

BIBLICAL LAWS ABOUT FOOD AS THE BASIS OF HEALTHY NUTRITION OF PEOPLE

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The importance of rational nutrition in human life for the civil society of independent Ukraine is considered in the paper. Irrational nutrition of a person is a source of various disease states, low physical and mental working capacity and reduction of the length of life. The results of historical and literary synthesis of pages of the Scripture clearly confirm that seven vitally important biblical products, namely: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil, honey and poultry, beef, lamb and eggs should be used in the daily nutrition.

Keywords: nutrition, biblical law, health, food, disease.

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Topicality

The importance of rational nutrition of people for the civil society of independent Ukraine is undeniable, because one of the main tasks in economic transformations of the current health care system provides for active formation of bases of healthy lifestyle among the country's population [4].

An axiom of this is the scientific fact that irrational nutrition of a person is a source of various disease states, low physical and mental working capacity and reduction of the length of life [10]. In addition, irrational nutrition serves as the cause of more than 80 different diseases, while every third our compatriot (adult and child) suffers from various illnesses, caused by the nutrition disorders. Among the considerable part of the dead there are victims of related malignant tumors and cardiovascular diseases [8].

"Men die due to recklessness in food, drinks and intemperance, not having lived even half of life that they could live. They consume the most difficult to digest food, drink the poisonous drinks, and then wonder why they do not live up a hundred years age. Paul Bragg (1991) wrote, "I'm sure that 99% of patients suffer that much because of the wrong, not natural nutrition" [13].

The significance of the marked words is that according to the WHO, the rational nutrition, on which the psychophysical health of the adult person depends, plays a major role among 12 mandatory conditions of healthy lifestyle [9], and in the prevention of diseases, strengthening

the health of a person. All this ultimately forms the basis of a healthy society.

Among the available information flows today, we attempted to entertain the importance of the biblical food in the context of the formation of bases of healthy way of human life in Ukraine of the newest format.

A motive for this is that healthy lifestyle serves as the prerequisite for the development of active participation in the labour, social, political, economic, family and household-related, recreational and other various forms of human activity [7], attainment of active longevity and full implementation of the social functions [5] with constant growth and changes in the nature of loads on human organism due to changes in political and socio-economic complexity of life of people in Ukraine and increasing risks of technological, environmental, psychological, political and military nature, which provoke negative changes in the state of health [20]. All this together makes this scientific research topical in its own content.

Aim

Role and place (as described in the Holy Scripture) of food as the vitally necessary thing in balanced nutrition and in the process of formation of bases of healthy way of human life.

Materials and methods

In carrying out the scientific work we used such methods as: bibliographical, qualimetric, historical and literary

synthesis, retrospective analysis, scientific abstraction and also methods of deductive awareness, structural and logical analysis with the system principles.

Results

Retrospective analysis of available information convincingly demonstrated that the connection between the person's state of health and the quality of food was well understood by many ancient peoples. The related data was found in the works of Hippocrates, Democritus, Celsius, Galen and others [11], while the great Avicenna formulated in this context the opinion relevant for today: "If the father of the disease is unknown, the mother is always the food" [1].

However, perhaps the most topical issue in rational nutrition with regard to formation of bases of healthy lifestyle among the population of Ukraine is the pages of the Holy Scripture. From the Book of Deuteronomy 8 [19] we can find that the Lord God gives seven vitally necessary products for a new generation of Israelis, destined to survive in the forty-year wandering, in order to possess the Promised Land.

In the Word of God within this context is said, "...For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are

iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee" (Deuteronomy 8:7-9).

Nowadays, in everyday life the consumption of seven vitally necessary products is like a blessing from fields of God's commandments, in this way we support both physical and spiritual health. It is important to note that modern medical science highly appreciates healing and nutritional qualities of seven important products mentioned in this passage of the Scripture.

As for the human consumption of meat it is important to refer to the Book of Genesis in the Holy Scripture, where it is said that once Abraham was sitting at the entrance of the tent during the heat of the day and saw three men in front of him. As they got to know each other, he invited them to the tent, ordered his servants to bring water to wash their feet, and ordered his wife Sarah to bake fresh breads for them. Abraham "...ran to the herd and chose a fine, tender calf, and gave it to a servant, who quickly prepared it. Abraham took cheese and milk, as well as the meat, and set these in front of them" (Genesis 18:6-7).

These guests told Abraham that Sarah would have a son within the next year. Indeed, next year, Sarah and Abraham had a son Isaac, despite the fact that both were not in the childbearing age.

Since then, over many generations Jewish families always kept ready fatted calf in case the "angel" comes to the house the guise of a traveler – to feed him [16].

