

IS *all* ANIMAL FLESH *good food?*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Though we occasionally publish articles on this subject, hundreds of letters continue to ask for the plain truth about "clean and unclean meats" for this present time. Therefore we reproduce below an article from the October, 1948, issue of "The Plain Truth"

by Herbert W. Armstrong

AFTER thousands of years of human experience on earth it seems there still is *nothing* people know less about than food.

Observe a little baby. It seems to think that anything and everything its little chubby hands can get into its mouth is good to eat—and everything baby gets his hands on goes straight to his mouth! How often must young parents take things away, and try to teach the lovely little bundle of humanity that everything one's hands can touch is not necessarily good for the digestion!

We're Just Grown-up BABIES!

Well, one might wonder if any of us has grown up! Most of us adults still seem to think that anything we can stuff in our mouths is good for food. About the only difference between us and the baby is that baby puts into his mouth whatever *looks* good, and we employ the sense of *taste* in deciding what goes into our mouths.

Your stomach is your fuel tank. Your automobile's fuel tank is its stomach. You wouldn't think of pouring just any old thing that will pour into the stomach of your car. You know that your car was not made to consume and "digest" fuel oil, water, milk, or kerosene.

Yes, we are very careful what we "feed" our automobile—and totally careless and indifferent what we feed ourselves and our children!

What *happens* to the food you eat? In the stomach the digestive process takes place. And, once digested—if you have eaten fit and digestible food—the essential minerals, vitamins, and carbon—the life-giving properties in the food—filter thru the intestinal lining into the blood stream to replenish and build up decaying cells, to provide energy, body warmth, good health.

Your body is **WONDERFULLY MADE!** It is the most wonderful mechanism in the world.

But, just as you must use the right kind of gasoline in the gas tank and

the right kind of oils and greases in the other parts of your car or impair its performance, so you must put the right kind of food into the most delicate mechanism of all, your body.

If you try to oil a fine watch with axle grease you wouldn't expect the watch to keep good time.

And when you put into your stomach all kinds of foul things which the Great Architect who *designed* your human mechanism never intended, you foul up your body and bring on sickness, disease, aches, pains, a dulled and clogged-up mind, inefficiency and inability—and you commit suicide on the installment plan by actually shortening your life!

The God who designed, created, and made your body has revealed some essential basic knowledge about what meats will keep that body functioning in tip-top shape. Why will we refuse His instruction?

You are Eating POISON!

You don't eat every plant that grows out of the ground. Some things that grow are **POISON**, not food.

But did you know there are many kinds of poisons? Potassium cyanide will kill you very quickly. Some poisons will result in death within a few hours or a few days. But very few seem to know there are other poisons people mistakenly eat as foods which result in premature death after continuous usage for, say, ten, or thirty, or fifty years.

The only difference between these poisons we falsely call foods and potassium cyanide is the relative number of minutes, hours, or years it takes to accomplish its killing mission.

Just as every vegetation that God caused to grow out of the ground was not designed for food, so it is with animal flesh. Some will say, "Well, if swine's flesh isn't supposed to be eaten as food, what did God create swine for?" You might as well ask, what did God create weeds and poison vines for? Everything may have been created for

a purpose, but *not everything* for the *one purpose of eating*.

Now some believe that in the original creation—in the Garden of Eden—God did not intend any animal flesh to be eaten. God's revelation on that point is vague, and many have argued it both ways. However, God has revealed that certain animal meats are to be eaten as food *now*, in this age, and Jesus who came to set us an example did eat flesh as well as vegetables and fruits, and so do I.

What the Great Architect of Your Stomach Instructs

When the very first written revelation came from God to man thru Moses, God instructed man as to which kinds of animal flesh man ought or ought not to eat.

You will find this list in Leviticus 11. This is not a ceremonial, ritualistic, or sacrificial law later done away at the crucifixion of Christ.

This is a basic law—a revelation from God to instruct man which kinds of flesh will properly digest and assimilate in the human system, and which will not. It is not a part of God's great **SPIRITUAL LAW**, summed up in the Ten Commandments.

