**Sweetness**

**Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul,**

**and health to the bones.**

***(Proverbs 16:24)***

**Light is sweet,**

**and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.**

***(Ecclesiastes 11:7)***

**Americans swallow an average of 22 teaspoons of sugar each day in the form of soft drinks, candy, cookies, and processed foods. Among teenagers, the figure is 34 teaspoons. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 11, 2009)***

**America is falling out of love with diet soda. The sales of low- and zero- calorie soda have fallen 6.8 percent in the past year, compared with a 2.2 percent drop in the sales of regular soda. Experts say consumers are worried about possible health risks from artificial sweeteners. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 20, 2013)***

**Faster and faster the atoms spin -- until, at last, the previous solar energy which has traveled so far pushes carbon, hydrogen and oxygen together and comes to rest in this union it has created. Thus, sugar -- that marvelous food which stores the gift of the sunbeam -- is ready to feed all life. *(Rutherford Platt, in The Living World of Nature, p. 236)***

**Taste buds are well-developed by the end of pregnancy, and the baby prefers a sweet taste. A doctor injected saccharin and a dye into the wombs of women with excessive amounts of amniotic fluid. He hoped the fetus would drink more, passing the excess liquid into the mother’s circulation system. It worked – more dye appeared in the mother’s urine when the amniotic fluid was sweet – but only until the baby became sated with the sweet taste and stopped drinking. *(Henci Goer, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Beware of artificial sweeteners: Artificial sweeteners, among the most common food additives in the world, may be contributing to obesity rather than preventing it, reports the Financial Times. In a series of experiments, Israeli scientists found that exposure to three sweeteners widely used in low-calorie snacks and beverages -- saccharin, sucralose, and aspartame --raised blood sugar levels in mice and increased their risk of glucose intolerance, a condition that often leads to obesity and diabetes. When the researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science then gave a regular dose of saccharin to seven human volunteers who did not typically use sweeteners, four of them developed glucose intolerance. Previous studies have suggested that certain artificial supplements can give consumers a "sweet tooth," making them more likely to seek out sugary foods, but this research suggests that sweeteners might actually alter the body's metabolism to make weight gain more likely. Sweeteners, the report found, "may have directly contributed to enhancing the exact epidemic that they themselves were intended to fight." *(The Week magazine, October 3, 2014)***

**There’s no mention of sugar in the Bible, the Talmud or the Koran. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**When building a bridge, one of the ingredients you need is sugar. Sugar is added to the mortar because tests show that it increases the mortar’s strength. *(Paul S. Hagerman, in It’s a Weird World, p. 66)***

**Twenty-two of the 50 top-selling candy bars were actually cooked up back in the 1920s. *(Rocky Mountain News, 1990)***

**The sweetest compound known is called lugduname. It is more than 200,000 times sweeter than table sugar. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 54)***

**The average American consumed about 140 pounds of cane sugar, corn syrup, and other sugars last year – 50 percent more than the Germans and French, and nine times as much as the Chinese. *(The New Yorker, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 2, 2006)***

**Report is the average bushel of corn has 72,800 kernels. That makes enough corn syrup to sweeten 324 cans of non-diet cola. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Fructose triggers cravings: Not all sugars are created equal. Glucose and fructose are simple sugars naturally found in fruit and have the same number of calories, but new research suggests there are important differences in how the body responds to these sweeteners. While glucose is absorbed directly into the bloodstream to produce energy, fructose -- which is used to sweeten soft drinks and processed foods -- is metabolized in the liver. The body reacts to glucose in the blood by producing insulin, which triggers feelings of fullness. "Fructose doesn't stimulate insulin secretion, and if there's no insulin, you don't get the information that you're full," the study's senior author, Dr. Kathleen Page, tells The New York Times. Consuming fructose also triggers more activity in areas of the brain involved in reward processing, which intensifies cravings for high-calorie foods such as candy, cookies, and pizza. Researchers do not recommend that people forgo fruit, since it provides fiber and nutrients and has relatively small amounts of fructose compared with soft drinks and processed foods. But researchers say it does make sense to limit overall sugar intake. *(The Week magazine, May 22, 2015)***

