

Clean and Unclean Foods

“Well, the Lord made all things clean; that is the clear teaching given to Peter. Beside this, Paul said everything we eat is sanctified as long as we pray over it.” Confusion reigns in the pseudo-Christian world today over the clear Biblical teaching of clean and unclean foods; over what is good for us to eat and what is not! The most novel idea of all is still an option; let us allow the Bible to speak for itself!

The original diet given to man is found in the story of creation. Genesis 1:29 is so simple and clear as to the optimum diet for man. “ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” Man’s original diet consisted of fruits, nuts, and grains. The major reason for disease that is flooding our world is because humanity has forsaken God’s original plan and has carved out their own! But you say, “Wait a minute, the Bible says that I can eat clean meats. What do you say to that?” I’m glad you asked. Man’s diet changed when sin entered. Genesis 3: 19 declares, “Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;” Sin would bring decay in man. The human body would begin to break down and the only thing in creation to build it up again would be vegetables. Thus, after sin entered the world, vegetables were enjoined on man as necessary in the diet.

Up until the time of the flood, there is no indication in the Bible of God condoning the eating of flesh. It is also at the time of the flood where God specifically distinguishes certain animals as clean and others as unclean. After the flood, God gives to Noah permission to incorporate the use of clean animal flesh into his diet. “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” Genesis 9:3, 4

With this first mention of eating clean flesh comes also something that is always overlooked. When eating clean flesh, the blood **must** be drained. The blood stream carries the nutrients to all parts of the body and the blood stream takes waste to the elimination organs. When we consume flesh with blood, we are stressing our system to throw off and eliminate not only our own waste, but also the waste of the animal. This additional stress and burden that we place upon the awesome human body is one major reason for all heart related diseases.

When God gave the go ahead to eat flesh, notice it was right after the flood when the earth had just been ransacked by the flood! Nothing was growing; everything was destroyed. In those circumstances, God told Noah that it was all right to eat flesh. Eating flesh was never for man’s best. It was allowed under extreme circumstances. After man was told he could eat flesh, there is an immediate drop off in the life span of humanity. Over several generations, we can see that life expectancy went from over 900 years all the way down to a few hundred years. Flesh was given under dire circumstances, but was never the optimum diet plan for mankind!!!

By the time of the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, we have also the first detailed delineation of the clean and unclean flesh items. This list is found in Leviticus 11. One of the obvious animals considered clean is cows. The Bible says, “Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven footed, *and* cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.” Leviticus 11:3 Some of the unclean flesh foods include pigs, vultures, rabbits, and shrimp. “And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you. And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you. And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he *is* unclean to you. Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they *are* unclean to you.” Lev. 11:5-8

Oh sure, but those health laws were all done away with at the cross. Peter was clearly shown that all animals are now clean and we can eat anything we want including pigs! Well, that story being referred to is found in Acts 10. The chapter centers around a Roman centurion named Cornelius. He is given a vision, told to send for the apostle Peter who would teach Cornelius the plan of salvation through faith in Christ alone. While Cornelius’s men are going to get Peter in Joppa, Peter has a dream. In the dream, Peter is shown all manner of animals, clean and unclean, and the voice in the dream tells Peter to kill and eat them. Peter responds by saying that he has never eaten anything common or unclean. The voice then says, “What God has cleansed, thou shall not call it common or unclean.” After Peter goes through this same vision a few times, he awakes and the Bible says, “While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.” Acts 10: 19, 20

At this juncture, Peter has seen a vision of all manner of animals, God has told him to eat them, and Peter has refused saying, “I’ve never eaten anything common or unclean.” While Peter is pondering the vision, the Holy Spirit tells him that three men are coming for him and he is to go with them. Peter goes with the messengers of Cornelius and arrives at his home in Caesarea. When Cornelius bows to him, Peter tells him to get up because he is just a man and then Peter says, “And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; **but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.**” Acts 10:28

Did you hear what he just said? The vision of all the animals in Acts 10 HAS NOTHING to do with dietary laws and what a person should and should not eat!! The great issue in the first century had everything to do with Jewish exclusiveness and bigotry; it had nothing to do with changing health laws that are for man’s best!! The Jews had so isolated themselves from other nationalities that they couldn’t even go to someone else’s home!! The vision to Peter began to break down the wall and let the disciples realize that the message of Christ was to go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people!!

Fine, I’ll give you that one, but Paul said that all food is sanctified when we pray over it. Every time I eat my pork and beans, I pray over it and the Lord gets rid of the disease in the meat and I’m good to go. Is that really what Paul is saying? Let’s take a closer look. “Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be

received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” 1 Timothy 4:3-5 First of all, the word for meats is *bromata* which simply means food in general. It doesn't mean flesh food! Paul says there would be people who would forbid marriage and the eating of things that are good that God gave in creation for our blessing! Paul goes on to declare that what God gave in creation in man's original diet is all good and none should be refused. Man's original diet in creation has nothing in it that isn't for man's best! We can be assured that the Lord's blessing will rest upon those who eat from God's original plan! This is all Paul is saying here!

Paul is not sanctifying any unclean foods. Pork and shrimp are still left out of the equation! All right, fine! Maybe, the unclean meats are still unclean. Sure, unclean food is still bad for you, but I can still eat my steaks and burgers! Based on the Biblical guidelines, one can; however, do not forget to eat flesh that is bloodless! Before closing, let us look at the clean meat for a minute. Have you ever heard of mad cow's disease? How about salmonella?

Some of the worst diseases today are being associated with clean meats. Notice “Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), commonly known as mad cow disease, is a fatal neurodegenerative disease (encephalopathy) in cattle that causes a spongy degeneration in the brain and spinal cord...The disease may be most easily transmitted to human beings by eating food contaminated with the brain, spinal cord or digestive tract of infected carcasses.” This is scary business. Cows eat other ground up animals, known as rendering, and this causes them to get a neuro disease whereby their brain and spinal cord are attacked. Humans then consume the animal as food and get the same disease. Amazing isn't it that cows get 'Mad Cow Disease' while humans get something called Alzheimer's! Cow flesh isn't very clean anymore, uh?

How about diseases found commonly in chickens? Have you ever heard of E. coli, botulism, and salmonella? These are three very common diseases found in poultry. With the commercialization of poultry, the cramped quarters, lack of exercise, shooting up with hormones to have faster growth; all these things say that disease in poultry will only increase over time.

Well, Jesus ate fish! In a different time, when commercial, oil tankers were not spilling fuel into major bodies of water, Jesus ate clean fish. In a different time, when sewage was not being disposed of in major bodies of water, Jesus ate fish. With cholesterol levels hitting all time highs in people, isn't it time we examined the sources of this bad cholesterol? Amazing how people stop eating chicken and fish, and immediately, their high cholesterol counts disappear!!!

When nothing else was ready to eat, the Lord said that humanity could eat flesh without blood. With all the varieties of food available, with so many options open to us: is it not time we returned to the original diet of man given in Eden? The diseases in the animal population make even clean meats unsafe for consumption today. A plant based diet was God's original plan and is still the best plan for humanity today.

