

What Does God Really Say About What Food You Should Eat?

There are many views regarding what diet is ideal. Vegans, vegetarians, proponents of plant-based diets and meat promoters all argue that their diet is best. Throw the raw diet crowd into the mix, and the confusion only increases. Many of these diets overlap but with some stark differences. For example, hard-core raw advocates don't cook any food. They consume it straight from the tree, vine or ground. Plant-based diets promote raw, but they are often flexible and have a much broader range of choices.

I don't claim to have all the answers. Even experts in the field of nutrition are divided, but again, we can glean a great deal from the biblical account. Most diets are written from an evolutionary perspective, so it's important that we get our facts straight. So let's begin where God begins.

In the beginning of creation, God said:

"Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food'; and it was so" (Gen. 1:29–30 NASB).

We were designed to eat living, plant-based food. The life of the plant via vitamins, minerals, and enzymes is to be deposited into the body—to restore, renew, and replenish. We read that, after the flood, everything that lives and moves was to be food for us except the blood that is in the animal (Gen. 9:3). The blood of an animal contains toxins. Many diseases travel in the blood. God also identified clean and

unclean animals. Un-clean animals, such as pork, are still not considered healthy since viruses, bacteria, and parasites are easily transferred from the pig to us.

Was man not to consume meat until after the flood, approximately 1,600 years after the fall? If so, why? Did early man eat only plants for over 16 centuries before God allowed meat? How did a plant-based diet provide vitamin B12, calcium, iron and zinc when they are difficult to obtain in a plant-based diet? Is it permissible to eat meat and dairy but not ideal? Should it be consumed sparingly? Does it balance nature ("kill and eat")?

Biblically speaking, you can find support for a few different views, but we are encouraged to let our moderation be known to all men. Moderation means drinking or eating something occasionally. Unfortunately, moderation is often abused, and very unhealthy patterns develop. Paul said all things may be allowed, but all things are not beneficial (see 1 Cor. 10:23). In most areas where people live the longest, their diets are primarily plant-based.

I believe that the pre-flood atmosphere of the earth was much different than our living conditions today. Man lived in a healthier environment that may have provided more oxygen and greater protection against the harmful rays of the sun, and plants and fruit-bearing trees grew in abundance. After the flood, however, fruits and vegetables became scarce (see Gen. 8:22: seedtime and harvest). I believe that God allowed meat consumption because of this scarcity. Healthy meat and dairy can be enjoyed from time to time for those who want to go this route, but they shouldn't be consumed in abundance. Personally, I'd rather err on the side of eating what we ate before the fall as my primary source of nutrition. But again, this is my opinion.

A Few Scriptures to Consider

- In Ezekiel 4:9a, we read that Ezekiel was to take “wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt ... and make bread.” This was his diet for over a year. Was it the sake of convenience or health? We can only speculate, but this plant combination had/has many health benefits.
- In Daniel 1, Daniel ate vegetables and water for 10 days and looked better than those who ate meat and delicacies. Plant food brings life (Rev. 22:2). It should be our primary focus at every meal.
- In Daniel 10, it appears that he did this again for 21 days. The spiritual outcome was incredible. I find it interesting that God blesses fasts where only vegetables are consumed.
- Meat aligns more with our animalistic nature; cravings for meat have been the downfall of many (see Num. 11). People were often rebuked because of gluttony over meat.
- When God fed the children of Israel in the wilderness, He provided “bread from heaven” known as manna (Ex. 16:4; John 6:31). The people made it into cakes or boiled it. It had the appearance of bdellium (from trees). The Bible states the manna tasted like wafers made with honey. The perfect food that God chose appears to be plant-based, not meat-based. This is rather compelling for me. Then God brought in millions of quail because the people “lusted for meat.”
- But in Acts 10, we find that Peter had a vision in which God instructed him to kill and eat meat.
- In Romans 14:1–2, the apostle Paul talks about not judging a person who eats meat. Granted, this could be referring to the unclean nature of certain foods and

whether those foods were offered to idols rather than being a proof text for meat-based diets.

- In 1 Timothy 4:3–4, Paul said that in the last days deceiving spirits will command people to abstain from certain foods—foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving. This verse is one reason why I don't prohibit any food that God created for food, including healthy meat and dairy.

Be careful when making absolute and dogmatic statements about diet. However, we can be assured that healthy is the way to go. Living food places vitamins, minerals and powerful phytochemicals directly into the body. Manmade food is dead; it doesn't give—it takes. {eoa}

Stay tuned for part 2!

Excerpted from the book Feasting and Fasting, available here: