



I. Leaving Egypt

Most people, including myself at one time, began their workout adventure in the same crowded gym by following what everybody else was doing. It usually entailed an enormous amount of time and a large volume workout philosophy of set after time-consuming set. For anyone wanting to get stronger and increase in muscularity, this approach will work for a while but you will inevitably hit the wall. Since the body previously had no need to meet the recuperative requirements that it is now demanding to build bigger and stronger muscles, it will perform up to a point with this process and come to a halt when its recuperative capacity has been tapped out.

It is when this process fails to achieve noticeable results, that most do not know what to do. They assume that they must stay at the gym longer, work out harder or eat even more. This 'more and more' manner of thinking is what I would refer to as the Egyptian Workout Approach of the harsh taskmaster of slavery. We do this because we think we can arrive at the setting of Eden from which we made a departure by seeking *more* of the same process that brought about our initial gratitude. What we did not know, however, is that we never

left Egypt and were never in a 'land flowing with milk and honey'.

Unfortunately, we are creatures of burden and are, strangely enough, drawn towards making things more difficult. Life becomes increasingly complex and cumbersome when we build upon this *more and more* mentality. We assume that if *some* money allows us to be happy then it is only logical that *more* money will make us even happier. If *some* of our possessions make us happy, then it only makes sense that *more* possessions will make us even happier.

A continual lust for *more* will only burden us with an unnecessary amount of baggage and refuel our desire for achieving something with an inordinate or excessive desire for more. Our assumption is that because this worked from the start, all that is needed is to add 'more' of it. This, therefore, is where the burden increases. It was William of Occam who said, "It is vain to do with more what can be done with less." When the burdensome yoke of the Egyptian Workout Approach has been cast aside in favor of the lighter and simpler Heavenly Workout, our workout goals can be accomplished at a much more exciting rate.

Just as the human body is equipped to operate on little or no sleep for days on end or work twelve to fifteen hours a day at the job, we can do the same with our work out regimens. In either scenario, these become heavily burdensome tasks and we become unproductive at some point. We simply maintain our work out abilities, diminish our body's proper biological functioning with inadequate sleep or become an unproductive employee with fried brains because of a massive workload. In essence, we have become apple trees bearing two apples a season.

This Egyptian Workout Approach never had to be employed from the start. We assume that the conventional wisdom in the fitness magazines is correct, after all, aren't they 'everybody else' too? God fashioned our bodies as an amazing piece of equipment with the ability to overcome every seemingly insurmountable obstacle that is thrown at us. I will explain this in greater detail later but to briefly illustrate, a Voluntary Principle stems from our own physical actions such as running, jumping, thinking or simply put, exercise. This is always the cause. An Involuntary Principle involves a process of which you have no involvement such as digestion, a beating heart or

sleep.

I say this because the Egyptian Workout Approach, although it will not free you, it will provide *something* because 1) it does employ a Voluntary Principle, just used in reverse and 2) the modus operandi of the muscular system is to operate as a defense mechanism in a threat/response relationship to exercise, therefore, it will defend for a while but will inevitably shut down when the threat has overwhelmed its involuntary capacity to recuperate.

God created us with an incredible ability as humans to employ an innate strength, fleshliness or carnality (e.g. tower of Babel) through Voluntary Principles that separates us from the Involuntary Principles of the Spirit in which they should be in submission. If we are ever to come out of Egypt, we must understand what brought us to where we are today so that we can move forward towards a 'land flowing with milk and honey' approach or what I like to refer to as the Heavenly Workout. Let's get into the Promised Land.

II. The Modus Operandi of the Muscular System: A Defense Mechanism

Muscle tissue requires far less application than most would believe to be true. Its cause stems largely from a lack of understanding in regards to the function of the muscle. What is understood is that the muscle must be subjected to an ever-increasing burden of weight to produce growth. What is misunderstood is *how* and *why*?

To answer the aforementioned questions, it is of the utmost importance to understand the modus operandi of the muscular system as a defense mechanism, which reacts in a threat/response relationship to exercise. When any given muscle is exposed to the burden of a heavy weight and forced to absolute failure during the course of repetitions, it perceives this experience as a threat. All available muscle fibers are called upon to remove the perceived threat and in the process of reaching absolute failure, it is momentarily weakened. It must now multiply the muscle fibers that were called upon and in so doing strengthen the muscle for what it assumes will be *another* encounter due to the previous threat. It must conquer the burdensome threat if it is to retain its position of superiority. This answers the question of why.

