

GOD'S DIET PLAN?

Fads in the Church

Fads. You see them in the world, and understand that this is the way of things. You also see them in the visible Church, and it should make you wonder. Often, the fads in the Church are the same fads that were in the world five or ten years earlier. Personality types (sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and the ever-popular melancholic), or so-called Cholors based on Hippocrates and other pagans, flourished for a time. Spiritual gifts inventories were popular in the '70's and into the 80's. Whether you're talking about spiritual warfare, backward masking, forecasted economic earthquakes, the Prayer of Jabez, or forty fulfilled days of purpose-filled living; fads, crazes and manias sweep through the Church regularly. "Christian" experts pump out books which are snapped up in "Christian" bookstores by Christians, pretenders and pagans looking for the latest extra-biblical revelation promising to do for them what Scripture alone cannot. The rich get rich. The poor get poorer. Do I sound cynical about this?

Fads, in general, are neither harmless nor innocent. "Experts" take the place of Divine revelation. The "Christian" professional class becomes more entrenched, and the poor schmuck in the pew is offered yet another distraction to keep his eyes from the Word (both the *written* Word and Christ Himself.) Like much that we find within the Institutional Church (or Church Inc., as I like to call it), fads provide entertainment, and give the "laity" a sense of participation (real participation is reserved for the Nicolaitan clergy/priest.) If you *feel* better about yourself, *feel* more spiritual, or *feel* safer, you've gotten your money's worth. That's fleshy human nature at work, and to be expected – IN THE WORLD! Ah, but it is also a prominent feature of Church Inc. You don't have to like it, but there it is.

One fad in, particular, gets my dander up.. Thinking about it, I'm not sure why this should be so. However innocent it may seem, virtually every fad fleeces well-intentioned people. Every one offers false hope. Every one takes peoples' eyes off the author and perfecter of their faith. People are often left poorer or more confused. It happens all the time, so why does this one bother me so much more than the rest? For me, it personifies the "savage wolves" of Acts 20:29, and the "doctrines of demons" of 1 Timothy 4:1. It preys on the flock, devouring many by means of the hypocrisy of liars.

The Natural Secrets to Preventing and Curing Disease

"There's a lady at our church. About ten years ago she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Well, she went to the cancer docs, and they wanted to operate and give her chemo and all that, but her sister had gone through those same things just a few years before, and she died a horrible death in a hospital bed. The lady did some research that lead her to a minister who wrote a book about God's immune system. She listened to him, changed her diet to vegetables and fruits, just like Adam and Even in the Garden in Genesis 1:29. Everything was organic, and 75% to 85% of what she ate was raw. She stopped drinking milk, coffee, soda, and everything but distilled water (and she got into juicing.) She practiced biblical hygiene, and did daily colonics. You know what? She cured her cancer! Isn't God great!"

You've probably seen the claims:

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SICK!
YOU CAN CURE CANCER!
YOU CAN CURE ARTHRITIS!
IMPROVE YOUR VISION!
ELIMINATE POISONS IN YOUR SYSTEM!

BE HEALTHY AND HAPPY!

The claims and the testimonies are seemingly endless. Switch to the “Genesis 1:29 diet” and do the other things and you’re led to believe that most, if not all of your health problems will disappear. One web site points out that right up until God permits people to eat meat, nobody ever got sick, and everyone lived 800-900 years or more. The clear implication is that you can extend your life if you buy their book, eat their organic food, and follow their advice.

They claim that this comes from the Bible (although some practitioners admit that their ideas come from “the Bible and other sources), and the gnosis (secret or hidden knowledge) that they possess is something God intends for everyone to use. Yet, at the same time, their special knowledge always seems to make them a bit superior to the run-of-the-mill Christian. They make you feel that if you don’t spend much of your time studying diet and health, researching and preparing organic meals, and giving yourself enemas, you’re someone to be pitied, you’re not really in line with the Divine plan. How they can make anyone feel inferior, while sounding like snake-oil salesmen, is beyond me.

Snake Oil and Neo-Paganism

Alternative medicine is nothing new. In fact, today’s “alternative medicine” was, for most of history, the **only** medicine, such as it was. Herbal cures, now claimed by the “church,” were once the province of the witch and the shaman. Ask today’s “wiccan” or “neo-pagan” and you will be told that herbal lore, vegan and organic diet, and most of the things that “Christian Health Ministers” are hawking, have been central to their humble, earth-based beliefs for centuries. Just check out the Pagan Activist page on the web (<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/3800/>) and you’ll see some common themes.

