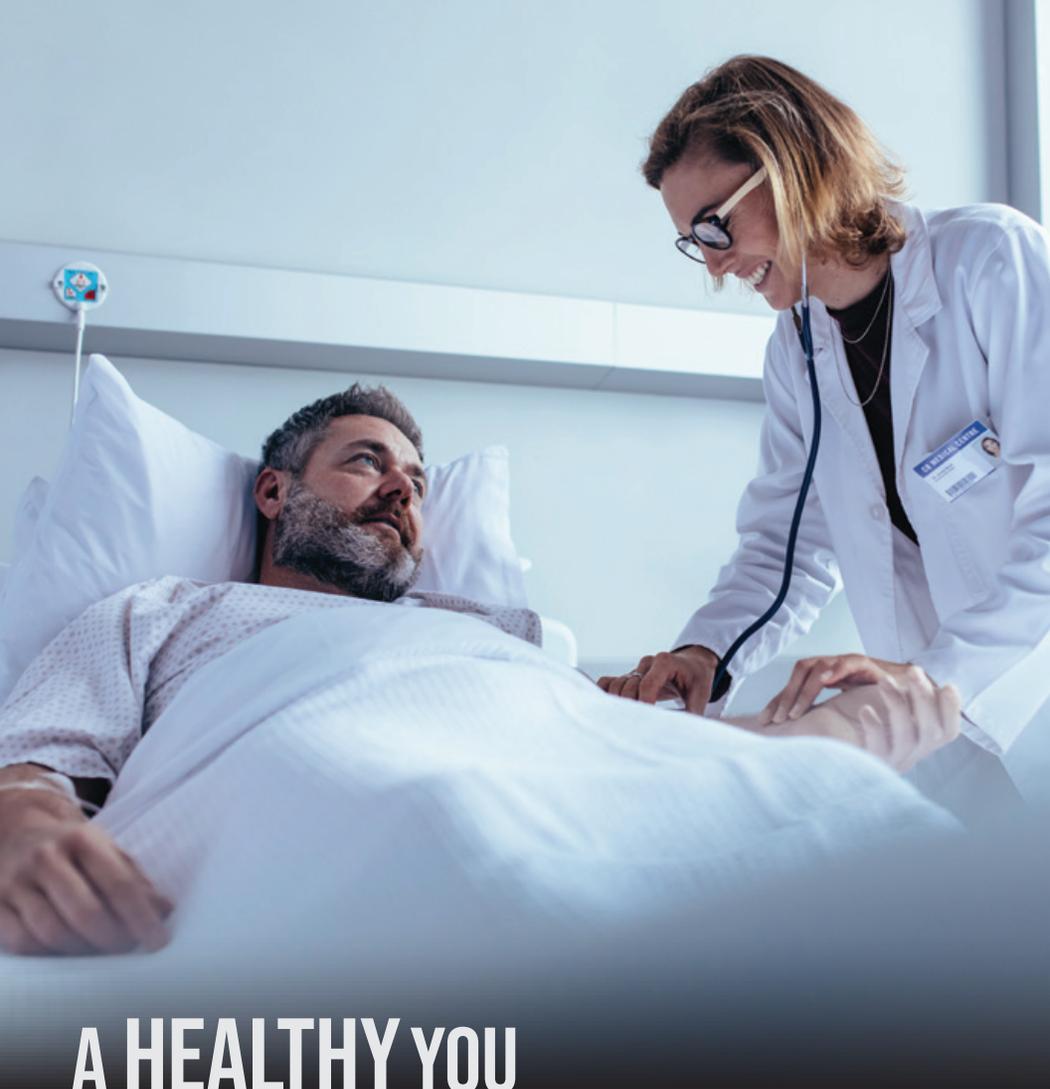




 **3ABN** BIBLE STUDY GUIDES
Looking Higher

A HEALTHY YOU



A HEALTHY YOU

Enormous sums of money are spent each year on health care with hospital visits, drug medications, expensive tests, and interventions to slow the debilitating effects of disease. However, despite the growing wealth of research and advancing technologies, disease continues to spread its influence over our lives and families. A little improvement here and an innovative breakthrough there keep many hopeful that scientists will discover a cure for all that ails us. There is good news in the fight against disease! The Creator, who designed this Earth and each of its creatures, established simple principles to preserve our health and live life to its fullest.

1 Who is the giver and sustainer of all life?

Genesis 2:7 “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”
James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights ...”

