

Winter 2018

THE DEAF MESSENGER



“Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things happening, you know that the end is near. It is right at the door” (Matthew 24:32, 33)

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The purpose of this magazine is to inform the deaf reader about such topics as practical Christian living; basic Bible truths; and what the past, present, and future historical events mean to each of us. This magazine attempts to cover spiritual, mental, and physical aspects in its articles and columns.

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Is Jesus Coming Back Soon?

By John Blake



GOODSALT CLIPART COLLECTION

For nearly 2,000 years since Jesus left, Christians have looked forward to Jesus' second coming. When Jesus left his disciples, an angel told the disciples that Jesus would come again. It would be in a similar way to how He was leaving. Many believe that Jesus' return is near, but Jesus still has not returned. Does the Bible give us signs that point to His return?

If we look carefully through the Bible, there are different types of signs of Jesus' soon return: Physical Signs, General Signs, Signs from Prophecy and Spiritual Signs.

Physical Signs: Jesus tells us in Matthew 24:

29, 30, NIV: "Right after the terrible suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened. The moon will not shine. The stars will fall from the sky. The heavenly bodies will be shaken." On May 19, 1780, darkness came over a wide area of the northeast of the United States. No one has been able to give a satisfactory reason for it. Surely it was a fulfilling this prophecy. That night, the moon came up looking like blood. On November 13, 1833, there was a huge meteoric shower over many US eastern states that lasted about four hours. Someone described the sky as looking like it was on fire. Some people thought that the end

of the world had come.

Earthquakes: While there have always been earthquakes, we are told that there have been over 10,000 strong ones of over 6 on the Richter scale since 1900. Comparing the first three months of 1979, with the first 3 months of 2014, there was a 100% increase in the number of 7 strength earthquakes during those 3 months.

General Signs: In James 5:4, NlrV we read: "There will be miraculous signs in the sun, moon and stars. The nations of the earth will be in terrible pain. They will be puzzled by the roaring and tossing of the sea. Terror will make people faint. They will be worried about what is happening in the world. . . ." Added to the physical signs is the message that people will become terribly worried about what is happening in the world. When we look at the wars that have gone on (and never seem to stop) since 1914, and see the huge build-up of atomic, chemical and biological weapons, it makes us stop

and take notice. If anyone explodes all the bombs now, we could get a nuclear night with most people dead. With the uncertainty of things in North Korea, the famous "Nuclear Clock" has moved nearer to midnight. Midnight means the widespread use of atomic weapons!

Moral Corruption: Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:11-3, NirV: "Here is what I want you to know. There will be terrible times in the last days. People will love themselves. They will love money. They will brag and be proud. They will tear others down. They will not obey their parents. They won't be thankful or holy. They won't love others. They won't forgive others. They will tell lies about people. They will be out of control. . . . They will love what pleases them instead of loving God." There has been no stop in sinning since Jesus was here. But it seems as if sin is becoming more and more widespread, and harder and harder to resist. Sin influences us through the TV, videos, Internet, magazine and even our cell phones and

emails. Many parents are very worried about all these influences on the characters of their children! It almost seems not possible to properly protect our families from the pull of sin coming at us from all directions!

A Huge Increase in Knowledge: We are told that back in 1900, the total amount of “knowledge” would have taken 100 years to double. Now, general knowledge is doubling about every 13 months. Daniel 12:4 says “Even to the time of the end . . . knowledge shall be increased.” That text may first mean spiritual knowledge growing fast, but it could also mean general knowledge. Many textbooks are now almost out of date by the time they are published. We all have to go to the Internet to get the latest knowledge in our studies.

Prophetic Signs: The 1,260-year prophecy talked about in both Daniel and Revelation, ended in 1798. This date is commonly considered the beginning of the “Time of the End.” The longest prophecy of

the Bible, the 2,300 years, ended in 1844. No other time prophecy goes past that date. Many Bible students have combined this prophecy with a study of the earthly and heavenly sanctuary and have decided that since 1844 Jesus is now in Heaven in a work of judging. God is showing the universe who will be ready to go to heaven with Him at His second coming. God cannot take sinners from earth to heaven and so all the universe must know who is safe to save! Soon that special investigation will end, and Jesus will come!

