

That's What Eve Said

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"To eat, or, not to eat?" That is the question!

Today's broadcast is titled, "That's What Eve Said," so let's set the tone for our broadcast as Judy Harper performs her song, "Eden, A Perfect Place."

[music – Judy Harper, "Eden, A Perfect Place"]

Part 1

Eve must have thought to herself, "To eat, or, not to eat? That is the question!" God told her not to eat the forbidden fruit; but His prohibition did not seem logical to her. You've heard the story many times before; but let's read it again.

1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. [Genesis 3:1-13]

Eve knew what God had said. She told the serpent, “But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” She knew she should not eat it—but she ate it anyway. Why? Because, “when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” She could see it was good for food. She trusted her own wisdom more than God’s wisdom. So, she ate it.

It is really easy for us to blame Eve for her stupidity. It is easy for us to say, “If God had told us not to eat it, we would not have eaten it.” Really? God has told us what not to eat; but many Christians eat it anyway. If they feel the slightest bit of guilt about eating bacon, it is because of what they heard some doctor say, not because of what God said. They see that the bacon is good for food, and the smell is pleasing to the nose, and eat thereof.

Eve was beguiled by the serpent. He said, “Ye shall not surely die”. Modern Protestants have been beguiled, too. They have been told, “Those health laws were only for the Jews.” As we will see from scripture, the dietary restrictions are still in effect. The New Testament makes it perfectly clear that Christians must observe the distinction between clean and unclean meats.

Some people have been told that Jesus declared all meats clean. If Jesus really said that, nobody told Caiphaz, Peter, or the Council of Elders in Jerusalem.

If Jesus had declared unclean meats to be kosher, and told Jews to eat them, Caiphaz could have charged Jesus with encouraging people to break God’s law. There would not have been any need for false witnesses to put Jesus to death if truthful witnesses could be found who would say Jesus declared unclean meat to be clean. If Jesus had eaten unclean meats, he would have sinned against God—but Jesus never sinned. He never ate unclean meat.

Peter refused to eat unclean food long after Jesus’ resurrection. We know this from Acts Chapter 10.

Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.”

“Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.”

The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. [Acts 10:9b-16, NIV]

Bible scholars tell us this happened about 14 or 15 years after the resurrection. In all that time, Peter had never eaten anything unclean. If Jesus had declared all meat to be clean, Peter would not have refused to eat the unclean animals, especially since he was so hungry.

Was the purpose of the vision to get Peter to eat snakes and reptiles? Peter knew that wasn't what God was using this vision to tell him. Here's what he told the household of Cornelius the vision meant.

He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. [Acts 10:28-29, NIV]

When he was called on the carpet in Acts 11, Peter told the Council the same thing, and they agreed. The vision didn't declare unclean meat to be clean—it declared Gentiles to be eligible for church membership.

Later, when the question about whether or not the Gentile converts should keep the Jewish dietary laws, the Council wrote to the Gentiles and said,

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. [Acts 15:28-29, NIV]

It was just as important for the Gentile converts to keep God's dietary laws as it was to keep God's laws about idolatry and sexual immorality.

Some Christians try to justify their ignorance of God's dietary laws by claiming, “Jesus doesn't care what I eat.” He cared what the members of the churches in Pergamum and Thyatira ate—and He cared a lot! Do you think He doesn't care as much about you, and what you eat?

To the Church in Pergamum

I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.

Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. [Rev 2:13-14, NIV]

And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. [Rev 2:18-20 KJV]

In both cases, Jesus considered eating forbidden food to be just as great a sin as sexual immorality. God forbade Adam and Eve from eating from a certain tree. He forbade the Old Testament believers from eating unclean foods. He forbade the New Testament believers from eating those same unclean foods (and clean foods sacrificed to idols, too).

Since it is clear from the scriptures that prohibition against certain food is still in effect, why don't Protestant churches obey God's dietary laws? We will address that question after Mary Hanson and Joshua Hanson, accompanied by JoAn Witzel, sing “Trust and Obey.”