When they tell you that they studied “the bible and other sources,” you begin to wonder what “other sources” they consulted. Many of the same people who promote these diets and hygiene practices also promote things like “Christian acupuncture” and chiropractic, or Christian Yoga: things that have their origins in Eastern and Western mystical and occult practices. [Yes, I’ve just put that out there without any documentation, but none of this is a secret! The web can be used for goodness as well as for badness, and it wouldn’t take long for someone who honestly wanted to know about these things to verify what I’ve said. However, if you don’t want to believe it, no amount of documentation will convince you. Besides, we could get “experts” on both sides of the issue to bandy secular arguments and “scientific” proof back and forth endlessly, and never prove anything. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY? That’s where we’re heading.]

While most of the promoters of these things are probably well-meaning, the whole “alternative medicine” field is ripe for fakirs and charlatans, and always has been (please note the play on words.) There have always been hucksters, tricksters and con-men that have played on peoples’ fears. Fears of illness, and especially the fear of death, have proven to be lucrative areas for a person of wit and charisma to mine for personal profit. Whether you claim to heal with a word or a touch, provide a “medicine bag” or talisman, sell tickets for a pool or spa with restorative properties, or sell snake oil nostrums and diet plans, you are sure to find people eager to trade their hard-earned money for a chance to be healed or to cheat death. The 1880’s to the 1920’s was an especially fine period in American history for “medicine shows,” producing men like Dr. Frank "White Beaver" Powell and Francis Schlatter, *aka* The New Mexico Messiah, The Healer, and El Gran Hombre¹, who would fleece you and leave town before you realized that you were not only still sick, but broke as well!

What, Me Worry?

¹ http://weeklywire.com/ww/09-15-97/austin_books_feature1.html

All right, I've spent two plus pages ranting, and the only Scripture (not even quoted) has been Genesis 1:29. That's about to change.

As we've seen, what drives these industries (and don't kid yourself, that's what they are) is fear. The first Scriptural concern I have is that the very foundation for these concerns is something that the Christian should not be concerned with! The purveyors of these dietary revelations quote a few Old Testament passages from Genesis or the dietary and hygiene commands **TO THE JEWS OF NATIONAL ISRAEL**, but they ignore New Testament passages that explicitly tell us that we shouldn't be worried about these things!

Matt 6:25-26 "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

Question: If God wanted us to take special care about our diets, if what we ate was really important, why would Jesus tell us not to be anxious about what we eat because life is more than food? Also, if the dietary and hygienic provisions of the Law were vital for Christians, wouldn't Jesus commend the Jews for strict adherence? Instead, concerning the very dietary and hygiene laws that these practitioners tell us we should follow today, Jesus told the Pharisees:

Matt 15:16-20 And He said, "Are you still lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

Was Jesus unconcerned about their health or how they lived their lives? Remember how the parable of the Prodigal Son ended?

Luke 15:22-23 "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry;

Shouldn't Jesus have added something like, "Don't do this at home."? After all, most of these diets eschew meat. Speaking of which, Jesus ate lamb. We know this because lamb is part of the Passover meal *which God instituted and commanded the Jews to eat*. Isn't that meat?

Luke 22:14-16 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Ex 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, "Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb

What about Peter's vision, and what does this say about the applicability of the Law's dietary restrictions for the Christian?

Acts 10:9-16 And on the next day, as they were on their way, and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry, and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; and he beheld the sky opened up, and a certain object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, and

there were in it all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. And a voice came to him, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat!" But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." And again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." And this happened three times; and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.

How clear do you need things to be? What do you say about this:

Rom 14:2-3 One man has faith that he may eat all things, **but he who is weak eats vegetables only.**

If eating meat was not desirable, shouldn't Paul have said so?

1 Cor 10:25-26 Eat anything that is sold in the meat market, without asking questions for conscience' sake; for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains.

Yes, I know this is about food sacrificed to idols, but just look: Paul tells them to eat *meat!*

It's not just a matter of meat or no meat, either. The crux of the matter is this: concern over extending our life span is, according to Scripture, ridiculous, because all the worry in the world will not add anything to add to our life span!

Matt 6:27-28 "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span?"

Luke 12:25 "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span?"

In fact, we should be anxious for nothing!

Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Doesn't it seem strange, all this effort and concern about what we eat, anti-cancer diets, and all things physical and temporal, in light of clear Scripture telling us where our mind and our treasure should be?

Matt 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

[You might also not that a few verses down, the text says: (Matt 6:24) "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Then, after **that**, Jesus says we should not be anxious about what we eat!]

Heb 12:1-2 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

We're to "live sensibly" and look for the blessed hope! Is it living sensibly when we get caught up in every passing craze, or are we indulging those same worldly desires we're warned to deny? Should we be commended for our wisdom, or admonished that we are being, "tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming..." (Eph 4:14-15). Are we, in fact, "...led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim 3:6-7)?

