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Perspective Article

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Reclaiming Healing Through Nutrition: Resistance to Plant-Based Diets and the Biblical Call to Restoration

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Abstract

Despite growing scientific evidence supporting using plant-based diets (PBDs) in preventing and reversing chronic diseases, these therapies remain underutilized in clinical practice. This article explores the multifactorial resistance to PBDs—medical, ethical, and spiritual—while drawing on scriptural insights that affirm lifestyle-based healing. Based on seven years of implementation at Bethsaida Hospital in Indonesia under the leadership of Prof. Dasaad Mulijono, we present clinical outcomes including regression of coronary artery disease (CAD), a restenosis rate as low as 2%, remission of hypertension, diabetes control without insulin, LDL cholesterol levels below 30 mg/dL, and reversal of obesity. These findings highlight the powerful synergy between evidence-based nutritional medicine and the biblical vision of health and restoration.

Keywords: Plant-Based Diet, Lifestyle Medicine, Prof. Dasaad Mulijono, Cardiovascular Disease, Faith-Based Healing, Chronic Disease Reversal, Medical Resistance, Biblical Health, Bethsaida Hospital.

1. Introduction

Chronic diseases such as coronary artery disease (CAD), hypertension, type 2 diabetes (T2D), dyslipidaemia, and obesity are the leading global causes of mortality [1-5]. An expanding body of research supports PBD as an effective and safe intervention for these conditions [6-10]. However, lifestyle-based therapies remain on the periphery of mainstream cardiology.

The reasons for resistance are complex, ranging from clinical inertia and commercial pressures to entrenched cultural habits [11-15]. This paper considers an additional dimension: the spiritual. Drawing upon biblical texts and real-world outcomes from our cardiac program, we argue that neglecting healing dietary practices may reflect not only medical conservatism but also a more profound disconnection from God's original design for human health.

2. Biblical Foundations of a Plant-Based Healing Paradigm

2.1. God's Original Prescription

"I give you every seed-bearing plant... They will be yours for food." — *Genesis 1:29* [16]. This verse frames the PBD as God's first gift for sustaining life—a concept now corroborated by modern nutritional epidemiology.

2.2. Daniel's Nutritional Experiment

"Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink... they looked healthier..." — *Daniel 1:12*–16 [17]. Daniel's experience is arguably one of the earliest comparative studies of dietary patterns, where plant-based intake resulted in measurable vitality.

2.3. Warnings About Rejected Truth

"For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine..." — *2 Timothy 4:3* [18].
"They perish because they refused to love the truth..." — *2 Thessalonians 2:10* [19].

These verses echo the reality that therapeutic truth, including in medicine, is not always welcomed, especially when it challenges prevailing systems.

2.4. A Vision of Restored Creation

"The lion will eat straw like the ox..." — *Isaiah 11:6-9* [20]. The prophetic imagery of a peaceful, plant-centred future reinforces the redemptive arc of returning to Edenic health principles.

2.5. Health as Divine Intent

"The Lord will keep you free from every disease..." — *Deuteronomy 7:15* [21].

"I will take away sickness from among you..." — *Exodus 23:25* [22]. Sickness, in this view, is often a byproduct of departing from God's principles, especially dietary. The modern Western diet represents such a departure.

3. Clinical Outcomes from Bethsaida Hospital

For the past seven years, the cardiology team at Bethsaida Hospital has implemented PBDs as standard care. The outcomes have been both medically and ethically significant. Selected results include [23-29]:

• Hypertension Reversal

Blood pressure normalized without pharmacologic intervention.

• T2D Remission

Significant reductions in HbA1c (1.5–3.0%), with insulin discontinuation in many T2D patients.

• LDL-C Reduction Without PCSK9 Inhibitors

LDL-C routinely reduced below 30 mg/dL with PBD plus affordable statins/ezetimibe.

• Weight Normalization

Patients achieve sustainable BMIs of 20–22 without calorie restriction.

• Renal Improvement

Stabilization and improvement in glomerular filtration rate (GFR) in chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients; several avoided dialysis.

• Heart Failure Recovery

Improved ejection fraction (EF) and New York Heart Association (NYHA) class in heart failure reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF) patients.

• CAD Regression and Low Restenosis

Plaque regression on CT and coronary angiography; restenosis rate of 2% after DCB vs. 10–20% elsewhere.

• Systemic Inflammation Reduction

Clinical improvements in psoriasis, autoimmune symptoms, and early cancer signs.

4. Discussion

Our findings support the growing consensus that nutrition should be a primary modality in chronic disease management. However, real-world implementation remains hampered by scepticism—even in clinical circles. We believe this resistance is not merely scientific but cultural, ethical, and spiritual. Scripture presents a coherent vision in which nutrition is central to health, healing, and human flourishing. The current marginalization of lifestyle medicine echoes prophetic warnings about dismissing truth. Reclaiming dietary healing is not only medically sound but spiritually aligned with the redemptive mission of healthcare.

5. Conclusion

PBDs offer a clinically validated, cost-effective, and spiritually grounded approach to chronic disease. Our experience at Bethsaida Hospital affirms that profound healing can occur when medicine aligns with divine design. It is time for the global medical community to re-examine the role of diet, not as a supplement to pharmacology, but as a foundational therapy rooted in science and Scripture.

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