In rich families of that time the beef and mutton were festive meals, cooked for special occasions - for banquets, weddings, soirees, sacrifices, but the duty was to kill lambs every year on Easter. We should also note the parable of the prodigal son, where the father was so delighted to have his son return home that commanded his servants, "...and bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate" (Luke 15:23).

Regarding such food as pork, we should refer to the Gospel of Mark that tells "... about a man with an unclean spirit who had his dwelling in the tombs", who lived in the land under Roman rule. Upon seeing this man, Jesus said to him,

"Come out, unclean soul, of this man!" And also asked him: "What is your name?" He responded, "Legion is my name, because we are many". There on the nearby hillside a large herd of pigs was feeding. So the demons begged Jesus, "Send us to the pigs, so that we may enter them". He gave them permission, and the unclean spirits came out and went into the pigs, and the herd of about two thousand rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the water" (Mark 5:12).

If pigs were "clean" animals, Jesus would never allow demons to enter them. He sent the demons in pigs and only made "unclean" meat more "unclean".

In addition, in that country controlled by the Romans, where sacrifices to the Roman gods were often made, cattle were usually sacrificed to "the gods above", and pigs to "the gods at the bottom". Jesus knew that pigs would be sacrificed to Satan and just sent the demons to hell in the shortest way.

In the animal world pig has always embodied gluttony. God probably appointed pig to clean the Earth from scum, while much of what pigs eat is not useful to human! In addition, they are not only gluttonous, but also very dirty animals [18].

The evidence in favor of the above-mentioned could be the work "Pork and human health" by the German physician Reckeweg Hans-Heinrich [15]. He points that toxic substances in pork are "sutoxins" and justifies them as risk factors in the occurrence of certain human diseases. A reason for this is that the chemical composition of pork meat is significantly different from other domestic animals, because in pork meat there are large quantities of cholesterol, fatty acids, histamine and growth hormone, which are harmful to human health.

One of the diseases with which a person can be infected, after eating the undercooked pork (heat treatment lower than 100 °C), is trichinosis, the agent – a parasite discovered in 1822 by the scientist Tiedemann and known in medicine as "trichinella spiralis" [17]. In Muslim countries, this disease is absent among the population, which is another proof of the greatest wisdom of the Almighty.

Turning the pages of the Holy Scripture in the Book of Leviticus we can

find warnings about human consumption of animal fat, "All fat is the Lord's. This is to be a lasting statute for all your generations, wherever you live. You are not to eat any fat or blood". (Leviticus 3:16-17). And then, "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, You shall eat no fat, of ox or sheep or goat. The fat of an animal that dies of itself and the fat of one that is torn by beasts may be put to any other use, but on no account shall you eat it. For every person who eats the fat of an animal of which a food offering may be made to the Lord shall be cut off from his people" (Leviticus 7:23-25).

So the Lord God forbade eating the animal fat in any of its form. In the mentioned passage of the Scripture nothing is said about vegetable or fish fat, but only that fat of animals known as "clean" can be sacrificed to God.

Actually, it is meant that fat, sometimes called peritoneal which lines the insides of animals, was burnt as sacrifices in the temple. In addition, it should be noted that in the God's guideline nothing is said about fat which is the part of meat of "clean animals", such as beef.

Nowadays, it is scientifically proved that any animal fats are organic substances which contain compounds of esters of triatomic alcohol / glycerol and fatty acids, namely: saturated (palmitic, stearic), unsaturated acids (oleic, linoleic, arachidonic) and F vitamin [6], known in chemistry as "triglycerides". Excessive consumption of it leads to the risk of occurrence of arterial pressure and a number of cardiovascular diseases [23].

As for the consumption of poultry meat and eggs, the Law of Moses gives the following recommendations about birds: "These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, the red kite, any kind of black kite, any kind of raven, the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat. But all other flying insects that have four legs you are to regard as clean" (Leviticus 11:13-19). 24 species of birds, mostly carnivorous are forbidden to consume according to Book of Leviticus.

In Deuteronomy 14:12-18 the

prohibited species of birds are listed. Such expressions are used as “all species” and “with their species”, though the exact description of these species is not given, while at the same time in Deuteronomy 14:20 it is stated that “Every clean bird you can eat”. In this, the pure bird means game (hunting) and poultry: chickens, geese, turkeys, ducks, pigeons, partridges, quails, that Jews were allowed to eat in the time of Jesus.

In the Bible occasions when Jesus hadn't eaten poultry were not mentioned, but He said about bird and fledglings (in English translation “hen and chickens”) in one of the Gospel verses, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Matthew 23:37).

