

Food, Disease and Deadly Presumption



What this study will discuss: What God says about food, its relationship to disease and the deadly assumptions we can make in relation to them.

What this study will not discuss: What God says about food and its relationship to daily function – i.e. food economy (How much should we eat? When should we eat? When should we eat more/less? What constitutes gluttony or gluttony-related obesity? What foods should we eat when we are young versus old, active versus sedentary?)

1. ALL FOOD IS GOOD AND A BLESSING.

1.1. Those things identified by God as food¹ include various grains, fruits, nuts, sugars or sweets, vegetables, dairy or milk products, meat, fat, oils and alcohol (Deu 8:8, 32:8-14; Gen 1:29-31; 43:11)

1.2. Those foods filled with gluten² and carbohydrates, are considered His best; those given to bless or make us happy (Gen 37:27; Exo 3:8, 17; Num 14:8, 18:12; Deu 6:3, 7:13, 11:14, 14:23-26; Jos 5:6; 1Ki 14:-13; 2Ki 18:31-32; Neh 8:10; Psa 4:7, 19:9-10 w/119:103; Psa 81:13-16, 104:15, 147:13-14; Pro 3:9-10, 24:13; Ecc 9:7, 11:1-2³; Sol 4:11, 5:1, 7:2; Isa 43:24⁴).

1.3. Though at one time, God placed restrictions on His people, regarding certain types of food (Lev 11:1-47), Jesus declared all food to be morally acceptable for consumption - i.e. as that which neither improves nor worsens our spiritual state/standing with God (Mar 7:18-23 = The list of sins that follow as the identification of what “defiles” a person makes it clear that what is meant by “Thus he declared all foods clean” is those foods once considered sinful to consume are now morally acceptable/no longer sin; 1Co 8:8; Heb 13:9).

1.4. It is for this reason that Paul can say that food itself can never make us guilty of sin (e.g. Mormons) (1Co 8:13-18).

1.5. It is bad theology and poor thinking to believe that all food is morally acceptable or unable to make us guilty of sin - yet at the same time believe some food is the cause of disease⁵ or other severe physical afflictions, given that God always and only attributes these things to sin (Deu 28:20-22, 58-61; e.g. Hezekiah – 2Chr 32:22-25 w/2Ki 20:1-11; the Philistines – 1Sa 5:6; the cripple at Bethesda - Joh 5:14; Even Jesus’ physical affliction was the result of sin – 1Pe 3:18). That the problem is again moral rather than related to food is true even when discussing issues such as gluttony, certain forms of obesity, anorexia and orthorexia. The problem is not food, but a person’s view of - and actions in regard to, food (which once more is good!).

1.6. Our genetic predisposition to certain diseases or physical afflictions are also the result of sin (Exo 20:5⁶).

1.7. That God attributes the prevention of disease or physical affliction always and only to our moral behavior (versus our diet) equally supports the fact that food should never be considered as a cause of disease (Exo 15:26; Deu 7:14-15).

1.8. The bad theology and poor thinking that believes food to be (or also to be) a cause of disease or physical affliction draws into question the character of God: how could a good God approve of food that is unhealthy? (Deu 10:11-13, 29:9, 30:19; 1Ki 2:3; 2Ch 24:20 w/1Ti 4:1-5).

¹ Fuel for the physical body (Gen 1:29 w/Eze 15:6).

² All wheat and beer naturally contain gluten.

³ Michael Homan believes that Solomon is advocating the brewing and serving of beer (“Beer Production by Throwing Bread into Water: A New Interpretation of Qoh IX.1-2,” *Vestus Testamentum* 52:2 [2002]: 275-278). In the words of Jeff Meyer, “Beer is just liquid bread. Or perhaps we should say, as James Jordan puts it, beer is glorified liquid bread. So casting your bread (grain) in the water and waiting many days to find it is about the process of fermentation, especially the anticipation of a glorious final brew.” (“The Wisdom of Drinking Beer with Others”).

⁴ According to an article in the December 2008 issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, high-fructose corn syrup can contain as much as 90 percent fructose, but the syrups used commercially are 42 percent or 55 percent fructose, which makes them chemically similar to cane sugar. In the words of Mario Kratz, a research associate professor specializing in nutrition and metabolism at the University of Washington School of Public Health (Seattle, WA), “The science is pretty clear that normal household [cane] sugar doesn’t differ from high-fructose corn syrup.” Per the Dr. Denis Webb of the University of California Berkeley, “The difference in how the body handles the two sugars has led to the belief that HFCS is much worse for you than regular sugar. However, several studies have clearly shown that HFCS and sucrose have indistinguishable metabolic effects” (“CLAIM CHECK: Is High Fructose Corn Syrup Worse Than Regular Sugar?”).

⁵ By disease is meant: “an abnormal physical condition that negatively affects the structure or function of part or all of the organism and not due to an external injury” (Dorland’s Medical Dictionary). As such it includes the 4 main types (infectious, deficiency/dysfunctional, hereditary, and physiological).

⁶ Based on our family history, each of us contain genetic markers predisposing us to certain diseases. What determines whose genetic marker is “turned on” is the question science admits alludes them. The answer hidden to science however is made plain by God’s Word (our moral behavior). Consider: “Illness, Disease and Sin: The Connection Between Genetics and Spirituality” by Matthias Beck (Journal Of Bioethics, Non-Ecumenical Studies in Medical Morality): “Today geneticists know a lot about background conditions of diseases. Many of them have genetic origins as do, for instance, all types of cancer. Few are inherited (about 5%), most are acquired (95%). But even inherited genetic defects don’t necessarily lead to disease. A ‘sick’ gene does not necessarily result in people getting sick. Genes must be activated or deactivated, meaning they must be switched on or off. Psycho-neuro-immunologic research has proven direct involvement of the human brain... and relationships on the immune system and on genetic switching. [This switching] or in-formation (of the cell) is complementary to the ontological concept of the soul...[In other words] the soul expresses itself in the morphology [of the human body which houses it]. Man is a being that is ‘constructed’ from the inside out: his spirit and his soul in-form the body’s matter [and health] from within. Because there is a connection between the brain—which represents the thinking and feeling of a human being—and the genes, the entire inner life of the person influences these genetic switching mechanisms. The interpersonal relationships and the environment influence the genes. Thus, both the inner and outer worlds are closely connected to what happens on the genetic level...Stress and depression [for example] change the activity of genes not only in numerous immune messenger substances (cytokines), but also within the cells of the immune system (T-cells and natural-killer cells). Psychic stress and depression can lead to turning off of certain genes of the immune system... Within an organism, cancer cells for instance slowly lose their ability for regular communication. Thus communication becomes disrupted [and] genes are switched wrongly, the cancer cells no longer integrate themselves into the organism of the whole and thus destroy it. The psychosomatic physician Thure von Uexkull considered diseases as expressive of a dysfunctional framework of (human) relationships [i.e. treating others in an unrighteous way]...If psychosomatic theory interprets disease processes in terms of bio-psycho-social events and thus understands illness as resulting from the disruption of relationships (i.e. sin), then it becomes possible to deepen this model to the dimension of the spirit and thus toward God. Disrupted communication [or relationship with our fellow man creates disrupted relationship with God, again sin]. This disrupted communication [between man and God then extends] to the genetic plane... [Since] disease rests on disrupted human relationships (i.e. sin), then the relationship between man and God is highly relevant to medicine.”

1.9. The person that believes food to be (or also to be) a cause of disease or physical affliction likewise commits the serious sin of condemning what God calls a blessing and good (Isa 5:20).

2. CERTAIN FOODS CAN BE PROBLEMATIC FOR THOSE WHO ALREADY SUFFER WITH DISEASE OR HAVE OTHER SEVERE AFFLICTIONS.

2.1. Though no food can cause disease or other afflictions, all food (like all things) can agitate, inflame, fuel or feed disease or other physiological problems (e.g. sugars w/certain cancers, sugars w/diabetes, gluten w/celiac disease, peanuts w/peanut allergies, milk w/lactose intolerance, spicy foods w/ulcers). It is however poor thinking to conclude: b/c food can fuel or agitate a disease or other physiological problems, food must be the cause of the disease or physiological problem. The same kind of argument is made by those advocating gun control today: because guns can agitate or fuel violence, guns must be the cause of violence.

2.2. Where (and when) disease or other physiological problems do exist, avoidance of certain foods should be practiced – especially if their consumption could be result in serious harm, discomfort or pain (source: common sense). That being said, our food restrictions must never become the burden of others in the Church unless that it is case (1T 5:16).