Yes. we've been warned about false teachers, but do we know them when we see them? Is it at all disturbing that you have a so-called Christian movement that almost universally says we shouldn't eat meat, and yet the Spirit specifically mentions those who "advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared" when delineating the identifiable characteristics of those who have "fallen away from the faith," paid attention to "deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons," and who use the hypocrisy of liars? Shouldn't that give one pause? Oh, and in case you don't think meat is one of the foods that God created to be shared, reread 1 Cor. 10:25-26 above, because Paul makes it clear that meat fits in that category.

1 Tim 4:1-5 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

In The Beginning

So, what about those people who lived nearly a thousand years? Was it because of diet, as many of these practitioners say? Why don't we live that long now? Is the shortening of the lifespan connected with the eating of meat?

God created the perfect man. That is, He created Adam with a perfectly formed body and mind, but Adam was NOT a superman. We know this because Adam was A MAN. Some people say that we have hidden powers and capabilities that we are holdovers from Ademic man, that we are "fearfully, wonderfully made," so we should love ourselves. This is a misuse of Scripture, and contrary to Scripture and logic. The genome for *homo sapiens sapiens* is the same today as it was for Adam and Eve, whose DNA contained **all** of the diversity of humanity which would spring from them. If the genome were different, **Adam would not have been human**. With all the talk of cloning in our day, the greatest fear of many responsible scientists is genetic manipulation that changes the genome, thus producing an entirely new species.

Gen 1:31 And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Gen 2:6-8 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Gen 2:21-23 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. And the man said,

"This is now bone of my bones,
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man."

Ps 139:13-16

For Thou didst form my inward parts;
Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.
I will give thanks to Thee, for *I am fearfully and wonderfully made;*
Wonderful are Thy works,
And my soul knows it very well.
My frame was not hidden from Thee,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth.
Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Thy book they were all written,
The days that were ordained for me,
When as yet there was not one of them.

It's true, man was once long-lived. Adam and Eve would have lived forever (death, after all, was a result of sin.) Adam's offspring lived hundreds of years.

Gen 5:5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

Gen 5:8 So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

Gen 5:11 So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years, and he died.

Gen 5:14 So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

Gen 5:27 So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

Why don't we live to be nine hundred years or more? The Christian Nutrition Ministers claim it is because we started eating meat, something God did not intend. This cannot be correct, as we shall shortly see. In any event, we must look at Genesis six to begin with, and here we have two ways to go:

1. God deliberately shortened man's lifespan. He did this because people were having unnatural relations with angels (the sons of God.)

Gen 6:1-4 Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. Then the LORD said, "**My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.**" The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

God shortened man's lifespan to an outside limit of 120 years. Many commentators complain that this is not the correct interpretation because:

“... the age of many of the post-diluvian patriarchs exceeded that specified time-namely, Noah and his sons lived much longer after the flood-Arphaxad, 530 years (Gen 11:13); Salah, 403 (Gen 11:15); Eber, 430 (Gen 11:17); Abraham, 175 (Gen 15:7); Isaac, 180 (Gen 35:28); Jacob, 147 (Gen 47:28); and after the time of Moses the life of man was gradually shortened, and reduced further and further, until it was fixed at the normal standard of threescore years and ten.” (from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft)

They claim that what is spoken of here is that mankind has 120 years left to get right with God before the flood comes. Yet, the view that God here limited man's lifespan to, at most, 120 years, is at least as ancient as Josephus, and was long the preferred view. There are two things in favor of this interpretation:

1) Chapter 5 ends with the following verses:

Gen 5:28-32

And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. Now he called his name Noah, saying, "This one shall give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed." Then Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other sons and daughters. So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

So here we have Noah, aged 500, having children, but when next we hear of Noah:

Gen 6:8-15

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. [etc...]

Notice, Noah *became* the father of three sons, *now* the earth was corrupt... *then* God said to Noah... If Noah was five hundred years old and became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth after that, and God called him after he was a father, how could Noah be 600 years old when the rain came if God gave mankind 120 years respite before destruction came? More likely is that God decreed 120 years as an extreme limit and phased His decree in over several generations.

2) If Gen. 6:3 is referring to mankind and not to man's lifespan, then saying "his days shall be one hundred and twenty years," would mean that God intended to wipe out the human race, yet God immediately made provision to save a portion of the human race in Noah and his family.

Taking this view, it is easy to see that God decreed the shortening of the human lifespan *before* He told Noah and his family to eat meat (He didn't just permit it – He gave them animal flesh for food!)

Gen 9:1-4 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. And the fear of you and the terror of you shall be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are

given. **Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant.**

Hum... Was the new food supposed to be the poison that would keep man from living longer than 120 years? Is that what the "Christian Health Minister" is saying? That would be some gift from the Father, huh? **GOD WOULD NOT DO THAT!**

Matt 7:8-12 "Or what man is there among you, when his son shall ask him for a loaf, will he give him a stone? "Or if he shall ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!**

What keeps us from living longer, then? **God's explicit will!** As part of creation, mankind suffers under futility and slavery to corruption, and we have a part in the groaning and suffering that creation is subject to. This corruption and futility are thought by many to be the direct result of sin, but Scripture clearly says that creation was subjected to futility by God (not Satan, because Satan would not hope to set creation free "into the glory of the children of God.") The corruption of our physical bodies, at this time, is the explicit and direct will of God, so is it any wonder that a world in rebellion against Him should be obsessed with health, fitness, and extending life? Notice that, in the following verse, "was subjected to" is Aorist, third person, singular. This means it was done to creation and that it is a past action with continuing present results (was subjected to corruption with the result that it continues to be corrupted.)

Rom 8:20-23 For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its **slavery to corruption** into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Rom 8:20

[Subject to vanity] The word "subject to" means placed in such a state; subjected to it by the appointment of another, as a soldier has his rank and place assigned him in an army. The word "vanity" here mataioetes (NT:3153) is descriptive of the present condition of the Christian, as frail and dying; as exposed to trials, temptations, and cares; as in the midst of conflicts, and of a world which may be emphatically pronounced vanity. More or less, the Christian is brought under this influence; his joys are marred; his peace is discomposed; his affections wander; his life is a life of vanity and vexation.

[Not willingly] Not voluntarily. It is not a matter of choice. It is not what is congenial to his renewed nature. That would aspire to perfect holiness and peace. But this subjection is one that is contrary to it, and from which he desires to be delivered. This describes substantially the same condition as Rom 7:15-24.

[But by reason] By him dia (NT:1223). It is the appointment of God, who has chosen to place his people in this condition; and who for wise purposes retains them in it.

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2. Something that was different after the flood, caused man's life to be shortened.

If you say that the decree of 120 years referred to a time between God's announcement of the coming flood, and it's beginning, and not to lifespan, then the reason for the decreased lifespan can only be speculation. Certainly, some can speculate that it was the addition of meat to the diet, but that's not the only thing that changed.

In the original creation, there was a layer of water or water vapor above the firmament (the sky.)

Gen 1:6-8

Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. And God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

A thick layer of water vapor would protect the planet from solar radiation, and it also had an apparent effect upon the global climate:

Gen 2:5-6

Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth; and there was no man to cultivate the ground. But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

Instead of rain, a mist rising up from the ground irrigated the earth. In fact, a thick layer of water or water vapor would moderate temperatures worldwide, so the entire climate would have been much more mild, and harmful radiation (and resultant mutations; all observed mutations have had a negative effect upon an organism) would have been virtually non-existent. [See Center for Scientific Creation article: <http://www.creationscience.com/onlinebook/FAQ32.html>]

The release of the water canopy, along with the breaking up of the "fountains of the deep," (Gen 7:11) and the covering of the earth with water, would have drastically changed earth climate, making it much harsher, prone to storms and ice-ages, and extremes of heat and cold.

Why was man's lifespan shorter after the flood? If Gen. 6 doesn't tell you, and the subjecting of creation to futility and corruption doesn't tell you, take your pick. The flood itself, the post-flood climate and increased radiation, and a reduced gene pool all occurred at the same time that people became meat-eaters at the decree of God. Also, if they started eating meat immediately after the flood, and if meat was the cause of early death, why did it take generations for the effects to show up?

Conclusion

People can say anything they want. They can eat what they want, and believe what they want about it. When they try claiming that their way is God's way, and that everyone must live that way...

When they write books, and profit off the saints...

When they elevate themselves to a virtual dietary priesthood...

...They'd better be able to back it up!

People tear Scripture out of context to prove all manner of goofy things. They ignore primary applications, they read all sorts of things into the text, and although they may amass a following, and gain material wealth; in the end it profits them nothing. Clear and uncomplicated passages of Scripture say that these Christian Alternative Medical or Christian Vegetarian "experts" are wrong, and might be false teachers, at that.

It's not a matter of what I think, or what you think. It's about what you will trust, a man's opinion, testimonial evidence, **or the Word**. Ultimately, however, it's about this: can we take our eyes off ourselves, our health and wealth, our petty concerns and start...

...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Heb 12:2-3