God, who gives life to all things (1 Timothy 6:13), sustains us every moment. Life and health are His gifts to us, but we are responsible to value, protect, and develop those gifts to their full potential.

2 What was God’s original plan for preserving the life and health of each person He created?

Genesis 1:31 “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good...”
Psalms 145:16 “You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

From the beginning, every part of God’s plan was pure and undefiled. God lovingly created exactly what was required to satisfy every need: pure water and air, balanced rest and labor, a satisfying and nourishing diet, and loving relationships with others and with Him. By living in harmony with all of God’s Law, the mind and body would be strengthened to enjoy both His life-giving friendship and His gift of perfect health.

3 How did sin interfere with God’s plan for preserving health?

Genesis 3:17–19 “... ‘cursed is the ground ... in toil you shall eat ... thorns and thistles it shall bring forth ... to dust you shall return.’”
Romans 1:24 “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves.”

Disobedience ruins everything God made. From the moment Adam and Eve departed from God’s instruction and listened to the lies of the devil, they began to satisfy their own selfish appetites. Deadly contamination corrupted God’s perfect Earth. The passing of nearly 6,000 years has shown that rejecting God’s Law degrades both the body and the spiritual life. The consequences of sinful choices that began in Eden are seen in our lives today when people suffer from disease, pain, and death.

4 To whom should I look for wisdom in how to care for my body?

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 “... do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

1 Corinthians 10:31 “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

Our lives belong to God because He created us and saved us from sin at great cost. He cares for us even more than we care for ourselves. We are to work with God, and not against Him, by learning and using the methods He established for healthy living. God is honored when we trust Him and demonstrate His wisdom and love by how we treat our bodies. But our sinful tendency is to neglect God’s loving guidance by indulging our appetite, even when it damages our body and depletes our strength.

5 Do the laws of nature that lead to health come from God?

Psalms 89:11 “... the world and all its fullness, You have founded them.”

The laws of nature are God’s laws. They reflect His character of love, because they sustain life. When we disregard any of God’s laws, we receive the natural consequence, both physically and spiritually, “for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7).

6 Are God’s original principles of health still useful to me today?

3 John 1:2 “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”

Nothing has changed about God’s love for us and His original plan is still the ideal. God wants each of His children to enjoy both physical health and a growing relationship with Him. His laws of health are

available to all. He urges us to become familiar with them and put them into practice.

7 Are God’s laws of health given only to make life pleasant and comfortable?

Romans 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

2 Timothy 2:21 “... he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”

There is more at stake than our physical strength, comfort, and longevity. Every diet or lifestyle choice that weakens our physical body diminishes our ability to serve God and others. God entrusts to us one life so we may improve our talents to honor Him. Choices that result in sickness and premature death rob God of our service—service that would bring Him glory.

Job 10:8 “Your hands have made me and fashioned me, an intricate unity ...”

1 Cor. 12:26 “And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it ...”

Mark 12:30 “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...”

Our physical life is linked to our spiritual life because what we do to the body directly influences the mind, where our moral reasoning resides. In our minds, we hear God’s voice, employ His power to resist temptation, understand His Word, comprehend Jesus’ love for us in the Cross, receive the Holy Spirit, and choose to obey or disobey God. When we turn away from His laws—even in our health by what we eat and drink—we weaken our relationship with God and diminish the power He gives to love and obey Him completely.

8 Are my health decisions connected to God’s desire for me to trust and obey Him?

1 John 2:15, 17 “Do not love the world or the things in the world... the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

2 Corinthians 6:17 “... Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”

James 4:17 “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

Small, daily decisions about health test and reveal our heart. Will we live in harmony with God, submitting to His will and living to please Him? Or will we live in opposition to Him, pursuing our cravings, our will,



“Choices that result in sickness and premature death rob God of our service ...”

our desires? “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much ...” (Luke 16:10). We develop a Christ-like character of obedience to God by saying yes to what He offers freely, and no to what He withholds for our own good. Sin has corrupted the human family because of a decision to indulge appetite (Gen. 3:6). But Jesus showed how we can be victorious over Satan’s temptations of appetite, letting no earthly desire come between us and the Father (Mat. 4:1–4). “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40).

9 Does Satan promote a counterfeit to God’s gift of healthy living?

1 Peter 5:8 “... your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

Romans 12:2 “... do not be conformed to this world ...”

Galatians 5:17 “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another ...”