Spiritual Signs: It is important to know that a growing number of churches are now saying that the Protestant Reformation is over. They say that we need to work closely with the Catholic church. This sounds wonderful and loving, but when you investigate deeper, this Roman church still believes in purgatory, confession to a priest, and that the body of Jesus is actually created right there during the Catholic mass. These doctrines are not

supported by the Bible. But the doctrines are being used to help to bring cooperation among many Christian churches. The religious world is now becoming prepared for the final events before Jesus return.

Sunday Observance: In many places the world is not keeping Sunday holy in any way. But, there is a growing movement to set aside Sunday as a religious holy day (or holiday). The present pope has made this very clear in his recent special document on the Environment. Prophecy tells us that one day in the future all people of the world will be forced to keep Sunday. If they refuse, they can suffer an economic boycott (Revelation 13:17) when they can't buy or sell if they do not have the "Mark of the Beast". You may wish to study this topic further as it will be a very important issue coming up before Jesus returns.

Jesus' Words: In Luke 17: 26, 27, NirV Jesus told us: "Remember how it was in the days of Noah. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes. People were

eating and drinking. They were getting married. They were giving their daughters to be married. They did all those things right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all."

The flood destroyed the pre-flood world. Only eight people went into Noah's ark and were saved. The Bible tells us that there will be a final time when God withdraws His Holy Spirit from all the world. But the Holy Spirit continue to be with His own small group of faithful people. There will be the seven final plagues (calamities) that will bring terrible physical problems to the world—much worse than at any time before. Right now, it seems that God is having the four angels of Revelation (Revelation 7:3) holding back the winds of terrible trouble until God's people are sealed in their foreheads as HIS faithful children. (That is a very important topic for more study!)

Conclusion: If you only look at one or two signs of Jesus return, you might

reject the evidence and say that these things have always happened. But, when you put all the signs of the second coming together, you see that the evidence is building stronger and stronger that something important is about to happen. Fulfilled signs lead us to believe that we are very near to Jesus' return. We must not set dates, as some people have done before. We should not say that surely Jesus will return in 2, 5, 10 or even 20 years. If we do this and time goes longer than we expect, then people may start doubting Jesus' return. Jesus will return—but in His timing!

For me personally, the strongest evidences of Jesus soon return are the signs in the Protestant/Catholic world. What has been predicted is happening before our eyes. Put that together with the great emphasis that Jesus gave about the gospel going to all the world, and then Jesus would return. The gospel is going now in so many new and wonderful ways through satellite, Internet,

cell phones—plus person to person.

I desire for Jesus to return and bring an end to sin and sickness and death. I want to go to heaven and be with all those saved who have lived since Creation! I would love to go for a walk with my guardian angel and have this angel tell me of many times he has worked with me to help others, or even protected me from a serious accident!

And now, you and I can have a part in helping people get ready for heaven. For example: You can tell people about the 3ADM web site: www.3adm.org and the HOPE Television web site: www.hopedeafchannel.org or the 3ADM Bible lesson site: www.deafbibleschool.com

These sites can help you grow spiritually and help you share the wonderful news of Jesus soon return with other people. You can help fulfill one of the last signs of Jesus' soon return—the gospel going to all the world, including the World of the Deaf!

John Blake is the Gospel Outreach Deaf Ministry Director who lives in Clive, Alberta, Canada.

Who Stays in Hell Longer— Cain or Hitler?