It is necessary to understand that God is the author of **ALL** law, and there are countless laws in motion. There are laws of physics and chemistry. You know of the law of gravity. There is the great immutable **SPIRITUAL** law to regulate man's relationship to God and to fellowman—the law of **LOVE**—the Ten Commandments. God gave His nation Israel civil statutes and judgments—**NATIONAL** laws for the conduct of the national government. Israel was also His church, under the Old Covenant. And for the dispensation then present God gave Israel rituals and ceremonial laws for the conduct of religious services, laws relating to typical and temporary sacrifices, meat and drink offerings—temporary **SUBSTITUTES** for Christ and

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their own appointed feasts and new moons, but *also retained* the Biblical ones—"the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies." These they turned into abominations and profaned by idolatry and labor. No wonder *God abhorred* THE MANNER in which the Jews treated His holy time (Isa. 1:13).

Whereas Israel changed every single day, Judah, under the guidance of a few kings who kept the correct festivals (2 Chronicles 30 and 35), was religiously divided. Some Jews remained true to the annual festivals, others kept them in vain because their hearts were not right, while yet other Jews invented their own annual occasions. The Jews never changed the sabbath, although they deliberately profaned it by work (Jeremiah 17:21-27).

For that sin, especially, they were driven out of Judea and *deprived of one of the blessings of God*—the opportunity of keeping His days. They became the property of their enemies and "the Lord . . . caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion" (Lamentations 2:6). Jeremiah does *not* joy over the abolition of the festivals, but *laments over their being forgotten*.

In the Days of Ezra and Nehemiah

Even after having to suffer the privations of war for rejecting the ways of God, the Jews did not fully learn their lesson. Those who returned to Jerusalem made a covenant not to buy on the Sabbath or holy days (Nehemiah 10:31). Yet they continued profaning these hallowed days. Here is what Nehemiah writes in his historical account:

"In those days saw I in Judah some *treading wine presses on the sabbath*, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses: as also wine, grapes, and figs, and *all manner of burdens*, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day . . . Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What *evil thing* is this that ye do, and *profane the sabbath day*? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath" (Neh. 13:15-18).

This stern rebuke of Nehemiah had a serious reaction on the carnal minded Jews after the time of Nehemiah. Instead of turning to keep the sabbath in the spirit as God intended, *the Jews soon began to formulate scores of rules of their own for its observance. This was the tradition of the elders against which Jesus spoke* (Matthew 15:3).

The beginning of this tradition is clothed in obscurity because of "the long blank in the history of the Jews which follows the time of Nehemi-

ah . . ." (Ency. Bib., p. 2425). When the observance of the sabbath comes to light somewhat before the time of Christ, it was a radically different observance than that of which Nehemiah spoke in the fifth century B.C.

Traditions in Jesus' Day

From the gospel accounts, and other historical evidences, the Jews held the following *traditions*, to enumerate but a few: no one could carry water to a thirsty animal—that would be a burden—but he could lead the animal to drink; one could relieve the distress of the ill, *but not heal*; one could not break or divide anything that was previously united, as that was a form of grinding; neither could one eat grain from the field as that was a species of threshing.

But the Jews didn't stop with this introduction of *human* traditions. After the death of Nehemiah, they *began to alter the days when the annual festivals were to be held*. By the time of Jesus the sects of Judaism were in great confusion over the passover and pentecost.

The apostle John shows that the Pharisees were holding the *Jewish* passover at a later time than did Christ (John 18:28). *The Jews in Judaea no longer observed the Biblical passover* at the beginning of the fourteenth of Nisan, as did Jesus and the Galilaeans. They held their sacrifice *toward the end of the fourteenth* and ate it on the night of the fifteenth which was really the first high day of the feast of unleavened bread.

To this day, the Jews fail to distinguish between the night of the passover (Exodus 12:22) and the night after the passover (Numbers 33:3; Exodus 12:42) when the Israelites left Egypt. The Jews do not keep the real passover.