In biblical times, Laws on consumption of meat were the same for poultry: kosher poultry was prepared by soaking, salting and roasting, and kosher meat was always without blood, corresponding to the Law of Leviticus which prohibited to eat blood of “clean” animals: “Moreover, you shall eat no blood whatever, whether of fowl or animal, in any of your dwelling places. Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people” (Leviticus 7:26-27).

Regarding the eggs – as a food product, it should be noted that in biblical times eggs were eaten before meals, but in time of Jesus they were the usual foodstuff.

In the Book of Job we can find very interesting question: “Does anyone want the tasteless white of an egg?” and then, “My appetite disappears when I look at it; I gag at the thought of eating it!” (Job 6: 6-7).

However, the attitude of Jesus to the eggs was better – He considered them well-gifts, “So I say to you: Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you will find; knock, and it shall be opened to you... Which of you, fathers, when your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or... when he asks an egg, will offer him a scorpion? So when you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, as a heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:9, 11-13). It should be mentioned that in times of

Jesus eggs were cooked in different ways, including frying and boiling. In addition fried or stewed fish under the layer of eggs was also popular.

Nowadays, many people avoid eggs because of cholesterol and the risk of contracting salmonella (acute infectious disease from the group of zoonoses, caused by bacteria of the genus Salmonella, accompanied by the symptoms of gastroenteritis and intoxication. There are nearly 2200 Salmonella serovars, which differ by O- i H- antigens).

Nowadays, it is scientifically proved that there is a lot of choline in the egg yolk, used in the human body to produce acetylcholine - one of the main neurotransmitters, providing work of brain and memory. Apart from choline eggs also contain folic acid, B group vitamins, antioxidants and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Most people do not know that egg yolks contain a lot of lecithin - substance which destroys the cholesterol [21].

The research conducted in 1999 at the Harvard University, showed that consumption of one egg a day did not increase the probability of cardiovascular diseases or a heart attack [22]. Instead, one eaten egg per day helped to prevent heart diseases.

The best way to get rid of harmful bacteria, with which eggs can be infected, is to properly cook eggs - to cook or fry the egg until the yolk becomes firm [2].

Another harmful factor to Human health in the context of formation of bases of a healthy way of life is the uncontrolled consumption of food and excessive weight - “overeating / hyperphagia” [12].

In addition, referring to the Bible, it should be noted that overeating is also the consumption of junk food. In the Book of Proverbs we read, “When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food” (Proverbs 23:1-3). It should be noted that food of rich people in some parts of the Scripture is named “delicacies”. This probably refers to fatty foods, especially fatty meat.

The consumption of meat in the Bible is often associated with overeating. Thus, “And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and sixty measures of meal. Ten fat oxen,

and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, besides harts, and deer, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl” (I Book of Kings 5:2). In the Bible it is explained that such amount of meat is excessive, because its production exhausts the land.

Furthermore, the Scripture is against gluttony, usual overeating: “Listen, my son, and be wise, and set your heart on the right path. Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags” (Proverbs 23:19-21).

The Law of Moses strictly punished gluttons. Drunkenness and gluttony were considered signs of “disobedience and rebellion” (Deuteronomy 21:20), while “... revelers and drunkards“ were sentenced to “... death by stoning” (Deuteronomy 21:21).

People who ate and drank a lot considered to be selfish, spoiled and undisciplined by the Jews of that time, while the pious people had to show patience, restraint and generosity towards those around [3].

In Chapter 11 of the Numbers the following interesting story is described. Wandering through the desert, the people of Israel began to murmur, not satisfied that they eat only manna and “people began to grumble bitterly”. “The rabble with them began to crave for other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said: “If only we had meat to eat!” (Numbers 11:4).

The Lord God replied as follows: “Now a wind went out from the Lord and drove quail in from the sea. It scattered them up to two cubits deep all around the camp, as far as a day's walk in any direction. All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers. Then they spread them out all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the Lord burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. Therefore the place was named Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had craved for other food” (Numbers 11: 31-34). It is important to note that those, who gathered least quails gathered ten homers, that was ten and a half bushels (more than 35 cubic meters) [14].

The meaning of this story: people did not die because they ate birds, but due to their gluttony and disobedience.

Conclusions

1) The results of historical and literary synthesis of pages of the Scripture clearly confirms that seven vitally important biblical products, namely: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil, honey and poultry, beef, lamb and eggs should be used in the daily nutrition with the God's blessing and benefit for health, while pork and animal fat, overeating and drinking were prohibited by the Lord God.

2) All this, despite the millennia of years lived by people, convincingly demonstrates the relevance and appropriateness in applying the commandments of God for human health concerning the consumption of vitally important biblical products, that can make the nutrition more rational and beneficial to human health, and can be the basis for formation of foundations of the healthy lifestyle in the social life of population of independent Ukraine.

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