Before answering how, an analogy will be used as a filter through which this matter can be better understood. It was Mike Mentzer who said that when the skin is exposed to sunlight, it defends itself by a darkening in pigmentation¹. In addition to this, added benefits follow from a brief exposure (20 to 30 min.) such as mood elevation, testosterone enhancement for building muscle and the body's natural production of vitamin D. These are all positive factors that assist in the recuperation and well-being of the body.

The negative factors of a prolonged exposure to sunlight are a depletion of vitamins and minerals, lethargy, skin cancer and sunburn. Analogously, it is the same with muscle. When muscle is subjected to a *prolonged* exposure to a given threat, overtraining ensues or in the case of the analogy, sunburn. If one does not experience increasing gains in either weight or repetitions on a weekly basis, then one is in a current state of overtraining. One may have an adequate tan to withstand the beating rays of the sun but what happens is that you become the proverbial victim of the frog in the kettle. Just as it is dying and does not even know that it is being cooked, so it is with a darker tan.

Added pigmentation will eventually protect from the sun but it will not prevent a depletion of vitamins and minerals, skin cancer, lethargy and diminishing testosterone production. All are residual factors even with an adequate tan. It is often the sad state of life at the gym. Many walk around in this sun darkened or sunburned state of overtraining and do not even realize it. Strangely enough, the same weight is lifted every week with little or no progress while assuming that this is what progress should look like. Many conclude that they are not working hard enough and add even more sets and quantify their exposure to weight lifting by increasing their time spent on a weekly basis. Neither of these conclusions is correct.

To answer the question of how, one must observe the brevity of time spent in the sun to produce a tan. It is minimal. There is a strong correlation between these two members of the body. By observing one, we can determine how to operate the other. Just as a minimal amount of time is needed for a sufficient tan, so it is also true of stimulating a muscle. A prolonged exposure to set after set on only one given exercise will only extend the duration of recovery and diminish gains. This, in effect, weakens the body's ability to defend

itself adequately by a continual overworking of an active training stimulus (Voluntary Principle) while ignoring the more important passive response (Involuntary Principle) of repairing what was weakened.

Our spiritual lives work in much the same way. When we discern a *threat* from either the enemy or our own personal sin, we are momentarily weakened when the temptation to sin is present. However, when we call upon God, we *resist* the threats of the enemy (Jas. 4:7) and temptation to sin by replacing our current revelation of *weakness* with His newfound *strength*. Each time we meet this resistance, we are creating new levels of strength not had before.

III. 80/20 Pareto Principle

In order to increase strength, one must build the muscle necessary to lift an ever increasing given weight. I will employ the use of the Pareto Principle to illustrate. It was first discovered by Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian economist in 1906, who observed that 80% of the land was owned by 20% of the population. He concluded, therefore, that 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.

This can be applied elsewhere as well: 80% of weeds come from 20% of the seeds, 80% of leaves come from 20% of trees, 80% of yardage comes from 20% of the football team, 80% of crime comes from 20% of the population, etc. This analogy allows us to synthesize a plan of action in building strength whereby we can determine that a minimal amount of work can produce a maximum amount of results. Therefore, 80% of the results of strength *should* come from only 20% of the causes.

It must be noted at this point that this principle was not invented but discovered. The difference between the two is that one functions in cooperation with life while an invention can move against the grain (e.g. politics, Egyptian Workout), making things more difficult. When we understand that we have discovered a principle that God has created, we can work in cooperation with it rather than against it. This is the ease of the Spirit. The Egyptian maidservant gave birth to Ishmael who represents the child of the flesh who is constantly kicking against the Involuntary Principle but when Sarah gave birth to Isaac, the child of the promise, this represented the child who would follow the ease of this very same principle.

Strength must be built through a minimal amount of stimulus (20% =effort or cause) in order to reap the benefits (80%=results or effects) of newfound muscular strength. This honors the difference between an involuntary action and a voluntary action. Again, the difference is crucial.

IV. Strength Training Harmony: Voluntary Principle Submits to Involuntary Principle

It is through the 80/20 workings of the Pareto Principle that we can extract from it, the two principles which govern the 80/20 structure. The following explanation of the Voluntary/Involuntary Principles may very well be one of the most important aspects to understand whether it be the physical aspects of working out or the spiritual aspects of “working out”. These principles are the essence of the voluntary and involuntary actions of the body.