Satan loves to hurt God by hurting His children, knowing that we are easier to tempt, discourage, and deceive when we are weak or suffering from disease. The enemy creates enticing counterfeits that oppose each healthy gift from God. He then tempts us through our fallen, sinful desires to crave what destroys, instead of what heals. The unhealthy habits of the world around us become a pattern that is easy to follow. “... Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it” (Matthew 7:13), but “we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11).

10 How important is it to learn God’s plan for caring for my body?

Proverbs 1:7 “... fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

2 Corinthians 5:10 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

Ephesians 5:17 “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

God “has given to us all things that pertain to life” (2 Peter 1:3), and we thank Him for His divine wisdom by living as close to His plan as we are able. Because we have inherited six thousand years of physical, mental and spiritual deterioration from sin, we should grasp every advantage God offers to oppose Satan’s deceptions and overcome sin. God’s Word and a God-led study of nature have made a healthy lifestyle more accessible as a way to honor God. “... come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord” (Isaiah 2:5).

11 What principles has God given for my own good that show me what to eat?

Genesis 1:29 “And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.’”

God gave food suitable for people who would never grow sick or die: nutritious plants grown in good soil, including the fiber (fruits, grains, and nuts)—with vegetables added later on in Genesis 3:18. God’s ideal diet kept every organ and system in perfect strength and balance. God is so good that not one of His creatures will be killed in the New Earth—even for food (Isaiah 11:9). By learning to tastefully prepare what the Creator gives, we show gratitude for His blessings; and by doing what is in our power to live close to God’s ideal, we prepare for life in Heaven.

Genesis 9:3–4 “Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”

God’s flawless design for diet continued for over two thousand years, accompanied by lifespans of many hundreds of years (Genesis 5). If sin had not spoiled Earth’s perfection, God’s provision would have continued unchanged. But after He preserved Noah and his family through the Flood, sources of food were limited. God then permitted the eating of certain animals’ flesh to preserve life. This was not God’s original blessing, but inflicted consequences on human health and longevity. Just as some of the “green herbs” are not suitable for eating, so it was with animal flesh—some would not be suitable for consumption. In addition, God specified that no blood or fat be consumed (Leviticus 7:22–27).

“God’s ideal diet kept every organ and system in perfect strength and balance.”



Leviticus 11:47 "... distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten."

As we advance toward God's perfect diet to which He is restoring us, we are given specific instruction to completely avoid consuming certain creatures that defile the body. This includes the following (Leviticus 11):

- Land creatures that do not have a split hoof and chew the cud, including pigs, rabbits, and any creature without hooves.
- Sea creatures that filter impurities from the water or consume dead creatures—whatever does not have fins and scales, such as lobster, oysters, clams, and shrimp.
- Birds of prey, including eagles, buzzards, ravens, crows, and bats.
- Insects that creep on the ground and flying insects without jointed legs, including cockroaches.
- Creeping animals such as lizards, snakes, rodents, and frogs.

These are unsuitable for human consumption and are called "an abomination" (Leviticus 11:10). The distinction between "clean" and "unclean" is for the health of all people, and was confirmed to Noah before God gave these instructions through Moses (Genesis 7:2).

Proverbs 25:16 "Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, lest you be filled with it and vomit."

Make moderation and simplicity the rule of life, living by principle rather than as a slave to temptation. Those who live a life of self-control trust God to supply their needs by not indulging in too much, or denying what is needed. "... do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go" (Joshua 1:7).

12 What principles has God given for my own good that show me what to drink?

Exodus 23:25 "So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water..."



"Practice temperance by avoiding any substance that interferes with clear thinking ..."

Fresh, pure water first thing in the morning and between each meal refreshes every organ and cleanses the body from impurities. The drinking source God provided in the garden of Eden was a river of pure water (Genesis 2:10). And when Daniel refused to defile himself with the King's food or drink, his request was for water to drink (Daniel 1:12).

Isaiah 65:8 "... Thus says the Lord: 'As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, "Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it" ...'"

Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise."

Ephesians 5:18 "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit"

Fresh, unfermented grape juice ("found in the cluster") has healing properties, tastes good, and is the only wine God prescribes. Alcohol clouds the mind, degrades the body, and interferes with our greatest need—friendship with God. The Bible warns, "Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things" (Proverbs 23:31–33).

1 Cor. 9:25 "... everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown."

Practice temperance by avoiding any substance that interferes with clear thinking, including mind-altering drugs and stimulants like caffeine, which restricts blood flow to the frontal lobe of the brain.

13 What principles has God given for my own good that show me how to live?

Genesis 2:7 "... God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ..."