**Sixty years after she was denied admission to Southwest Missouri State College in Springfield, Missouri, because she is black, Mary Jean Price Walls received an honorary bachelor’s degree in July from the college, which now is Missouri State University. Her son, Terry Walls, was instrumental in the awarding of the honorary degree. *(American Profile magazine, October, 2010)***

**Laboratory rats that drank diet sodas consumed more calories overall than those that drank regular soda. (Not a good sign for dieters.) *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 54)***

**When he was a state trooper in the Shenandoah Valley, a friend’s husband spotted a car pulled over to the side of the highway, which was designated for emergency stopping only. Investigating, he found a man holding a small boy up to the guardrail, pointing toward a field where sheep were grazing. “Officer,” explained the young father, “we’re visiting from the city. I grew up on a farm, but this is the first time my son has ever seen a lamb. I consider that an emergency. The trooper, a country boy himself, agreed and drove off with a cheerful wave. *(A. L. Ensor, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)**

**Ike Ditzenberger, a high school varsity football player with Down syndrome, last week scored a winning touchdown, albeit for his losing side. Ditzenberger’s Snohomish High School Panthers, in Washington state, were down 35-0 with 10 seconds left in the game when the coach called the “Ike Special.” Ike was given the football and rushed for 51 yards, weaving around opposing players who energetically failed to tackle him. He ended his rush with a dance of joy in the end zone. “They gave him the gift of normalcy,” said Kay Ditzenberger, Ike’s mom. *(The Week magazine, October 15, 2010)***

**McDonalds and Burger King sugarcoat their fries so they will turn golden-brown. *(Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 169)***

**Next year, the global consumption of sugar is expected to reach a record high of 171 million tons, according to a new report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The average American is now consuming 23 teaspoons of added sugar each day, much of it in prepared foods and drinks. *(Vox.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 5, 2014)***

**It’s so hard to forget pain, but it’s even harder to remember sweetness. We have no scar to show for happiness. *(Chuck Palahniuk)***

**You’ve heard a spoonful of sugar will cure the hiccups. A medico says, “What does it is not the sweetness, but the rough texture sending a barrage of signals through the throat’s nerves.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**Honey won’t spoil, due to its high sugar content, which bacteria and fungi can’t tolerate. *(Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 241)***

**Europeans brought the honey bee to America in 1600s. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**You’ve heard that salt rubbed into an open wound hurts. So does sugar. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Husband: "What are you working on?" Wife: "A new strawberry pie recipe." Husband: "What is that rhubarb you're adding to the pie filling?" Wife: "That's right - it's a strawberry-rhubarb pie." Husband: "Why on earth would you ruin a perfectly good strawberry pie by adding rhubarb to it?" Wife: "It serves the important purpose of balancing the flavors -- it cuts the overly sweet strawberries." Husband: "Well, okay. I guess that makes sense. What goes in next?" Wife: "Sugar." *(Art & Chip Sansom, in The Born Loser comic strip)***

**Lemons have more sugar than oranges. *(Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 163)***

**How artificial sweeteners make you fat: Rats fed a steady diet of sugar substitutes were hungrier and gained more weight than rats that ate sugary food, a new study has found. The study may explain why people who drink a lot of diet soda have higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and other metabolic problems. Purdue University researchers fed sugar-filled and sugar-free yogurt to groups of rats, and found that rats that got accustomed to artificially sweetened meals were still hungry afterward and went back for more food. Why? It appears that artificial sweeteners confuse the body, which is programmed to associate sweet tastes with calories consumed; when we repeatedly eat something sweet that provides little or no calories, researchers say, we break that connection, and our confused bodies keep seeking more food. Also, the rats that frequently ate sugar substitutes also didn’t have the metabolic increase that usually follows eating a meal, so they burned fewer calories, researcher Susan Swithers tells HealthDay. Combine a larger appetite with a slower metabolism and you have a formula for severe weight gain. “The take-home message,” Swithers says, “is that consumption of artificially sweetened products may interfere with an automatic process.” *(The Week magazine, February 29, 2008)***