The Jews were also divided over the exact date for the celebration of pentecost—the feast of firstfruits (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, article, "Pentecost"). The Jews' feast of firstfruits or pentecost was celebrated by the Pharisees on a specified day of the month. The Sadducees maintained that pentecost was on a particular day of the week, since it had to be counted (Lev. 23:15). This perversion of God's festivals deserved the name given by the gospel writers: "Jewish feasts" (John 6:4; 5:1).

How did Jesus regard these regulations? Did the teaching of Jesus indicate that he abolished these *man-made* regulations and freed the sabbath from the *bondage of tradition*? Or did he abolish the sabbath and the festivals? These questions are of major importance. In the next issue will appear the real teaching of Jesus—something very different from church doctrines today.

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the Holy Spirit. Those laws, of course, ended when the Reality came.

Physical, as well as Spiritual Sin

And then, we must realize, THERE ARE PHYSICAL LAWS WORKING IN OUR BODIES, REGULATING OUR HEALTH. Now this MEAT question has to do with *these* laws!

I have known men who make a hobby of bitterly accusing others of SIN for eating pork, oysters, and clams.

Let us get this straight and clear!

We usually speak of SIN in its spiritual aspect. That is the aspect in which it usually is considered in the New Testament. The Bible definition of it is this: "Sin is *the transgression of the law*."

The *penalty* for violation of that spiritual law is DEATH—but not the first, or physical death, but the second, or spiritual, and ETERNAL death in the "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14).

Now the eating of wrong food is not a transgression of this spiritual law, and is not a sin *in this sense*. To violate the physical laws of health brings the penalty of disease, disability, pain, sickness, and the *first* death. It is not necessarily spiritual sin.

That is what Jesus made plain, as recorded in Mark 7:14-23. Here Jesus was speaking of *spiritual* defilement, not physical health. Not that which enters into a man's mouth, but the evil that comes OUT OF HIS HEART, defiles the man SPIRITUALLY. What defiles the MAN—and he is speaking of defiling the MAN, not injuring the body—is transgression of the Ten Commandments—evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, blasphemy (verses 21-22), etc. These things have to do with the SPIRITUAL law, and not with the physical laws of health. Specifically he was referring to a possible particle of dirt which might get on food from dirty and unwashed hands—He was not here speaking specifically of clean or unclean meats at all. But He was speaking of SPIRITUAL defilement, not physical health.

No Change in Structure of Animal Flesh at Cross

The animals whose flesh properly digests and nourishes the human body were SO MADE IN THE ORIGINAL CREATION. No change was ever made in the structure of men's bodies at the time of the flood, or at the time of Jesus' death, or any other time. Neither did God

make some sudden change in the structure of animal flesh, so that what once was unfit for food will now digest properly and supply the body's needs.

The unclean animals were UNCLEAN BEFORE THE FLOOD.

Notice, *before* the Flood, Noah took into the ark of the CLEAN animals, to be eaten for food, by SEVENS; but of the unclean, of which he was not to eat during the Flood, by TWO'S—only enough to preserve their lives. The inference is inescapable that the additional clean animals were taken aboard to be eaten for food while Noah and his family were in the ark.

The instruction in the 11th chapter of Leviticus, then, was not some ritualistic regulation for the Mosaic period only. Why do so many people have the idea that God is some great unfair monster who imposes foolish hardships on His people? Whatever God instructs us is for OUR GOOD, not some nonsensical restriction for one period to be changed around some different way for other people of a different period.

Swine flesh—pork, ham, bacon, sausage, etc.—is simply NOT FIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION. The same is true with oysters, lobsters, dogs, snakes, rats, and skunks.

It's all a matter of what we have become accustomed to doing. It seems strange and horrifying to us to hear that some Chinese eat mice as a delicacy. But the Chinese are horrified to hear that we eat nasty, slimy, filthy oysters! But some human grown-ups, like little babies, will eat anything they can get their hands on and stuff into their mouths.

At so-called "quality" grocery stores in large towns and cities, specializing in rare delicacies, you can purchase "delicious" canned rattlesnake—if you care for it.

So far as I am concerned, you may have my portion if you wish to try it. I do not care to eat it for the same reason I do not eat slugs, skunks, cats, or eels—for the same reason I do not eat poison ivy or weeds. Yes, and for the same reason I do not put fuel oil in the gas tank of my car!