[music - Mary and Joshua Hanson, JoAn Witzel, “Trust and Obey”]

Part 2

In the first segment of this broadcast, we saw that God used food as a simple test of obedience for Adam and Eve. After they failed the test, and they no longer had access to the forbidden fruit, and could not have eaten it if they wanted to, God instituted another simple test. He made a distinction between clean and unclean animals. Clean animals could be sacrificed and eaten. Unclean animals must not be sacrificed and eaten.

Then we saw that the dietary restrictions remained all through New Testament times. They were not abolished at the cross. New Gentile converts were required to keep kosher by the Council of Jerusalem more than 15 years after Jesus' resurrection.

Given the clear Biblical instruction to abstain from forbidden food, why don't most Protestant churches obey God's simple test of obedience? History tells us that it is a tradition born from hatred of the Jews.

Abstaining from unclean meats is something Jews do. To make a clear distinction between Jews and Christians, the food prohibitions were abolished by a corrupt, anti-Semitic church in the dark ages. They changed the official day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday because they didn't want to worship on the same day as the Jews. They celebrated Jesus' resurrection on the pagan fertility holiday, Easter, instead of on Passover because they would rather celebrate with pagans than with Jews. The custom of eating ham on Easter was instituted largely to offend the Jews, because Jews killed Christ on Easter weekend. Eating food that Jews don't eat was done just to make a clear distinction between Christians and Jews.

In recent years, Protestants have tried to rewrite history to downplay the anti-Semitism of the medieval church, and given more politically correct reasons for these well-established traditions. It is falsely claimed that the apostles started worshipping on Sunday soon after the resurrection to honor the day Jesus arose. We showed that wasn't true in a previous broadcast. Christians kept the Sabbath until the fourth century.

In the same way, Protestants have tried to justify their dietary disobedience by claiming that the distinction between clean and unclean animals started with the Jews. Christians would know this is untrue if children were simply taught the story of Noah's Ark accurately.

The overwhelming majority of people were taught from the time they were little children that Noah took two of every kind of animal on the Ark. That's not true. Genesis is very clear on this point.

And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. [Genesis 7:1-2 KJV]

Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals long before there were any Jews. He took two of every unclean animal and seven of every clean animal. Then, Genesis tells us what happened when he got off the Ark.

And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. [Genesis 8:20 KJV]

The reason why God told Noah to take seven clean animals is because clean animals can be sacrificed; but unclean animals can't. (God isn't honored by unclean offerings.) By taking four males and three females of each kind,

Noah was able to sacrifice one male of every clean animal, leaving three breeding pairs of every kind of clean animal.

Noah's three sons and their wives were the three breeding pairs of humans. No human was sacrificed at that time because Jesus was to do that later.

Why are children taught that Noah took two of every kind of animal on the Ark? It's that old anti-Semitism rearing its ugly head. If children were taught that different numbers of clean and unclean animals were taken on the Ark, they would realize that God's distinction between clean and unclean wasn't made for Jews alone. The distinction between clean and unclean goes all the way back to Noah's Ark, and even before that to the sacrifices in the Garden of Eden.

If children were taught that Noah took seven of the clean animals, and two of the unclean animals, there is the chance that a child might ask the embarrassing question, "What animals are clean and what are unclean?" Sunday School teachers don't want to have to explain that God said not to eat pigs, knowing that some of the children probably ate bacon and sausage before coming to church that morning.

Since they weren't told the truth about Noah's Ark as children, many Christians don't even know how to tell a clean meat from an unclean meat. The relevant Bible passages are Leviticus Chapter 11 and Deuteronomy 14:1-21. The general rules are:

1. You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.
2. Of all the creatures living in the water of the seas and the streams you may eat any that have fins and scales.
3. Don't eat scavenger birds, or birds of prey. All other birds are clean.
4. You may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. All other insects are unclean.
5. You are not to eat any creature that moves along the ground, whether it moves on its belly or walks on all fours or on many feet; it is unclean.