Each molecule we inhale is absorbed into our bloodstream and delivered to the cells of our body. As far as possible, choose an environment surrounded by fresh, clean air. Refuse toxic substances inhaled into the lungs.

Matthew 5:45 "... your Father in heaven ... makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good ..."

Natural sunlight strengthens the body's immune system, improves happiness, and maintains waking and resting rhythms so that sleep and labor are more productive. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield ..." (Psalm 84:11).

Genesis 2:15 "Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it"

Exodus 20:9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work"



“Loving relationships, modeled after God’s love for us, improve our health.”

Frequent, useful, physical labor enhances mental function and keeps blood moving through every system of the body, enriching it to exercise its potential. “She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms” (Proverbs 31:17).

Psalms 3:5 “I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.”

We need uninterrupted sleep each night in a safe, dark environment. The stomach also needs rest between meals to complete digestion and deliver the full benefit from nutritious food (Ecclesiastes 10:17). Give the mind and eyes lengthy periods of rest from the artificial light and the stimulation of screens. When we regularly set work aside, we are refreshed and work becomes more productive. “... ‘Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while’ ...” (Mark 6:31).

Proverbs 17:22 “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.”

White blood cells, an essential part of the immune system, are made in the bones! By focusing on God’s blessings, we allow Him to fill us with His joy and cheerfulness, which give strength to fight disease.

Genesis 2:18 “... God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone ...’”

Loving relationships, modeled after God’s love for us, improve our health. Encouraging words, physical affection, warm conversation, and concern for loved ones benefit the whole person, not just the emotions.

Romans 1:20 “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made ...”

Jesus “often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed” (Luke 5:16). When we live close to nature, we may experience the priceless benefits of fresh air, open space, learning from God’s Creation, and deepening encounters with God.

1 Corinthians 3:16–17 “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy ...”

Because God places such a high value on each person, we should not intentionally pursue risky behavior that will damage or endanger the body temple where God dwells. Safe driving, seatbelts, bicycle helmets, washing hands: these are just a few examples of caring for what God values—you. Seek the greatest adventure thrill God offers: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called ...” (1 Timothy 6:12).

14 What is the best thing I can do to preserve my life?

James 5:16 “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed....”

Isaiah 33:24 “And the inhabitant will not say, ‘I am sick’; the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity.”

A clear conscience is vital because sin affects our health. Guilt generates stress that is felt in the body and undermines the abundant life God offers (John 10:10). A strong body may receive a few extra years, but a person whose sins are forgiven can also enjoy God’s gift of eternal life.

15 What goal is God leading His people toward as He rescues us from this polluted world of sin?

1 Thessalonians 5:23 “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 2:7 “... To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

God is not satisfied with partial restoration of the ones Jesus purchased by His sacrifice. He wants us to receive His blessing of health on this Earth, increasing unity with Him, and eternal life in Heaven. Let’s live in harmony with the Creator’s laws now, so we will already love and long for the home He is preparing for us in Heaven.

“A clear conscience is vital because sin affects our health.”



WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR ME IN GOD'S PLAN FOR HEALTH?



1. God's way of living is a joyful experience. The Lord “satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Psalm 103:5), and “His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3).

2. God gives strength to overcome unhealthy habits, even childhood habits learned from others. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). “... for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

3. Healthy decisions you make today will lead to lasting improvement in health. “And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with you ...” (Deuteronomy 6:18). “... choose life, that both you and your descendants may live ...” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

4. True healing comes from God. “And He said to her, ‘Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.’” (Luke 8:48). “... For I am the Lord who heals you” (Exodus 15:26).

5. Health and healing in our lives will be a testimony to others of God’s wisdom and faithfulness. “... your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you ...” (Isaiah 58:8).

6. When we faithfully follow God’s laws, we can be at peace, knowing that our life is in His hands. “... My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled ...” (John 14:27).

LESSON SUMMARY

1. Our lives and health are a loving gift from God to be used for His honor.

2. The diet God gave in Eden was God’s perfect plan. We should do what is in our power to understand and follow God’s plan.

3. The laws of nature are God’s laws, and are for our good. Violating those laws interferes with God’s work in us.

4. Whatever we do to the body affects the mind, which is where we choose to love and obey God.

5. The health and lifestyle decisions we make each day lead us to follow either our will or God’s will.

6. God has given effective principles in His Word for preserving health.

7. God invites you to choose to read, study, pray about, and obey His Word every day.

Additional Notes:
