



30 Is There a Diet Chosen by Our Creator?

One's food is a very personal matter. When we get hungry, we naturally want to eat what we think is satisfying to us. Often personal, even selfish, prejudice dictates our diet.

But there are increasing numbers of people who are learning that one's choice of food largely determines health and therefore happiness. Some wait to change until they are forced by disease to do so. In those cases, appetite has had to give way to the demands of simple survival.

Others, more wise, learn to anticipate the possibility of disease and have voluntarily changed their eating habits. They sense the relation between food and health. And there are many of a different group—those who prefer a healthful diet because they frankly enjoy simple foods. Often these people have become vegetarians.

Why vegetarianism? Who first thought of it? Why is it steadily increasing all around the world? There are several reasons: desire for health, economy (vegetarian food is usually cheaper than meat), and taste. But there is one reason that is surprising to many people: the Bible teaches that a vegetarian diet has been preferable in the past and that it will again become man's universal choice.

There's an even better reason why we should control appetite: only when we have healthy bodies and clear minds can we appreciate the present work of Christ our High Priest in His final ministry of cleansing the sanctuary, and preparing people for His second coming. God is interested in our health. This study will introduce the facts.

Does God Care What You Eat?

1. What shows that God is pleased when we enjoy the taste of delicious food? Psalm 103:2-5.

ANSWER: "Bless the Lord, [thank Him, appreciate His kindness]... who _____ thy mouth with _____ things "

2. Some feel they have so little fun in life that they deserve the pleasure of eating. What shows that the Lord is not a kill-joy in this respect? Isaiah 55:2.

ANSWER: "Eat ye that which is _____, and let your soul delight itself in _____."

"Fatness" is from a Hebrew word that really has nothing to do with being overweight. It is used seven times in the Bible, and always refers to a satisfying, healthful, adequate diet. (According to this text, an overweight person is not properly

nourished.) These texts show that the Lord has implanted hunger in our bodies, and delights to satisfy that hunger with really good food. And physical hunger becomes a symbol of spiritual and emotional hungers for which He also wants us to find complete satisfaction.

Does God Care About How Healthy You Are?

3. Read 3 John 2, and answer this question: What does God want for you personally "above all things?"

ANSWER: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou _____ and be in _____, even as thy _____."

4. When Christ bore the sins of the world, what else did He bear at the same time? Matthew 8:16,17 (read this carefully, for it may be surprising to you).

ANSWER: He not only bore our sins, but "... Himself took our _____, and bare our _____."

This means that the Lord does not want us to be sick, any more than He wants us to sin. Salvation is not a reward to be enjoyed after death. Following Christ means a happier, healthier life here and now as well.

5. Turn back to the beginning, the first chapter in your Bible. What food did God provide for us when He created us? Genesis 1:29.

ANSWER: "And God said, Behold, I have given you _____, which is upon the face of all the earth, and _____, in the which is the fruit of a tree _____; to you it shall be for meat" (the word means food).

In order to know what are the best foods we must study God's original plan for man's diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food.

6. After sin marred the perfect life that God intended us to enjoy, what did the Lord add to man's diet? Genesis 3:18.

ANSWER: "The _____ of the field"

Before sin came, the diet consisted of fruits, grains, and nuts. After sin came, the Lord added what we now call vegetables. But not a word is spoken about eating the flesh of animals. ("Meat" in the King James Bible is an old English word that means "food" and not necessarily flesh). For over a thousand years, mankind's diet was vegetarian.

7. During the time that man's diet was vegetarian, what kind of health and longevity did he enjoy? Genesis 5:3,4,5,11,27, etc.

YOUR ANSWER: _____.

8. After the terrible flood destroyed the world in Noah's day, what permission did the Lord give to the survivors who emerged from the ark of Noah to start life anew in this ruined world?

Genesis 9:1-4.

ANSWER: Meat was an emergency food after " _____"

9. *After man began eating flesh food, what happened to his span of life? Genesis 11:23, 25, 32 and 25:7,8.*

YOUR ANSWER: _____.

10. *What is God's plan regarding the eternal home of His saved people? 2 Peter 3:12,13; Rev. 21:1-4.*

ANSWER: "We , according to his promise, look for ____ heavens and a _____, wherein dwelleth righteousness." " . . . And there shall be _____"

11. *Do you think that in this earth made new the redeemed will kill animals to eat them? Isaiah 11:6-9.*

ANSWER: "They shall not hurt nor _____ in _____ my holy mountain . . ."

The first two chapters of the Bible tell of a new world where there was no sin, sickness, unhappiness, pain, or death. The last two chapters of the Bible tell of a ruined world being renewed again, recreated, where again there will be no sin, sickness, unhappiness, tears, pain, or death. In other words, God's plan of salvation includes the restoration of all things that were lost when Adam and Eve invited Satan to rule in place of God. It is unthinkable that there will be predatory hunting in that glorious, happy new earth, either by man or by animals.

Meat Eating—a Temporary, Emergency Diet

12. *What does the Lord expressly forbid, if we do eat meat? Genesis 9:4.*

ANSWER: "But the flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye _____."

13. *Is this command of God repeated in the New Testament, and is it applicable to all people? Acts 15:19, 20, 28, 29.*

ANSWER: "Abstain from ... things _____, and from _____." "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, _____, and from things _____"

An example of how this command of God applies practically, is seen in the practice of the evil sons of Eli (read 1 Samuel 2:12-17). They would not eat the "sodden" or boiled flesh provided them, in which the blood was drained and boiled away. They insisted on roast flesh with the blood-taste in it. The story shows that God considered this a serious wrong.

14. *When you think of the sacrifice Jesus made for you when He died on the cross, are you happy to yield yourself to Him? Romans 12:1,2.*

ANSWER: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye _____ a _____, holy, acceptable unto God"

What Jesus is doing for us and in us is important in our everyday life. It requires that

our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing, become such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health. We want to present to the Lord our bodies—not an offering corrupted by wrong habits but—"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

15. *What common substances does the word of God forbid us to use? Proverbs 23:29-35; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 21:27.*

ANSWER: _____.

The Lord tells us not to indulge any harmful habit, or use any habit-forming substance, because we harm ourselves when we defile our bodies in any way. Anything that enslaves us is contrary to the principles of the gospel of Christ (Galatians 5:1).

16. *How can one gain the victory over any such evil habit? Philippians 4:13; Luke 4:18.*

ANSWER: "I can do all things through _____ strengthens ____." Christ came "to preach _____ to the captives, ... to set at _____ them that are _____."

That means you! Christ is our Saviour here and now! He won't force us against our will, but if we will to will, He will supply the power. Make your choice, then ask Him to set you free. Keep choosing—even if means a thousand times a day.

You may wonder why He has allowed you to form some bad habit that you must overcome. The answer is—so you can know first-hand His power to save.

17. *What reason is most important of all for living free and healthy in these last days? Luke 21:34, 35.*

ANSWER: "Lest at any time your _____ be overcharged with _____, and _____ ... and so that day come _____"

We are living in the great final Day of Atonement. Jesus is performing a special work of preparing a people for His second coming. We must keep our minds clear in order to appreciate what He is doing! Only then can we know how to cooperate with His Holy Spirit. And clear minds are possible only when we are free from every "defiling" practice.

18. *Is it your choice henceforth to live free in Him? _____*

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7 "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17