The Voluntary Principle employs the actions such as those we perform at the gym. The pushing, pulling or lifting movements should compose 20% of our voluntary actions. The rest and nutrition will compose 80% of the results. Therefore, a minimalist approach to strength training must be implemented to build muscle.

We need to understand that we are actually involved in very little of our body’s daily functioning. When we eat, we *supply* our stomach with food (20% voluntary) but it takes care of the digestive process (80% involuntary). Our recuperative process runs much the same way. When we permit one moment at night for sleep (20% voluntary), we allow the proper repairs to be made during the course of sleep (80% involuntary). We are able to do nothing on a biological level to assist in this. All that needs to be done is simply get out of the way and passively allow these principles to run their 80/20 course. Doing ‘more’ adds to the problems.

We need to understand that the hidden nature of the Involuntary Principle should be left to work on its own to enhance the benefits of the Voluntary Principle. A hidden network of complexities involved in repairing and therefore multiplying muscle fibers is not available for the human eye to see. This principle is in keeping with Genesis 1:28: “...’Be fruitful and increase in number.’” The point is to always produce *life*. When we permit the 80% involuntary nature of this principle to

perform its tasks, we cannot help but bear the fruit of increase either with strength of faith or strength of a physical nature. The Voluntary Principle is the visible outward display of the tree branches whereas the Involuntary Principle is the deep roots hidden from the naked eye; the Sabbath day's rest of much productivity.

When Gideon confronted the Midianite army, God displayed the 80/20 Involuntary/Voluntary Principles in order to achieve success in this military campaign. Armed with 32,000 men, God told Gideon that he had too many men and that Israel might 'boast' if they defeat the Midianites with this excessive number. In the end, Gideon ends up with only 300 men to fight 120,000 of the enemy. The odds are now 400 to 1 and in the eyes of fleshly strength, these are not good odds.

Gideon could have reversed the principles, implemented an 80% voluntary approach, and through his own sheer strength, defeated the Midianites. However, history has shown that numbers alone do not win wars e.g., Yom Kippur War, Six-Day War. He could have haphazardly won, overwhelmingly won or he could have lost. In the end, he would not have seen the mighty hand of God at work in the most incredible of circumstances. The point is that the backwards 80% voluntary approach would not have been the most *efficient* approach because it would have gone against the grain of God-designed principles to make life much easier.

The 80% Involuntary Principle is one in which matters are hidden and concealed. We only need to honor the fact that it does exist. Just as the body makes repairs and multiplies muscle fibers while in the involuntary state of sleep so does faith and the strength of God work in a hidden and concealed spiritual realm. All that God asked of Gideon was a minimal 20% voluntary effort in fighting the enemy and he would do the rest. Who would have thought that blowing trumpets would spiritually stir a lunatic frenzy in the camp of the enemy, causing them to strike one another down? (Jdg.7:22) With God at his side and 300 men, Gideon defeated an entire army of 135,000 men. In this cooperative plan of honoring each principle, 120,000 men were struck down. (Jdgs.8:10)

V. Strength Training Chaos: Involuntary Principle Submits to Voluntary Principle

These principles run contrary to the conventional wisdom of gym

“experts” who use the inverse of the 80/20 Pareto Principle. They apply an Egyptian Workout with 80% of voluntary action at the gym, which only allows for 20% of involuntary actions for recovery and therefore, stagnating results. These workout programs generally run six days (80% voluntary) with one day off (20% involuntary) to recuperate. This is simply not enough time to recuperate.

One last word of caution: be cautious when receiving work out advice from the big strong guys at the gym who spend countless hours with numerous sets and yet are both big and strong. These guys are the genetic exceptions to the rule. They are not the rule, only an exception. They are a genetically gifted body type that excels in the recuperative process. The only problem is that with a reduction in work out philosophy, they could achieve even greater results. The man that can bench press 405 pounds for 5 repetitions is no different from the man that can only bench press 135 pounds for 5 repetitions if this is the same amount performed week in and week out *ad infinitum*. Following the principles that are already aligned with the body will assist in navigating through the muddy waters of conventional weight lifting.

The Egyptian Workout Approach bears a strong correlation to our walk with God and our inability to conquer sin in our own lives. We often take a path whereby we simply try to restrain our sin by suppressing it and therefore preserving the life of the sin within the heart. We go against the grain of the revelatory nature of the Involuntary Principle of faith by suppressing it with the Voluntary Principle of willpower.