**There are people still around, a lot of them, who remember when molasses was the common sweetener. Sugar didn’t get real popular until the price dropped after World War I. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Scratching is one of Nature’s sweetest gratifications. *(Montaigne)***

**The different and the novel are sweet, but regularity and repetition are also teachers. *(Mary Oliver, poet)***

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**After chopping onions, I open two small packets of sugar and rub the sugar all over my hands, then wash them. Viola! The smell is gone. Works great every time. *(Reader tip to Heloise from Tex Sportman, Schertz, Texas)***

**What makes certain onions, such as those from Walla Walla, Washington, and Vidalia, Georgia, so famous? High sugar content. Up to 12.5 percent. Comparable to the sweeter oranges. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**Half the pleasure of solitude comes from having with us some friend to whom we can say how sweet solitude is. (William Jay)**

**Half of the sugar produced in the United States each year comes from sugar beets. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 54)***

**So high in sugar are raisins that they can be stored outdoors in bins under plastic until they’re processed. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**During the Persian Gulf War, our son Dan served with the Third Battalion, 27th Field Artillery. On the first anniversary of the war, we were watching a commemorative program on TV. “Dan,” I asked, “can you recall what you were doing one year ago today?” “Sitting in the sand,” he said. “Dan,” I told him, “I was sitting in this room with your mother and four other women who were crying their eyes out.” “Well,” my son said, “I guess you had it a whole lot worse than I did.” *(Forrest Dunbar, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Consumers spent a record $39.6 billion on candy in 2021, according to the National Confectioners Association. After a year of isolation in 2020, unit sales of breath mints were up 5.8 percent. *(FoodDive.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 1, 2022)***

**I always strive, when I can, to spread sweetness and light. There have been several complaints about it. (*P. G. Wodehouse)***

**What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness? *(John Steinbeck)***

**They’re Sweeter Than Sugar:**

**NutraSweet (aspartame) – 180 times sweeter than sugar**

**Splenda – 600 times sweeter than sugar**

**Neotame – 7,000-13,000 times sweeter than sugar**

**Saccharine – 300 times sweeter than sugar. *(World Features Syndicate)***

**Sugar is added to commercial table salt to stabilize the added iodine. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The human tongue tastes bitter things with the taste buds toward the back. Salty and pungent flavors are tasted in the middle of the tongue, sweet flavors at the tip. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, P. 27)***

**Your candy or your life: Children who eat a lot of candy and other sweets are more likely to grow up to be criminals, a new study suggests. The British study, which tracked 17,500 people over decades, found that 69 percent of people with convictions for violent crimes ate sweets daily when they were kids. Of those who hadn’t been violent, only 42 percent consumed candy every day as kids. Why? It’s possible that the sugar or additives in candy influences kids’ behavior directly, researcher Simon Moore tells the Toronto Globe and Mail, but it’s more likely that eating sweets serves as a marker of both impulsivity and a lack of discipline in the home. Kids who binge on sweets fail to develop self-control, which makes them more prone to violence as adults. Health experts cautioned against mistaking correlation for causation. You can give kids candy “in moderation,” says Melinda Johnson of the American Dietetic Association, “as long as the overall diet of the child is well-rounded.” *(The Week magazine, October 23, 2009)***

**Husband says to wife: “Dr. Phillips says my blood sugar is too high! I have to watch my sugar. So . . . I’m watching you!” *(Chris Browne, in Raising Duncan comic strip)***

**Tasters say California wines are a bit sweeter than their counterpart French wines. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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