



# The Order of the Golden Age



## The Voice of Scripture in Favor of a Bloodless Diet

By Rev. J. G. Ouseley

The history of God's dealings with Humanity has been a history of progressive refinement and development, by which we do not mean modern civilization and luxury. This appears in the matter of pure diet, the Scripture argument for which has been hitherto so little noticed or understood.

In the golden age, God said that man should live on the fruits of the earth (Gen.i.), "Behold I have given unto you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." And so for an age they lived on the fruits of the earth, and it went well with them.

After a time wickedness came upon the face of the earth and men began to lust for flesh, whether from having tasted of animals offered in sacrifice, and having discovered the art of making fermented liquor which inflames the blood, or which is as probable, from having over-populated the earth, and brought famine upon themselves. So it came to pass that men grew violent, lusted for the flesh of their humbler earth-mates, and then for the flesh of their own species, and this violence brought on them the judgement of God, and the flood came which swept away the evil race.

After the flood God is said to have given permission to eat flesh of animals, even as afterwards God is said to have sent quails to the Israelites when they tired of the manna given to them. Boils and blains were the result of this flesh-eating in the wilderness. So "He gave them flesh in His wrath." But with this permission after the Deluge, there was a restriction, "The blood thereof ye shall not eat."

After Noah, if not before, we read of a further restriction, or a fresh promulgation of what had been, under Moses, the law-giver of the nation, who further forbade the chosen people a very large indulgence, which was before permitted. Animals were then divided into clean and unclean; and from the unclean, the elect people chosen to teach the nations of the earth the divine laws were utterly to abstain.

Next were sent prophets like Daniel, who set examples of abstinence from flesh altogether, and of these are the schools of the prophets somewhat similar to the monasteries, whether Jew, Essenian or Christian of after times.

Then was sent Jesus of Nazareth, who ate not flesh-meat nor gave it to the people, but took away the bloody sacrifices, and substituted for them the Christian sacrifice of bread and wine with oil and incense, as the great representatives of the fruits of the earth. Neither did the disciples of Christ eat flesh-meat,\* and when the multitudes were hungry, they were fed with a few barley loaves and some fishes; never do we read of flesh of beast or bird.

After this we read of the Holy Spirit, speaking through its organ, the Church, directly forbidding to the Gentile converts blood and things strangled, as well as, and equally with, fornication. Some interpret that as a relegation to "the precepts of Noah," but, taking the words as we find them, and interpreted by the practice of Jesus and His disciples, every Christian who eats flesh-meat, whether procured by the knife or by strangling, is guilty of direct disobedience to the commands of the Holy Spirit through the very apostles of Jesus Christ, and modern science reveals the fact that however an animal be killed we cannot eat of the flesh without eating of the blood also. Every Christian who eats flesh-meat, beast or bird, must either himself or herself, shed blood or "strangle" or cause others so to do, and thereby cause others to sin as well as themselves. As for objections

drawn from the Pauline Epistles, it needs only to be remembered that meat in this English Version means any kind of food, as it does to this day in Scotland and other places. Also that St. Paul, the founder of celibacy of the clergy, admits that in such matters he gave only his private opinion, "had no command from the Lord."

In the early days of Christianity the disciples of Christ were abstainers from flesh, which is shewn by the best writers of ecclesiastical history, and this is one great proof that their Master was an abstainer also, for disciples do not usually strive to be better than their Master. The first Fathers of the Christian Church, who lived directly after the Apostles, and were taught by them, were abstainers from flesh, and they adhered to the Pythagorean philosophy as their Master did, and taught a pure system till the Christian Church became afterwards defiled by the gross and sensual elements which crept into it.

Next, the same Church, inspired by the same Spirit, (if we believe that Christ was with her by this Spirit "to the end of the world") established entire orders of men and women, to shew forth by example the more perfect way, and to all these she forbade flesh-eating entirely.

Now, the same Spirit which resides in the whole body of the Church is making a fresh effort, and striving to teach men to cease from flesh-eating altogether; to live a pure life, to eat and drink pure meats and drinks, and abstain from flesh and blood, which excite the flesh to deeds of violence and impurity, and which can have no other tendency.

A further step, when humanity is more purified and renovated, and which even now the foremost have taken, is the ceasing from the grosser vegetable products, and living only on fruits, and their juices, grains (at least, after a certain age, when these grosser vegetable products are no longer needed.)

In the after state, the resurrected condition, those who are in spiritual bodies cease from these, and live, some think, on the inner essences of fruits and flowers. After this there is a veil - but the steps of the ladder so far are sure and certain, distinct and well-defined, shewing that the leading of God is strictly progressive - from step to step, upward, the voice is clear, there is no uncertainty, no ceasing of the Spirit's guidance, if we believe that which is promised, "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age," and again, "I will send to you the Spirit of Truth, who will guide you into all truth."

It is for us to look to those things which concern the present time and the generation succeeding us, and to obey the laws which give us health. By the experience of ages, by the testimony of competent physicians, by the witness of great men, philosophers, thinkers, and workers of every nation and climate, it is shewn that man can live most healthily and pleasantly and enjoy the longest life, on fruits, grains, oil, and juices of fruits, with pure whole-meal bread, which in itself contains all the elements of perfect nutrition, and pure water (soft or distilled); and - if any need or think they need animal products - milk, eggs, cheese and butter, and honey.

To these let there be added, early retiring, early rising, the daily bath, ablutions, exercise, pure air, profitable work which gives pleasure to the worker, and the sympathy of a friend, and due opportunities for recreation and the cultivation of the mind and heart, and we have all that is needful (on the material plane) for the enjoyment of a long and healthy life, and a vigorous mind, open to receive the light of truth, and such revelations of the divine order, law and will, as may be given from age to age, according to the varying needs and capacities of the human race. The connection between the body and the mind, and their mutual interaction is daily becoming more and more manifest, and what we eat and drink and how we are clothed can no longer be thought a matter of indifference to be ruled by the insensate caprices of fashion and custom and a perverted taste.

Pure diet and cleanliness are the first steps of the ladder which leads from earth to heaven, from wandering to rest and peace, and they are the basis of all true reform. The true Theosophists, be they Brahmin, Buddhist, Parsee, Jew, Moslem or Christian, have ever been, are, and will be, abstainers from flesh-meat. And no system of Reform, no great spiritual work, can succeed, which ignores the importance of pure and natural diet and the cleanliness and health of the body as well as the mind.

\*The immediate disciples of Jesus, especially St. Matthew, St. James, and St. Peter, we are expressly assured by St. Clement of Alexandria and St. Augustine, lived entirely on non-flesh foods. See "Ethics of Diet," by H. Williams (Pitman, London), pp. 52-83.

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