This requires more biological knowledge than some people possess, so here is a list of common foods to help you out. {See the chart, "To Eat, or, Not To Eat" on the last page of this transcript. }

The common beasts you may eat are cattle, deer, goats, and sheep. You may not eat pigs or rabbits.

The fish you may eat are bass, bluegill, bonito, cod, flounder, halibut, mahi-mahi, salmon, sardines, sunfish, tilapia, trout, tuna, and whitefish. The forbidden seafood includes such things as calamari, catfish, clams, crab, frog legs, lobster, oysters, shrimp, and swordfish.

You may eat chicken, Cornish game hen, duck, quail, turkey, and eggs from any of those birds. You may not eat eagles, hawks, owls, seagulls, or vultures.

The only insects you may eat are crickets, grasshoppers, katydids, and locusts. All other bugs are forbidden.

You may not eat a clean animal if you find it lying on the road, dead. Nor may you eat it with the blood still in it.

Some people say that God told the Jews not to eat pork because of trichinosis, and not to eat lobster because of cholesterol. They say God knew things about health that the Jews were not sophisticated enough to understand; but since we modern, sophisticated people know the trichinosis worms can be killed by thoroughly cooking pig meat, and there are cholesterol-lowering drugs, it is okay for us to eat those things today. That's nothing more than a rationalization similar to the one Eve used.

God simply said not to eat those things. He didn't say not to eat them unless they are properly cooked, or unless mitigating drugs are taken. Yes, there are good health reasons not to eat the food He has forbidden, and that might have been one reason He said not to eat them—but He might have had another reason, too.

Apparently, since the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil doesn't exist any more, He decided to replace it with a prohibition on certain foods as a simple test of obedience. God told Eve, "Don't eat from the tree in the midst of the garden." Eve thought she knew better than God, so she ate it, thinking her disobedience was not a terrible sin. God told Adam and Eve's descendants, "Don't eat these particular things." Many Christians think they know better than God, so they eat them, thinking that their disobedience is not a terrible sin.

Eve thought she would not be punished for eating the forbidden fruit. She was wrong. You may think that God will not punish you for eating forbidden food. Do you really want to take that chance?

God told Adam and Eve not to eat the forbidden fruit. It was a simple test. They failed. God has told His beloved children plainly not to eat the forbidden food. It is a simple test. Are you going to continue to eat the forbidden food?

How can Christians criticize Eve for eating the forbidden fruit while they are eating a ham sandwich? With all the good things God gave Eve to eat, did she really have to eat from that one tree? With all the good things God gave you to eat, do you really have to eat the things He has forbidden?

If you love God, you will obey Him. Abstaining from forbidden foods is such a simple test of loyalty—don't fail it.

[music – Dave Pogge, "Find Us Faithful"]

{See "To Eat, or Not To Eat" chart on the next page}

	To Eat	or	Not To Eat
Beasts	Antelope		Camel
	Bison		Hyrax
	Cow		Lizard
	Deer		Pig
	Goat		Rabbit
	Ibex		Rat
	Ox		Snake
	Sheep		Weasel
Seafood	Bass		Catfish
	Bluegill		Clam
	Bonito		Crab
	Cod		Eel
	Flounder		Frog
	Halibut		Lobster
	Mahi-mahi		Octopus
	Salmon		Oysters
	Sardines		Porpoise
	Sunfish		Scallops
	Tilapia		Shark
	Trout		Shrimp
	Tuna		Squid
	Whitefish		Swordfish
Fowl	Chicken		Eagle
	Cornish Game Hen		Cormorant
	Duck		Hawk
	Quail		Heron
	Turkey		Osprey
	Eggs from above		Owl
			Seagull
			Vulture
Bugs	Cricket		Ants
	Grasshopper		Flying insects
	Katydid		Gnats
	Locust		All the rest