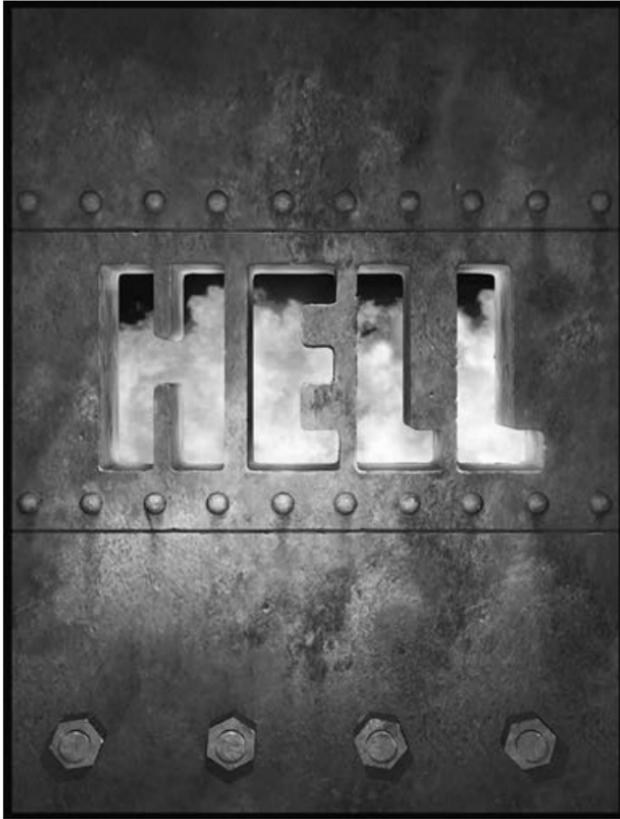
By George Belser

Adolf Hitler was one of the world's most evil persons. Hitler killed more than six million innocent Jewish people. If you were the judge, which person should suffer more? Of course, you would say Hitler. He should suffer longer because he killed more people than Cain did. But Cain lived and died almost 6,000 years

Many people believe there is an everlasting fire of hell. They believe hell is a place where wicked people suffer forever as punishment for their sins. An interesting question would be this, who should suffer in hell longer, Cain or Hitler? Cain was the world's first murderer, and he killed only one person who was his brother, Abel.

before Hitler did. Then Cain would be in hell suffering for 6,000 years before Hitler died. Then this would mean that Cain would suffer longer than Hitler. Would this be fair? Of course not!

Many religious people, philosophers, and Bible students have argued about the subject of hell for



centuries. A famous French philosopher, Voltaire, once said that he became an atheist (a person who does not believe in God) because he heard a minister speak about hell. My grandfather heard a minister preach fire and brimstone, so he was against religion. Most people have the popular idea that good people go to heaven and wicked people go to hell.

Actually, the Holy Bible does not agree with the idea. The question, “Who stays in hell longer—Cain or Hitler?” is moot (useless) and has no value. Many people do not understand the real meaning of the word hell in the Bible. The word hell comes from four original Hebrew and Greek words. The Hebrew word is sheol. Sheol means darkness, dark pit, tomb, or grave. The Greek words are hades, tartarus, and gehenna. Hades and tartarus mean a place of darkness, pit, tomb, or grave. The Greek hades and tartarus are the same as the Hebrew sheol. Gehenna means the burning of garbage in the Valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem.

These four words do not show a picture of a burning place for wicked people to suffer forever as punishment for their sins. Part of the good news of the gospel is that salvation is for all people who accept Christ’s sacrifice on the cross as forgiveness of their sins.

Also, people get the wrong idea about hell from the word everlasting. The original word of everlasting is came from the Greek word *aion*. *Aion* means unmeasured time, or a relative length of unknown time. For example, a slave continues being a slave “forever” until he dies or until he receives freedom from his master. Read Jude 7 for example about Sodom and Gomorrah suffering punishment of eternal fire. But we know that these cities are not burning now. Sodom and Gomorrah are buried under the Dead Sea. Both cities were destroyed by fire sent from heaven many, many years ago.

Now, you may wonder about the words “the lake of fire” that you read in the Bible, such as in Revelation

20:10, 14, 15 and 2 Peter 3:10-12. Yes, in the end, a fire will come down from heaven to burn the earth. Everything that has been polluted by sin will be completely destroyed. Satan himself will be consumed (destroyed) by fire at last. The Bible does not show that Satan will suffer in hellfire forever.

Malachi 4:3 explains that saints will “tread [walk] down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of their feet.” And in Ezekiel 28:17, 18, NKJV, God tells Satan, “I cast [throw] you to the ground. . . . Therefore I brought fire from your midst; it [the fire] devoured [destroyed] you. And I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.” To ashes means that the fire will come to an end, and everything that is burned up will become ashes.

One more question about hell and eternal fire. Why does the English translation of the Bible use of the word eternal describe hell, fire, or destruction! Good examples of this meaning are in Mark 3:29 (eternal damnation);

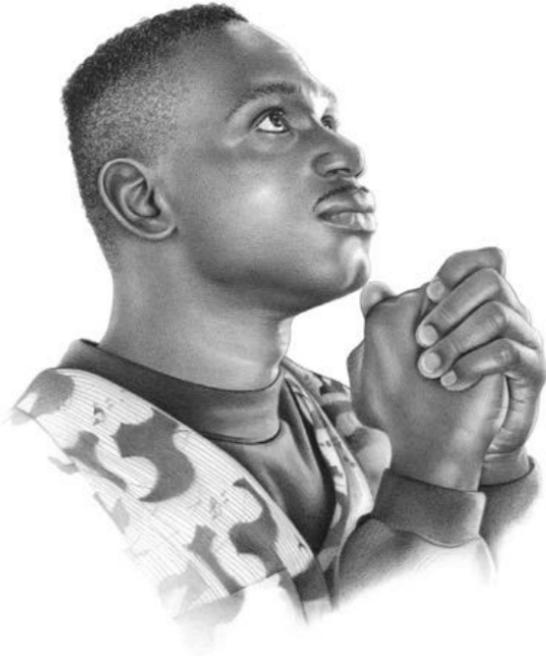
2 Thessalonians 1:9 (everlasting destruction); and Matthew 25:46 (everlasting punishment). These words talk about results, not about events that last forever. Who could believe in a God who would enjoy watching wicked people suffer forever in the white-hot hellfire that would continue burning throughout eternity? Certainly not our God!

God is full of love. God shows His love by sending His Son (Jesus) to die in our place (Read 1 John 4:8, 9). Jesus died a cruel death on the cross to save us and to have our sins forgiven. What made Jesus go through all this suffering with a willing heart? Why, of course, it was love! (Romans 5:8, 10). Jesus died so that we do not need to die and that you can have the gift of eternal life. Yes, you can live forever if you choose to believe in and accept Jesus as your Savior (John 3:16; 1 John 5:11-14). So, how about accepting Jesus' offer to be your Savior today!

George Belser is a retired Deaf pastor who lives in Vancouver, WA.

Silent Prayers: Praying without Stopping

By Margie English



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Search me, O God, and
know my heart!

Try me and know my
thoughts! Psalms 139:23,
ERV

A silent prayer, or praying
silently, is an important way
of communicating with God.
We pray without signing
in different ways, and in
different places. A silent
prayer shows what is in
our hearts. We pray silently
when we think about God

and talk with him about
things that happen in our
lives. Silent prayers that
follow God's plan keep our
minds and hearts open to
God.

Can we pray when we
are doing something at
the same time? Yes, we
can. In 1 Thessalonians
5:17, Paul writes. "Pray
without ceasing." The word
"ceasing" means the same

as “stopping”. So, Paul is saying, “Pray without stopping.” How can you pray without stopping? Does this mean praying all the time? How do we pray all the time? With silent prayers, we call on God for help with someone or something important in any event.

God knows what we are thinking or feeling about something. A silent prayer is our heart’s voice. In Psalms 139:2, King David sang: “You know my thoughts from far away.” When saying a silent prayer, we are talking in our heads, creating a picture or a feeling in our minds. Sometimes, when we are at a social event, we bow our heads for a minute of silence. We do this to remember someone who has died, or to pray about a sad event. We may be praying silently for someone we are talking with, or doing something with.

For example, we may pray silently for the Holy Spirit to join us when we watch someone talk about Jesus and His love for us, or we may be thinking about selfish things.

With silent prayer, we search our hearts about what we do or see, and then give them to God. We ask for forgiveness, and ask for help in changing our ways. God promises us that when we reach out for God, he is with us. “Come near to God and he will come near to you” (James 4:8). With sin in our hearts, we need God near us to help guide our thoughts and behavior so that we walk in God’s path.

