

Hunting, Fishing and eating meat from Gods word

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Assertions/Conclusions of this article:

Here we will show conclusively that man has been given all animal life for his use and that there is no sin in taking these animals for his use and for eating them. We are not interested in debating hypothetical 'sins' here not mentioned specifically in scripture, nor are we going to discuss that animals were not eaten in the garden by Adam and Eve, as these are irrelevant points for us HERE and NOW in this new covenant.

Supporting evidence:

Firstly, we are not interested in debating hypothetical 'sins' here not mentioned specifically in scripture in that no mention of a mans mental/emotional state while hunting/fishing is ever taken into account in Gods word.

Nor are we going to discuss that animals were not eaten in the garden by Adam and Eve.

These are irrelevant points for us HERE and NOW in this new covenant and merely a distraction from the truth. What we are focusing on here is one single issue if whether or not Gods word allows hunting/fishing and our consuming of meats from animals.

We will start in the Garden where God clothed Adam and Eve.

And for Adam and his wife Jehovah God made coats of skins, and clothed them. (Gen 3:21 MKJV)

The use of the word 'skins' there overall takes on the intent of animal skins. While we do find this after the fall, this is only relevant in that at this present point Adam and Eve understand that they are naked now, they did not grasp this before, apparently, thus before the fall there was no need for them to be covered. If there had have been, surely God would have done no differently than He did at this point. God Himself used animals to create clothing for man.

Now we move on to Genesis 9...here we see Gods clear permission to take/eat animals.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon the animals of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon all that moves on the earth, and upon all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herb. But you shall not eat of flesh with the life in it, or the blood of it. (Gen 9:2-4 MKJV)

Here, after the flood, God gives man every animal of the earth for his use. Man is given the right to eat these animals and how does one do so unless he hunts them? (short of raising them for that purpose, which some, of course do). There is a restriction that we see even at the time of Acts, that we not eat the blood of any animal.

Whenever this topic is presented to you, always refer back to Genesis 9:2-4 here to see what God say on the matter.

Let us jump ahead to the Proverbs and see what is written there about eating animals.

The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious. (Pro 12:27 KJV)

I think that is fairly clear.

There is some confusion concerning the exact intent of 'roasteth' there, it either means what it is rendered as, or it the very least means to 'snare or catch in a net'...ie "hunting".

Scripture calls this man 'slothful' who does not do so when he hunts.

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Here are passages showing Jesus' involvement in both helping to catch, and eating, fish.

And they said to Him, "We do not have anything here except five loaves of bread and two fish." But He said, "Bring them here to Me." And commanding the crowds to recline on the grass, taking the five loaves of bread and the two

fish, looking up to heaven, He blessed, and breaking them, He gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the crowds. So they all ate and were satisfied, and they took up what they had left of the fragments, twelve baskets full. (Mat 14:17-20 EMTV)

Now Jesus, having summoned His disciples, He said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been remaining with Me three days, and they do not have anything to eat. And I do not desire to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get so many loaves of bread in this deserted place, so as to satisfy so great a crowd?" Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish." So He commanded the crowds to recline on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish, having given thanks, He broke them, and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the crowd. So they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up what they had left of the fragments, seven hampers full. (Mat 15:32-37 EMTV)

Dismiss them, so that they may go into the surrounding farms and villages and may buy themselves food; for they have nothing to eat." But answering, He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish." Then He gave orders for them all to recline in groups on the green grass. And they reclined in parties of hundreds and of fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves, and was giving them to His disciples, so that they might set them before them; and the two fish He divided to all. So they all ate and were filled.

(Mar 6:36-42 EMTV)

Then His disciples answered Him, "From where will anyone be able to satisfy these people with bread here in this deserted place?" He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." So He commanded the crowd to recline on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and having given thanks, He broke them and was giving them to His disciples, so that they might set them before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them before the people. So they ate and were filled, and they took up an abundance of fragments, seven hampers full. (Mar 8:4-8 EMTV)

Jesus, the Fisherman

and He saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen, after getting out of them, were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and He asked him to put out a little from the land. And sitting down, He began to teach the crowds from the boat. Now when He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have labored all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will lower the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great multitude of fish, and their net was tearing. So they beckoned to their partners who were in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they were sinking. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For astonishment gripped him and all who were with him at the haul of fish which they had taken. (Luk 5:2-9 EMTV)

Post resurrection Jesus is still eating meat

Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But as they still disbelieved for

joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Do you have any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And taking it, He ate it in their presence. (Luk 24:39-43 EMTV)

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and he threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. Then as they got off onto the land, they saw a charcoal fire laid there, and fish placed on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." Simon Peter went up and hauled the net onto the land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared to question Him, "Who are You?"--knowing that it was the Lord.