When we exercise a Voluntary Principle in an inverted 80% capacity by adding more and more to a workout routine, we unknowingly carry out an external process by mimicking the hidden, complex and mysterious process designed for the Involuntary Principle. The purpose of the Voluntary Principle is to reveal what was formerly hidden so that it might come out of its concealment and express itself in strength. Strength cannot increase when we suppress, ignore, or hide the sin in our shame. This unfortunate process is simply the route that everyone follows when we do not know what to do with the weakness that has presented itself.

VI. The Paradox: Happiness in Weakness

It is paradoxical to assert that in order to produce something, the opposite must be implemented but it is true nonetheless. Truth truly is stranger than fiction. Paradoxically, in order for strength to result, the muscle must first be weakened. We are already in a current state of weakness when attempting to lift more weight or perform more repetitions than the previous workout allowed.

For instance, if you are able to bench press 200 pounds for 5 repetitions, you are currently at your strongest *and* weakest. You are at your strongest because you were only able to complete 5 repetitions while bench pressing 190 pounds from the previous workout, therefore, you are currently 10 pounds stronger. You are weakest because you can *only* complete five repetitions with 200 pounds and not 210 pounds for the same amount of repetitions. At least not yet. We are always building strength upon the weakness of the previous work out! Weakness, therefore, always precedes strength.

It is paradoxical to declare that strength and weakness are inextricably bound together in a relationship where one *absolutely* needs the other in order to validate each characteristic but it is essential to understand this in our walk with God. We must first always have a *revelation* of the sin (weakness) that keeps us from becoming stronger. It is only when we are able to rejoice each time a new area of weakness is revealed that we can come before God and replace the lies that we believe with the truth so that strength might increase. This is why the apostle Paul said, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor.12:9-10)

When life throws seemingly insurmountable obstacles in our path either from the outside or the inside, we can only rely on present levels of weakness to be strengthened with God's delight. When we hide our sin in the shadows of shame, it is because we believe that God cannot, should not and does not want to see what is inside. This makes it difficult to delight in our weaknesses. When we are willing to bring our sin out of this hiding, we can rejoice *with* God in having acquired His strength. God will always provide an occasion for our

sin to come to the surface so that we may see what we have been carrying all along. This is His process.

It is also a paradox that in order to produce life from a seed, it must be buried and die. It is difficult to conclude that life must first come from death but nonetheless, it is so. This is why Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." (Jn.12:24) It is also, why he said, "But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first." (Mt.19:30)

Those that continue to work out within the parameters of an Egyptian Workout will continue to engage their own strength through the burdensome task of fleshly means but the one who can first *acknowledge* his weakness through a Heavenly Workout will be made first with newfound strength. When we trust in God to be our strength in times of weakness, we rely upon that elementary and minimal Involuntary Principle of faith to overcome the present resistance and current weakness with newfound strength from God. When we are in a moment of duress, we must remember that God is standing there with us. He is waiting with eager anticipation that we will push away, in the form of a repetition, the sin that desires to overtake us. Whether we resist a heavy poundage or resist the enemy (Jas.4:7), we experience a moment of temporary weakness that will be followed by newfound strength if we submit our voluntary actions to the Involuntary Principle of either spiritual faith or physical recovery.

VII. Cardiovascular Efficiency

The conventional wisdom of the fitness industry misleads many to believe that you can actually divorce weight lifting from "cardio" work by performing lighter activities that keep the heart racing at an elevated rate for a suspended period of time. These needless activities do not and should not be incorporated in a workout regimen due to a serious misunderstanding of the functioning of the body and its detrimental effects.

Jogging has been the culprit of numerous injuries such as shin splints, stress fractures, knee pain, lower back pain, sciatica, plantar fasciitis or Achilles tendonitis. Rather than trying to continue performing an activity that is the cause of so many problems, eliminate the source of the problem altogether.

You can never divorce the heart from any form of weight training because everything we do is first initiated by our muscles, not the other way around. The following is an illustration of just such a cooperative activity involving the muscle first and then the heart: Let's say you run a mile that takes approximately 100 steps to complete (I know this is off and only for illustrative purposes).

Now, rather than jogging, put enough weight on the Olympic bar to complete 50 repetitions at a quarter squat and you will have duplicated the heavily sought after cardio running "effects" of heaving breathing and profuse sweating. The only difference is that this will avoid the pounding that the knees and hips absorb and the heavy toll on the body overall. You will only feel the heavy breathing of the cardiovascular system as a *result* of the squats, not as the cause. Remember, the heart does not know what you are using it for; it assists at the request of the muscular system.