We can pray silently all the time without stopping. With a silent prayer, we call on God to help us, and the people around us, to receive His message. Without saying words out loud, we call on God to help us say the right words, and to lead us away from sin. Praying silently all the time keeps us with God all the time.



Margie English is a Deaf writer who lives in Vienna, VA.

Religion in a Box

By Amanda Colgan



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I would like to share with you what my Pastor gave a sermon on. If you were to package your faith, what would you put in a box? The Bible? How about a model of a church building? Or a research paper defending against abortion? For many people, religion comes with a book of truth or a list of behaviors we should

practice. At dictionary.com, religion is defined as “a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects: the Christian religion; the Buddhist religion.”

If faith is nothing more than beliefs or behaviors, no wonder people peek in the box of faith and say it is

empty. Jesus told a parable known as the Prodigal Son. This story is a great example of the core of faith. In the story of the Prodigal Son, a wealthy father has two sons. The younger son leaves home and spends all of his father's inheritance on prostitutes, parties, etc. He hits rock bottom and lands a job taking care of pigs. That is when the son begins to wonder if his father might forgive him of his sins. Let us notice here how the son understands sin. Please read Luke 15:17-19 in your Bible. Here we see the son plans to confess to his father, "I have sinned." How had he sinned? He had bad behavior. He was a bad boy. In Luke 15:20, 21 we read that the son comes back home and tells the father that he has sinned against God and against the father. The son exclaims that he is not worthy to be his son. The father's response to the rebellious son is in Luke 15: 22-27, please read it.

The father makes no mention of the son's bad behaviors. The father understands faith in a

different way. His love for his son is unconditional no matter if his behavior is good or bad. Now my point here is this: I believe the major point of faith for God is not about behaving for God. It is about being with God, being with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let's continue with the story of the Prodigal Son. In Luke 15:28-30 we read about the other, older son. "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' The older brother felt superior because he has shown excellent behavior, while his brother had behaved very badly. In his mind, he deserved better treatment because he never sinned or did any bad things the other

son did.

But notice the father's response in Luke 15:31, 32 " 'My son, the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' " The father does not excuse the younger son's bad behavior but he was concerned about a relationship. He tells the older brother "You never left me; our relationship was never in jeopardy, so what is your issue?" The father's concern was not with bad behavior. It was about the broken relationship.

Many of us have the wrong picture of God; a God of wrath who is waiting to squash us if we fall into sin. God is not like that. He loves us so much. He grieves when we fall. God is like the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. God has open arms waiting to embrace the sinner. Sin is not about falling; it is about falling away from Him. That's the big difference. It is about living outside of God's presence,

being separated from Jesus Christ.

The Christian faith is not about behaving for Jesus; it is being with Jesus Christ. What about practicing of faith? Isn't there something the Christian should do? Yes! The behavior God expects from us is this: to remain in His presence. That is what I would put in my box; friendship with Jesus and finding constant pleasure in company of Jesus.

James 4: 8: "Come near to God, and he will come near to you."



Amanda Colgan is a Deaf homemaker who lives in Fiskdale, MA.

Patience

By Francisca Trexler

Webster's Dictionary describes the meaning of patience. Patience means the ability to go through with what is difficult or disagreeable without complaining. For example: the teacher's patience is being tested this year by several parents who seem to have no interest in their children's education. Another example: I do not have the patience to wait in the line for hours just to buy a ticket.

It is a fact that we often know that we do not have much patience in our lives. We should have more patience, especially with the children and the elderly (older people). We often notice that young people do not have patience with the elderly and the young children. But the young people will later grow older to be like the elderly. I am sure that they will realize that they should have more patience with the children and the elderly.

According to the Bible,

patience is one of the most important virtues in the Christian's life. Nothing else is better than patience. There are some Bible verses about patience. Proverbs 25:15, "With patience, you can make anyone change their thinking, even a King. Gentle speech is very powerful" (ERV).