The day will come when the learned (so-called) doctors will at last learn that eating greasy hog flesh and other unfit "foods" has been a prime cause of cancer and other deadly diseases.

About Peter's Vision

But what about the sheet of unclean animals shown to the Apostle Peter in a vision? Did this vision change the entire composition of all unclean animals, or of the human digestive apparatus, so that these unfit things suddenly became nourishing food? NOT AT ALL! The

purpose of this vision was NOT to change God's food and health laws which have been inexorably in motion from the beginning, but its purpose was to show Peter "that I should not call any MAN COMMON OR UNCLEAN" (Acts 10:28). Jews had been taught to regard Gentiles like unclean animals—to have nothing to do with them.

Paul teaches us *not to judge* one another because of what the other eats or does not eat—but he does not teach us to eat that which is UNCLEAN and unfit for food.

He does, however, put the spiritual welfare of another ahead of the physical welfare of our own bodies. We are not to let our knowledge of God's instruction about meats become a spiritual stumbling block to another. If we are invited to the home of one not a Christian, or not possessing this knowledge, and we accept the invitation, we are to eat such things as are set before us, asking no questions. Better let a small portion of unfit meat go into your stomach this once than arouse the prejudice and indignation of another against your religion and turn him forever from the truth.

Two other points to be briefly mentioned. *God condemns also the eating of animal fat, or blood* (Lev. 3:17; 7:23; etc.). Butter, olive oil, and some vegetable oils and shortenings are all right, but animal fat should be cut off before eating meat. Hamburger is not good because mixed with much fat. Lard should never be used. These things will wreck any stomach in time.

It may not be spiritual sin to eat unclean meats. Yet, if one deliberately does it out of lust of appetite, that breaks the tenth command and becomes sin.

But in all events wrong food injures the body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It defiles the BODY if not the *man*, and if we defile our bodies God will destroy us. Read I Cor. 3:17.

Why World Suffers

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his own personal gain. Rather he was a man who was trying to seek a means to end the sufferings of his fellow men and bring peace and prosperity to the world by means of a society based on an economic system.

Marx made one great mistake. He never knew or heard of the *true* God—overlooked that there is a God who is working out a purpose here below which will eventually bring peace to the world.

Hitler screamed that he had come to save men from their folly. That the world was foolish in not realizing it and following him.

Both Hitler and Marx had the idea of a scientifically planned society, in which there would be no superstition. No man who was unfit for a job would be in a place he did not belong and labor would be used where it would do the most good. Hitler believed in conquering the world and forcing his thousand-year plan on its inhabitants. Marx believed in conquering the world by intrigue and revolution, planting the seeds of his ideas in men's minds so they would die for it, to see it become a reality.

Sincere Plans of Men Bring Only Unhappiness

Both of these plans have wrought nothing but unhappiness on this earth. They did not allow for the avaricious natures in human beings. As long as man rules mankind there shall be suffering, war and misery and poverty.

Religion as practiced in this world today—all the religions, including Christianity, ARE merely superstitions, fables, myths. Great thinkers see these irregularities and thus throw God's word into the rubbish heap of discredit. If they were to study the Bible as diligently as they do the science which they claim discredits religion, they would know where the errors are and perhaps see that God's true teachings are the only way of bringing peace to this world.

Instead they have devised societies on their scientific principles, leaving out God and His laws.

What We Learned in Europe

While Mr. Hoeh and I were in Europe last summer, we were asked many times to describe America to people of many countries who were interested in our way of life, our government and our society. We found that people in many countries of Europe have a better knowledge of U.S. history than many people right here at home.

They have misconceptions about our standard of living. These they have acquired from the American movies that are shown in Europe, and the fact that too many Americans traveling in Europe don't want to be bothered to take the time to tell anyone about their country. Europeans read in their newspapers about our government scandals, the mismanagement, the graft and corruption in our government.

Then we turn around and try to tell them that our democracy is the best form of government on earth. This is an unbelievable contradiction to most of them. They think of America in terms of Chicago gangsters, New York racketeers and Hollywood actors and actresses. They know virtually nothing