Have you ever witnessed the guy on the leg press, who upon completion of the concentric (positive) portion of the movement causes a herky-jerky motion at the knees that just makes you cringe? I do not know of anybody practicing any sort of sound body mechanical advice that would approve of this. Now, let's assume that this guy weighs 180 lbs. and is currently pressing a weight of 360 lbs. That amounts to 180 lbs. per leg to complete a given number of repetitions on the leg press.

While many would disapprove of his performance, nobody would ever consider it improper to run on those legs under the burden of that very same 180 lbs. He is now transferring 180 lbs. of weight per leg (and then some) due to the force implemented, and is now jerking and jolting his knees with every stride. This is the frog-in-the-kettle all over again. It is a very slow disintegration of cartilage.

In other words, it is a misnomer to assume that an activity such as jogging is superior to a workout program in strengthening the heart. Training your muscles to failure is far safer and superior due to an adequate minimalist time structure for enhanced recovery process. An elevated heart rate which involves heavy breathing is always the result of the legs performing muscular contractions at a steady rate (jogging) that does not allow for total exhaustion of all muscle fibers and therefore, *eliminating* the opportunity for newfound strength for

the following work out.

The heart is always *involuntarily* working to assist the muscular system's activity. Therefore, the *heavy breathing* of a severe oxygen intake is always the *effects* of the heart hard at work whereas the muscular system is always the *cause*. It is not that the involuntary process of the beating heart is subservient to the voluntary process of the workout but rather, it is in harmony by first delivering the oxygen needed to the body's most needed parts, its muscles.

The purpose is to reap the rewards of a strengthened heart (80% involuntary). Muscular activity in itself cannot drive the beating heart because the beating heart itself *is* an involuntary process, only the *effects* of the beating heart. The muscular system can do nothing apart from first receiving the oxygen it needs to resist a given weight. In order to properly condition the heart and eliminate unnecessary "cardio" work from your workout program, you must perform all weight lifting exercises in a given workout with little rest between sets. For instance, you might try resting only one minute between sets or even thirty seconds if you are a little more adventurous. You may want to ease into this and, as always, seek the advice of a physician if you are unsure of your current ability to work out.

Our spiritual walk works in much the same way. Our desires (20%, cause, voluntary) always bear witness to the *condition* of the heart (80%, effects, involuntary). This can work in either a good way or a bad way. When our actions are good (20%, cause, voluntary), then our heart will in turn become strengthened (80%, effects, involuntary). Conversely, when we begin to invert the processes by using an 80% application of causes with control and suppression of sin, it results in a weakened heart utilizing only 20% of the effects of involuntary actions. This is why Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Mt.6:21)

VIII. The Workout Program

The typical Egyptian Workout Approach consists of a heavily taxing regimen of working out each major muscle group at least twice a week whereas the Heavenly Workout minimizes this to only one major muscle group per week by following God ordained principles. The Egyptian Workout Approach would consist of something like this: 4 sets of bench press, 5 sets of shoulder press, 4 sets of close grip

bench press, etc.

No logical and adequate reasoning exists as to why the Egyptian Workout Approach stops at, for instance, 4 sets of bench press. If 4, why not 5? If 5, why not 6? There is no scientific basis for stopping at any given point. If asked, "Why not 100 sets of bench press?" the answer would be emotional, not logical. They would certainly retort, "That would be silly," but no sound reasoning could support why they would not. After all, if 4 sets are good, surely 100 would be better, right? Not so.

There are many different ways to structure your exercise program but the following is the program that I have used with a great degree of success. Each muscle group should be completed to failure for only *one* set. This program is as follows:

WORK OUT PROGRAM (Weeks 1-4)

Workout 1 (Tuesday)

Chest- bench press

Shoulders- standard shoulder press

Triceps- close grip bench press

Abdominal- weighted sit-ups

Calf- seated calf

Workout 2 (Friday)

Legs- squat

Hamstrings- leg curl

Back- bent row

Lats- pulldown (supinated grip; hands towards you at shoulder width)

Biceps- standard barbell curl

- This workout consists of only working out two days per week. It may seem strange but I can honestly attest to the fact that my squat started at 185 lbs. for 6 repetitions and in 9 weeks, I was up to 260 lbs. for 5 repetitions. That is a 75 lb. increase in 9 weeks!
- The "Tuesday and Friday" references are for illustrative purposes only, however, please be sure to place a couple of days off in between workouts to encourage recovery. Remember, you are growing while you are at rest.