Peter saw Jesus who watched him after he denied Him three times. Peter saw Jesus' patience and love. He was struck in his heart for denying Him in front of Him and remembered Jesus' prophecy about him doing it. Shocked with sorrow, Peter ran and cried bitterly because of Jesus' forgiveness with patience. But later Peter learned to be patient like Jesus, and he also became a powerful preacher among the people. Peter was patient with the people and encouraged them to give their lives to Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Luke 21:19: "By your endurance [patience] you will

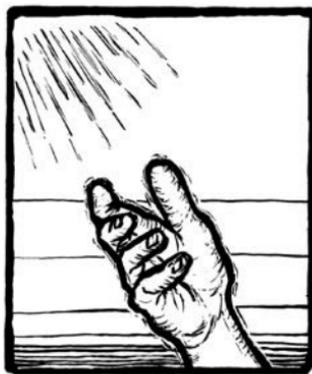
gain your lives” (ERV). God wants us to have pure lives, kindness, love and patience. We need to give our lives to Jesus Christ; then the wonderful Holy Spirit will work in our lives. We are continually growing in Christ as long as we keep our eyes on Him daily. Jesus Christ can help us all to have patience. See Galatians 5:22, 23: “But the Spirit produces [creates] the fruit of love, joy, peace, *patience*, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. There is no law that says these are wrong” (ERV) (with emphasis). We can ask Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to create in us to have all the fruits, including patience. Without Jesus, we will not make it.

Proverbs 16:32: “It is better to be patient than to fight. It is better to control your temper than to take a city [destroy the whole city]” (NCV).

Our lives need patience for everything. For example: figuring out math problems, writing stories, crocheting a blanket or doing certain things. All these things

require patience. Without having patience, we will not succeed in many things of our lives. Patience saves us from much trouble and fighting.

I would like to close with a good example of the patience of Thomas Edison, who was an inventor. While experimenting with the light bulb, he failed over one hundred light bulbs before he succeeded with a light bulb that had the right material that would give light for a long time. That is a good example of having patience in trying over and over until you have achieved your goal. It is important to have patience in our lives like Jesus’.



Francisca Trexler is the Assistant Director of Three Angels Deaf Ministries, who lives in Lanham, MD.

Choosing and Using Olive Oil

By Sue Radd

Olives—and their oil—have been used since biblical times. But they became more popular in modern society after it was found that it is possible to eat a high-fat diet and still have a low risk of heart disease, as long as you use the right fat to flavor a lot of plant foods, such as in the Mediterranean diet.

The pioneering Seven Countries Study showed that people in Crete (Greece) ate 40 percent of their calories from fat, but the rate of heart disease was one-thirtieth (1/30) of Finland, which had a similar level of fat intake! The difference? The Cretans used large amounts of extra virgin olive oil. The fat in Finnish diets came mostly from animal foods.

There are many interesting flavors of olive oil—fruity, peppery, buttery—but the best kinds to buy are cold-pressed, extra-virgin olive oils in dark bottles or cans. These have more than 45 different phytonutrients with antioxidant properties. This is thought to be the main reason olive oil is linked with less heart disease and breast cancer.

“Extra-virgin” and “virgin” olive oils have the highest content of phytonutrients.

But “olive oil” and “light olive oil” have few or none as they have been refined to different degrees and the phytonutrients have been lost. That is why they also have a lighter color and flavor. Light olive oils are also not lower in calories as many people believe.

“Cold pressed” (or cold extracted) means no heat treatment has been used to draw out the oil from the fruit, preserving phytonutrients.

To get more antioxidants, use extra-virgin olive oil raw to flavor salads, or on steamed vegetables, such as asparagus or endive (Greeks also add lemon juice).

You can cook with olive oil, but studies show that the higher the temperature and the longer the cooking time, the more antioxidants you lose. Stewing is better than shallow frying, especially over extended periods. If you choose to deep-fry, extra-virgin olive oil is more stable than vegetable oils, as it has a high oleic acid content, and the antioxidants further slow down harmful changes that occur with heating.

Sue Radd is a nutritionist who is the award-winning author of “The Breakfast Book” and coauthor of “Eat to Live.” www.sueradd.com

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