3. SERIOUS DISEASE OR PHYSICAL AFFLICTION IN A PERSON’S YOUNGER YEARS CAN MEAN THAT PERSON IS GUILTY OF UNREPENTANT OR SERIOUS SIN.

3.1. A person who lives righteously is expected to live a long, healthy life - or into their elderly years, before they contract life-threatening diseases or afflictions (Psa 34:12-16 w/1Pe 3:10-12; Psa 37:28 w/38, 91:9-16; Pro 16:31).

3.2. This is also the reason young people are admonished to be righteous: so that they may live a long, healthy life rather than that life being cut short or made difficult by serious disease or affliction (Eph 6:1-3; Pro 3:1 w/7-8, 4:10).

3.3. When therefore a young person contracts a serious disease or affliction, the question that should immediately arise is, “could they be guilty of unrepentant or serious sin?” (Joh 9:1-2; Job 20:4-16; 36:13-14; Psa 38:1-11 = David was a young man at the time of his sin with Bathsheba. Some believe the plague/disease he is speaking of to be venereal – which can be life-threatening [*British Journal Of Venereal Diseases*, “Venereal Diseases In The Bible”, 1949]; Psa 106:14-15 = Those upon whom God pronounced His wasting disease [mad cow/deer disease, zombie disease – Job 12:24-25] were - in large - young adults, as demonstrated by their latter curse of 40 yrs of wandering).

4. AMONG THOSE SINS THAT MAY BE MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSING DISEASE – EVEN DEATH, ARE THE SINS OF PRESUMPTION.

4.1. Assuming versus presuming: 1) What they share in common = Both think something to be true/may be true yet do not possess the evidence required by God to prove view it as fact (Deu 17:6, 19:15; Num 35:30; Mat 18:15-16; also 2Co 13:1; 1Ti 5:19; Heb 10:28 = A claim that is beyond the ability to be reasonably questioned due to the clarity, context, character, consistency, coherence and abundance of the supporting evidence/witnesses. This is also considered the criteria necessary to establish something as fact today). 2) What makes them different = Only presumption acts on - or communicates as fact (to others or self) such baseless beliefs (i.e. gossip) and is considered serious sin (Psa 19:13; Col 2:8; Tit 1:10; Eph 5:6; 1Ti 6:20).

4.2. The sin of presumption has been known to lead to serious disease, even death (Num 12:1-15, 20:8-12; Deu 1:28-44; Deu 17:11-13 and 18:18-20; 2Ch 26:16-21).

4.3. Avoiding the sin of presumption requires never communicating (to yourself or others) or acting on something as though it were fact, until you have the biblically required evidence (Deu 29:29 = Don’t act like you know what you don’t know). We are instead to be people always and only walking in what we know (in the present) to be truth or fact (Eph 5:8-9; Psa 119:104; 1Ti 1:12-13).

4.4. Examples of things today that people assume today in relation to food that either outright contradicts the Biblical evidence or does not possess what God requires as evidence in order to act on - or communicate (to yourself or others) as fact: sugar is toxic, artificial sweeteners are toxic, foods containing carcinogens are toxic⁷, foods that have been treated w/pesticides in the process of growing is toxic, foods where hormones were used or genetic modifications were made are toxic, foods coming from China or other countries are toxic, any food possessing artificial additives - or ingredients that I can’t pronounce are toxic, only foods bought from Whole Foods or some other hippy inspired supermarket are safe.

4.5. The reason people follow such conspiracies is due:

4.5.1. (Once more) to bad theology and poor thinking. They believe that the purpose of life is to survive rather than to be righteous (even if that means it may be dangerous) (Deu 21:1-7).

4.5.2. People would rather fix their diets or other amoral things than change their moral behavior (Jer 7:21-23; Amo 5:21-25).

4.5.3. B/C fear sells (“fearvertising/shockvertising” is considered the best way to sell products; e.g. Halitosis – a made-up medical condition by Listerine in order to sell mouthwash⁸) (Isa 8:12-13).

CLOSING CONTEMPLATION/CHALLENGE:

“Go (therefore), eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.” (Ecc. 9:7)

⁷ Alcoholic beverages are classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as a Group 1 carcinogen – or containing agents that can cause cancer in humans (i.e. ethanol) (Cancer.gov).

⁸ See “The Growth Of Fear Appeals In Advertising. Experiments show that fear-based selling is 100% more successful than any other (think Insurance companies!).”