

# Scripturally Clean Food

Many believe that all food is now okay to eat. They point to what Yahshua said and what Peter saw. Here is what the Bible says.

Not only does the Bible reveal what our behavior should be in this world, but we also are told what foods are appropriate to maintain proper health and vigor.

"A sound mind in a sound body," is an ancient cry of the Greeks that holds true today. If our body is in good health, we feel good, our vigor is improved, our thinking is clearer, and our disposition more pleasant.

Food has a direct bearing on our health and well-being. The food we eat is the fuel needed to keep us going just as gasoline is needed to fuel the engine of an automobile and provide needed power. Water, kerosene, milk, or orange juice won't work in a car. The human body also requires the right foods for good health.

## Good Nutrients Removed

Food processors have educated many through their advertising programs of the better nourishment in eating whole grains. White bread sales continue to fall as shoppers become aware of the wholesome virtues of whole grains. In the past the wheat germ was removed from the flour because it tends to turn the bread rancid in a shorter time. But the very vitality of the wheat kernel is found in the wheat germ!

The outer husk of wheat known as bran is usually also removed from the kernel in order to mill a pure white flour. Such flour is nothing more than the white starch of the wheat stripped of its precious nutrients.

To overcome this, many bread makers add various synthetic vitamins and amino compounds to their white flour, labeling it "enriched bread."

Bread and breakfast cereal makers often emphasize that their products contain "fiber." If they would utilize the whole grain in wheat, barley, oats, rye, and corn, there would be no need to add sawdust or other cellulose for dietary bulk.

## Scripturally Clean Foods

Not every plant or animal placed here on earth is given us for food. Thorns and thistles came as a curse for disobedience, Genesis 3:18. Neither were all animals placed on earth as potential food for mankind. Some act as living garbage cans.

There are those who believe that we should eat only fruit, grain, nuts and vegetables and no animal flesh. There is no clear proscription against eating animal flesh. In fact, it was commanded that Israel partake of lamb at Passover.

The Bible allows animal flesh to be eaten today. Two entire chapters, Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, are devoted to clarifying which creatures are clean food and acceptable for us. Read them now. Our Savior Himself, our example, ate flesh, as well as fruits and vegetables. Ancient Israel sacrificed animals to Yahweh and the offeror was allowed to eat the flesh of that animal.

A number of people understand that grain, nuts, fruits, and vegetables comprised man's diet before the flood. Genesis 9:3 indicates that animal flesh was eaten after the flood when the windows of heaven were opened and apparently earth's climatic conditions were then altered. It

may be that the earth will revert to this prior condition when it is made new, and there is no more sea (Rev. 21:1), when carnivorous animals will eat grass like the ox, Isaiah 11:7.

### **Aren't All Animals Good to Eat?**

But, didn't the Savior cleanse all food in Mark 7? Can't we eat everything today? We are given both spiritual and physical laws for our own good. Spiritual laws deal primarily with our relationship to our Heavenly Father and our behavior toward our fellow man. Physical laws are also given us to avoid sickness, pain, disease, disability and even physical death. Laws dealing with our health are not necessarily spiritual laws.

The Savior was making the point of the spiritual defilement in Mark 7:14-23 through the analogy of physical food. It is not the food *in itself* that defiles, but the evil retained in one's heart and mind. By entertaining thoughts of disobedience, one is soon moved to committing acts of sin.

It is important that we recognize that the Savior was speaking of disobeying the Ten Commandments. His emphasis was not on physical food or physical health, but on thinking and acting clean.

### **Clean and Unclean Before Flood**

Noah already knew the difference between clean and unclean animals, taking into the ark seven of the clean and two of the unclean, Genesis 7:8. When the Savior died, nothing He said or did changed the unclean to clean. Neither did He change the human digestive system. The clean and unclean principle is still with us, for at the end of the age, those who eat of the unclean like the hog are under a curse, Isaiah 66:17.

Since the time of Noah not merely the green herbs are a part of man's diet, but clean fish, clean fowl and clean animals are as well, Genesis 9:3 and Leviticus 11. Notice these verses do not say every animal upon earth was given for food.

Man usually knows which plants are safe as food, but he is not always aware of which animal flesh is proper. Yahweh therefore has determined for us which meats are clean.

### **How We Know What Is Clean**

Yahweh wants His people to live clean, entertain clean thoughts, and eat clean foods so that we can be a clean people and an example to the world.

Certain animals such as swine, dogs and shellfish are earth's garbage collectors. They consume carrion (corpses of dead animals). We are not to eat these.

Most humans are repulsed at the thought of eating skunks, rats, lizards or snakes, but think eating pork is permissible. Swine may have a split hoof, but they lack the extra stomach and are unclean.

Neither are we to eat the carnivorous or flesh-eating creatures such as the cat family of lions and tigers. The clean animals are those which eat grasses and foliage such as cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and buffalo.