- As the workout enters into the fourth week, eliminate Workout 2 entirely and resume with Workout 1 on its regularly scheduled day. Your back, and in particular, your legs comprise half of your body and therefore demand the greatest amount of recovery efforts. Do not be concerned with losing muscle. It takes far more time for atrophy to set in than what is popularized with the curbside philosophy of conventional gym training wisdom.
- Eliminate your triceps exercise in week four, as it is such a small auxiliary muscle that can easily be overtrained with much of the “push work” during a bench press and shoulder press. In the fifth week, continue the cycle all over again as though you were in the first week of the 4-week cycle with the total inclusion of Workout 1 and Workout 2.
- Keep a record of the work out so that you know what part of the cycle you are currently in.
- An even simpler approach to this workout would entail Workout 2 employing a squat, bent over row and barbell curl. That’s it!
- Perform a couple warm-up sets before the work out and perform your heaviest weight for only one set for each muscle group thereafter somewhere in the range of 5-8 repetitions until failure, e.g. bench press- 1 set, shoulder press- 1 set, close-grip bench press- 1 set, etc. If you do exceed the recommended repetition number range, which you may, then continue until you reach failure.
- I have detailed notes that tell me that at the end of four weeks, you will be “tapped out”. There is usually nothing in the tank and recovery will be difficult. Keep in mind that many factors can inhibit your ability to recover well. Your body functions as a whole to recover from good stress (exercise) and bad stress (strained relationships, lack of sleep, lack of proper nutrition, death of a loved one, negative stress of anything). It will eventually culminate with decreased gains. If you reach a tipping point where your progress has slowed down, you may need to back off from the gym and take a week off to recover.
- Expect an increase of *approximately* 10 pounds per compound movement per week and approximately 5 pounds for single joint

movements.

- If you are currently in a plateau state and having difficulty with your present work out routine, please take off a minimum of at least one week from the gym prior to starting this strength program.
- Keep your work outs to no more than a half hour. The sooner, the better.
- For abdominals, do sit-ups holding a plate or dumbbell directly over your head, aiming for a low number of repetitions (5-8) rather than the conventional high repetition pattern.
- If you are a woman, an adolescent or simply in an older age category, your ability to recover quickly is slightly diminished. You can perform Workout 1 in the first week and Workout 2 in the second and continue to alternate.

IX. Repetition Cadence

The cadence of a repetition is the speed at which a repetition is performed. The positive or ascending portion of a movement is what is referred to as the *concentric* contraction of the muscle. The negative or descending portion of a movement is what is referred to as the *eccentric* contraction of the muscle. The stationary portion, where a muscle simply holds the weight in a steady position is what is referred to as *static* contraction.

I have experimented with many different cadences such as a 2/2, 2/8 or a 2/5 where the weight is moved at a rate of 2 seconds in the concentric position and lowered for a count of 5 seconds in the eccentric position. It is the assumption that with an increased amount of stress on the eccentric portion of the movement will result in greater gains in size and strength. Unfortunately, this falls under the 'more' category of seeking improvement because it made no significant contributions.

I asked myself why lowering the weight at a prolonged rate did not contribute to improvement; after all, the eccentric (negative) portion is very important because it does strengthen tendons and connective tissue vital to strength. My conclusion is this: the negative aspects of life such as childhood traumas and wounds of the heart are far more difficult to recover from than the positive movements of life. I did not

say it was impossible only difficult.

When I did not see adequate progress in the following workout, I could only conclude that I had not recovered from the previous workout. That is always the case when progress stalls. The best formula for a proper rep cadence would be a 2/3 where the weight is lifted for approximately 2 seconds and lowered for a count of 3 seconds.

X. Diet

The subject of dieting has become a cultural phenomenon in America as well as grossly misunderstood. Many Americans do not have an adequate understanding as to how they became overweight. For starters, I would like to say that the term “diet” has driven connotations of difficulty, hardship or suffering. This should not be the case. Rather than refer to a term that has evolved into such a dirty word, I would prefer to refer to this activity as “learning how to eat properly.”

The typical American diet consists of a hamburger and a plate full of French fries. When eaten on a regular basis, this provides a formula for disaster. The components of this plate of food break down in the following percentages: protein (hamburger) 20%, starchy carbohydrates (French fries & buns) 50%, fat (grease) 30%. One of the most important components in keeping insulin from spiking is the protein portion which has been reduced to a mere 20% of the plate and the ratio of carbohydrates overwhelms any chance for it to stay down!

A healthier model would have the percentage switched to a consumption of 28% protein (or more), 55% fats and 17% carbohydrates. For more information on this diet model, you can find the actual study [here](#) or you can refer to its commentary by Dr. Eades [here](#).

Select your meals from each of the following foods:

Protein: fish such as salmon, tilapia, tuna, etc., beef, chicken, scrambled eggs, organic peanut butter, cheeses such as cottage cheese, cheddar, etc.

Carbohydrates: pasta, potatoes, fruits, rice, breads, etc.

Fats: butter, avacados, olive oil, olives, flax, nuts such as almonds, walnuts, etc.

Vegetables & Greens: asparagus, green beans, bell peppers, cucumbers, squash, onions, salad, etc. (corn is not a vegetable)

The key in selecting a meal is to keep your carbohydrate intake somewhere in the range of 50 to 70 grams of carbs per day. They should compose the least amount on your plate with everything else as much as you want. How you choose to spread this out during the course of the day is up to you. Try to eat at least four meals a day and drink at least 6-8 glasses of water a day. This increases metabolism.

Meal Examples

Breakfast: 2 scrambled eggs with cheese (cooked in olive oil)

Lunch: Turkey sandwich with cottage cheese and banana

Dinner: Chicken breast (cooked in olive oil) with parmesan cheese, asparagus (with butter), small portion of rice, olives or more cheese.

Snack (4th meal): almonds or a couple tablespoons of peanut butter or perhaps 2 or 3 more scrambled eggs.

Always remember to read labels and limit your total portion of carbohydrates. For proteins or fats found in butter, olive oil or almonds, eat until you are content. This goes for vegetables as well. They are fibrous and do not work the way that starchy carbs work. This is a great way to fill up.

Most assume that the greatest problem in the American diet is the excessive consumption of fats. This is only partly true. What is not said is that fat in itself is actually good for you. The omega-3 fatty acids found in fish, eggs, flax and olive oil are all examples of healthy contributors in areas such as: the immune system, cardiovascular system, liver health, joint lubrication and brain health to name a few. The truth is that fat does not make you fat. What has happened is a *perceived* notion that fat= fat. This is not true.

However, what is true is that fats in combination with an excessive amount of complex/starchy carbohydrates comprised of a total number of calories beyond what your basal metabolic rate has the ability to burn contributes to the storing of adipose tissue. The body simply recognizes an overabundance for which it does not need and stores it away for a time when food might become scarce.

Your body is designed to overcome the greatest odds and does not know when a famine may strike. Therefore, it will prepare itself with a storage of excess much like the model Joseph used to prepare before the famine in Egypt struck. When a starchy carbohydrate is eaten, it is broken down in the bloodstream into a simple sugar known as glucose. It is then stored as glycogen in muscle tissue and is used as a source of energy. It is used to help us talk, walk, think or in terms that we all understand, exercise.

Furthermore, to substantiate this occurrence, the recent find of the mummy of an ancient Egyptian queen, Hatshepsut², has shed much light on the subject. X-rays revealed severe tooth decay, probable diabetes, cancer and obesity from an excessive carbohydrate consumption. Even if you are in the range of 20 to 40 pounds overweight, you fall into high-risk categories with increased probabilities for each pound of weight such as the cancer or even diabetes that took Hatshepsut's life. This mummy is representative of where we will end if we do not alter our regular dietary intake.

A great number of rulers from the Ptolemaic dynasty were found to be extremely obese. One such famous ruler from this dynasty, Cleopatra, was also found with decayed teeth and supposedly obese but was portrayed, as all were, as slender in statue or in hieroglyphics. It was common for Egyptian rulers who may have bitterly engaged former rulers to erase their legacy by hiding the mummified remains, as was the case with Hatshepsut. Just as it was common to attempt to erase the history of a predecessor or the perceived inferiority of an obesity factor, this is also, why we will never see in some sort of artistic depiction, the God of Israel defeating the Egyptian nation. However, what they tried to hide through their artistry was found in the reality of their remains. The culprit was a diet high in carbohydrate consumption.

When an excessive amount of carbohydrates are consumed beyond

our basal metabolic rate, the body recognizes this as an overabundance and consequently stores the excess carbohydrates as an alternative source of energy, fat tissue. It reacts this way as a means to overcome a harsh environment when food is scarce. God is a magnificent designer! The body utilizes only what is *necessary* and converts the rest into fat to prepare itself for times when food may not be so abundant and carbohydrates are scarce. If we have unwanted weight, it is a telltale sign that the body had no need for it and we consumed more than what was adequate.