(Joh 21:7-12 EMTV)

There can be no doubt that our Lord both helped His disciples to catch fish and also ate of animal flesh Himself. Notice that nowhere is anyone's motives or mindset brought into account. This is because it is irrelevant. There is no scripture that says "hunt...but ONLY if you feel badly about it"...and neither shall we make up new laws and sins to add to Gods word on the matter.

There are those who create these new 'sins' by saying that Jesus and His disciples fished for food...of necessity...and since many hunters do not hunt because they have to, then they do it for pleasure, so it is supposedly 'sin'. We see in this passage that Jesus had a defenseless fish hooked and caught merely to pluck a coin from its mouth.

Mat 17:27 "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, and cast in a hook, and take the first fish coming up. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a coin; taking that, give it to them for Me and you."

Do we believe that Jesus (God) could not simply have made this coin appear in His pocket or in a tree somewhere instead of hooking a poor fish in the mouth?

Of course He could have...yet He chose to "use" a fish to do so. Is Jesus 'cruel' for needlessly hooking a fish in its mouth simply to gain a coin that He could have made appear right in His own hand?

Of course not.

And neither is the hunter 'cruel' when he hunts for reasons other than food.

Eating Meat and Vegetarianism

Lets look to a couple passages and see what Gods word says about eating meats versus being a Vegetarian.

Romans 14 is a wonderful passage as it is apparent that Paul is dealing with this same issue that some are today.

Receive one that is weak in the faith, not for disputes over opinions.

One indeed believes that he may eat all things, but another, being weak, eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.

Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or he falls. And he shall be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. (Rom 14:1-4 EMTV)

The main point being that NEITHER side is to judge the other in the matter. Both stand before God alone in the matter, not each other.

The second issue is that it is he who refuses to eat meats, believing that he shouldn't or isn't permitted to for whatever reason, it is this man that Gods word calls 'weak' of faith, not the man who eats meats and knows that he is able and permitted to do so.

Responsibility, Denial and Hypocrisy

The argument that men hunt and fish to feel powerful or prideful is one that I've found comes from either ignorance or misconceptions... at least where most christian hunters are concerned.

If anything most christian hunters would feel a sense of loss when an animal life is taken even if they do enjoy hunting. I know that even when I take the life of a fish, there is always a sense of concern that the animal not suffer needlessly and it is always in the back of my mind that I've taken the animals life. Its not a sense of guilt, per se, but more just an acknowledgement that I am the one who ended this animals life.

I think that most hunters who are truly christian would feel this way, as well as many other hunters who are responsible and care about wildlife and nature, even if they are not believers.

One thing that is quite disturbing to me about many of these arguments where hunting is concerned is the accusations levied against hunters because they dont 'need' to hunt, but choose to do so.

The fact is that a hunter or fisherman is far more capable of understanding the issue of animals literally dying to be food on their plate, than someone who has only bought their meats from store.

Those who have always purchased fast food and grocery meats keep themselves pretty much clueless as to what really goes on in putting meat on their tables and in their stomachs. In most cases it is simply ignorance of the details...in others it is a willful rejection of responsibility in the death the animal being eaten to relieve oneself of that guilt....the 'I am not the one who killed the animal' excuse...

To stand back and refuse to kill an animal for oneself ...to refuse to take the whole responsibility upon oneself for the slaughtering of the animal by refusing to assume the guilt for killing the animal simply because one buys their meat at the market....to then turn and levy judgment against the person who does take that responsibility upon themselves by hunting/fishing....is the finest display of hypocrisy one can commit.

We can have no respect for the opinion of the individual who judges those hunters/fishermen who do take on this responsibility and personally know the cost, the price that was paid for that roasted animal flesh on their plate, while these accusers partake of the very same animal flesh, yet deny their own responsibility in the death, and possible abuse, of the animal they consume.