Yahweh defines even further and eliminates those which either are not ruminants or lack a split hoof. Thus, the horse, rabbit, and camel are unclean.

Eagles, hawks, pelicans, sea eagles, owls, vultures and crows are examples of unclean carnivores of the bird family. Clean birds include turkeys, chickens, geese, ducks, doves--those which feed on grains or plants.

## **Insulated from the World**

Interestingly, animals with paws come in direct contact with the ground and are listed as unclean. The ruminants having a split hoof are insulated from direct contact with the ground and are clean food. (Perhaps the split hoof is to remind us of our separated walk in life. The second stomach--that we are to thoroughly digest His Word.)

Clean fish all have both fins and scales. As in the case of tuna, the scales may be exceedingly small. Scales insulate fish from direct contact with the waters. Unclean sea foods are the skin fish such as catfish, whales, dolphins, and shark. The unclean shellfish include lobsters, crabs, oysters, octopus and clams, which generally feed on effluent.

When we understand that not all creatures are fit for food, we can comprehend why Yahweh gave us a list of those suitable for mankind to eat. We do not ordinarily consider rats, skunks, weasels, vultures or flies and roaches something we would like to eat. Usually the arguments favoring ingesting pork or shellfish are based on a few misunderstood Bible verses taken out of context.

## **Every Creature Good to Eat?**

Sometimes 1 Timothy 4:1-5 is quoted as allowing man to eat anything he chooses. *"Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which (Yahweh) has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of [Yahweh] is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of [Yahweh] and prayer."*

Note especially the latter underlined part of this passage. We are to be thankful for this food because it is sanctified by Yahweh's Word. It is sanctified, or set apart for a holy purpose, in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. There we find a list of the foods that Yahweh has set apart as being proper for His people. Before believers partake of a meal they should thank Yahweh for what they are about to eat, and ask that He bless it.

## **Peter's Vision and the Gentiles**

Peter's vision in Acts 10 is often appealed to as a revelation that Yahweh has cleansed all meats; and it is erroneously assumed that now all creatures are clean and edible.

Peter sees a sheet upon which are all sorts of beasts, creeping and flying creatures. Peter protests the command to kill and eat, saying he has never eaten anything that is common or unclean. This is now some 10 years since the Messiah's ascension to the heavens and Peter has not eaten anything common or unclean! This happens three times, verse 16.

Peter in verse 34 at last understands the point of the vision. He says, ***"Of a truth, I perceive that Yahweh is no respecter of persons."*** Now Peter sees that all who fear Yahweh and do what is right are acceptable with Him. Jew, Samaritan or Gentile, race makes no difference. ***"But Yahweh has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean,"*** verse 28b.

This was the symbolism of the common and unclean beasts, a vision given just before three men came to see him, verses 16-19. Peter now understood that the Gentile Cornelius was to be a part of the Assembly.

This vision was not to change all creatures into acceptable food under Yahweh's law. It was symbolism. Dogs and pigs still eat garbage. Lobsters, scallops, clams and shrimp still thrive where sewers empty into rivers and seas.

This very important vision had an entirely different meaning for Peter, which he ultimately came to understand to mean that all people who work righteousness are candidates for salvation. Peter was given the "keys to the Kingdom," by the Savior, Matthew 16:19. Peter was selected to open the way for Jew, gentile, and half-Israelites to be accepted into the "Ecclesia" or Assembly and become a part of the body of the Savior. Being baptized into Yahshua's Name and becoming a part of the body of Messiah, the Assembly, is how one enters the Kingdom through Yahshua. The Apostle Peter opened the door for the Jews in Acts 2, where his preaching to them brought repentance and they were then baptized, Acts 2:38. Their sins were forgiven and they became members of the body of Messiah.

He also preached to the Samaritans, Acts 8:14-17, and the Holy Spirit was given to them when hands were laid upon them. The Samaritans were part Israelite, part Gentile. They were now accepted into the Assembly and became a part of Yahshua's Body by working righteousness.

How do they "work righteousness?" By keeping Yahweh's Commandments. "All Thy commandments are righteousness," Psalm 119:172. This includes the commandments telling us what foods we should not eat.

### **Avoid Blood and Fat**

In early New Testament times many converts to Yahshua came from pagan backgrounds. They often drank blood or ate flesh that did not have the blood drained from it. We are not to eat animal fat or blood, Leviticus 3:17 and 7:23. Ingesting some fat is unavoidable, but excess fat should be cut away. Cooking and frying is best done with butter, olive oil, or vegetable shortenings. Lard is prohibited as it is from swine.

In His wisdom, Almighty Yahweh revealed the way to health. Researchers are telling us of the dangers of fat in the diet both in relation to heart disease and cancer. Blood contains unhealthful toxins.

Yahweh gives us a list of foods that are proper for us to eat. A benefit is healthful, robust living. Carrion eaters spread disease, like trichinosis in swine.

To insist upon eating these unclean creatures is direct opposition to Scripture.

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