The body will use four different forms of energy in order to overcome: **1) carbohydrates 2) fat 3) muscle and 4) protein.** The object is to give the body the tools to use fat rather than carbohydrates, protein or muscle tissue as a chief energy source. Always be sure to take in some form of protein with each meal to protect and build muscle tissue. This will also assist in the stabilization and suppression of insulin levels spiking dreadfully high. This is the next important step in understanding how the body functions.

Insulin is a hormone that carries glucose in the bloodstream and assists in storing it as glycogen in muscle tissue. When insulin levels are kept continuously at high levels, constantly using energy in the form of glucose and glycogen, the body draws from this steady source of energy. Now, here is the goal: to switch energy sources from glycogen, stored because of excess carbohydrate consumption, to fat tissue, from excess starchy/complex carbohydrates and fats.

When insulin levels are either low or absent, the body can then utilize fat as a sustaining source of energy. In order to do this, starchy carbohydrate intake must be reduced to approximately 50 grams to 100 grams per day. This is the low carbohydrate approach. For more information on this subject, I would recommend *Protein Power*, by Drs. Michael and Mary Dan Eades³. Although I do not subscribe to the premise of Paleolithic man, it is a great source of information on how to combat the high carbohydrate syndrome.

I want to state for the record that I am in no way ascribing to anyone with obesity issues any sort of correlation with having sin in your life. There are loads of whacky theologies out there that produce a myriad of condemnation in the lives of so many and I would like to be the voice of encouragement here. It is possible to be physically fit and

lose unwanted weight.

We all come from different backgrounds and were either taught very poor eating habits or have succumbed to the emotional investment in having found a false comfort in food. It is the latter that gets us into so much trouble. Unfortunately, it delivers a bad return on the initial investment. God designed the body to utilize only what is necessary in accord with our ability (metabolism) to spend the calories that are consumed. If, for instance, we only burn 1500 calories a day and take in a total of 2000 calories a day on a high carbohydrate-eating regimen, this will eventually catch up with us and lead to our obesity.

XI. Calorie Burning Efficiency

I had recently read the advertisement for a “cardio” exercise DVD in which this individual claimed to be able to burn 500 calories in a half an hour. This is just simply absurd. Much of the claims of the “cardio” world center around the myth that more calories are burned this way. If God had designed us to burn this many calories in a half an hour, we would be dead if applied on a grander scale.

Let me illustrate. Imagine Jacob's twelve sons rising early in the morning to harvest their grain with their sickles in hand, swinging at the stalks all day long. Now let's just assume that they worked a straight eight hour day. In one hour they would have burned a 1000 calories and in eight hours, a grand total of 8000 calories! The food that would need to be consumed to support these activities would have been outrageous.

Can you imagine laboring in the hot sun where you would have been swinging, moving and shuffling around only to burn such an enormous amount of calories that you would have been dead at the end of the day? Even holocaust survivors who were at the extreme end of malnutrition and forced into extreme work conditions simply would not have survived at a calorie burning rate such as this claim.

The best method for burning calories is simply to add more muscle. Muscle tissue requires additional calories for optimum support. The body will always acknowledge muscle tissue as its most valuable resource. Therefore, in order to preserve muscle, the body will eliminate anything else that the muscle tissue demands, especially fat in the form of excess calories. For more on this, please read the following [study](#) in its .pdf format.

On a personal note, I can tell you that my own wife has lost approximately 30 pounds by doing absolutely no “cardio” work, changing her diet and working out only one time per week with as little as 2-3 exercises done until failure. Again, doing more only adds to our problems.

My hope is that the information contained in this ebook will encourage you in your workout endeavors and strengthen your spiritual walk with God. We gain so much insight when we can recognize God-designed patterns that he has created for our benefit in order to either understand or reinforce the truth in something else. God bless in all of your 20% efforts!

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- 1 Mike Mentzer, *Heavy Duty Journal* (Published 199u, M. Mentzer ([United States) 58 pgs.
 - 2 John Noble Wilford, "Tooth May Have Solved Mummy Mystery," *The New York Times*, June 27, 2007
 - 3 Drs. Michael and Mary Dan Eades, *Protein Power* (New York: Bantam Books, 1996), 298 pgs.