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For the past twenty years I have abstained from all kinds of meat. I maintain that it is unethical and against the perfect will of the Supreme Deity to butcher and slaughter animals in order to eat their flesh. In this article I will not deal with the sacrificial cult and the passages of the Hebrew bible which deal with the slaughter of animals, since I have written several articles on the subject. In this paper I will focus on Jesus so that we can see whether he actually ate fish - as commonly supposed. As late as yesterday, there was a debate on the subject - and as usually a certain Christian believer referred to Luke 5 in order to prove that Jesus helped fishermen catch fish and if this is so then he could not have opposed the eating of the same. The person also referred to the feeding of the 5000 with bread and fish. Others also quote Luke 24:41-43 to prove that Jesus ate fish and honey in Jerusalem, in the evening - the very day of his resurrection - in the presence of the Eleven during his first appearance to them. Others point to John 21 where we are told that after his resurrection Jesus helped his disciples catch fish,

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cook them and serve them as breakfast. It is also pointed that Jesus had to eat meat since he observed the Passover and hence was obligated to eat the lamb. I will not comment regarding the Passover lamb in this paper since I have written an article 'Proof Jesus Did Not Eat The Passover Lamb' and the reader can refer to it for details.

I do not refute the fact that in these passages of the Christian New Testament it is plainly shown that Jesus did indeed regard fish as acceptable for food and that he himself consumed their flesh. But I maintain that there is a satisfactory biblical explanation for these passages and when properly understood it follows that Jesus actually was a vegetarian. Here is the first passage, that of Luke 5:1-11:

"One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the

fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

5

Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

6

When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

7

So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”

9

For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,

10

and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.”

11

So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and

followed him.

It is of colossal importance to determine just at what point of Jesus' ministry this incident supposedly took place. According to Luke's version, prior to this incident Peter, Andrew, John and James were not as yet the disciples of Jesus. However, by this point of time Jesus was already known throughout Galilee and his miracles and fame spread throughout. As a matter of fact, according to Luke's version, Jesus knew Peter before this incident for he was in his home and actually healed his mother in law who was sick [Luke 4:38-39]. At that time Peter was not as yet Jesus' disciple. If the version we find in Luke's gospel which is a forgery - in accordance with the synoptic principle - was the only version we have concerning the choosing of Peter, Andrew, John and James, then my task to prove that Jesus was a vegetarian would be significantly more difficult. But we also have the versions of Mark and Matthew and on the basis of their versions I have no choice but to discard the version given in Luke's gospel. Please note what Mark 1:14-20 has to say about the calling of the first four disciples - the fishermen - Peter, Andrew, John and James:

14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

15

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

16

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

17

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

18

At once they left their nets and followed him.

19

When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.

20

Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him."

According to Mark, Jesus chose Peter and Andrew independently of John and James and at the very beginning of his ministry. Peter and Andrew were casting their nets into the sea and not washing them as Luke's version has it. Jesus did not preach from the boat at this point of time - as Luke's version has it - but actually later. After calling Peter and Andrew he then went on and saw John and James mending their nets with their father. He called them and they became his followers. Luke's version which insinuates that Jesus helped Peter and his fishing partners catch lots of fish is a synoptic forgery. In order to understand the synoptic problem and it's principle please read my article 'The Problem of the Synoptic Gospels.' In Matthew 4:18-22 we read the following of the same incident:

" **18** As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. **19** "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

20

At once they left their nets and followed him.

21

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John.

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They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them,

22

and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him."

The versions of Mark and Matthew nullify the version in Luke's gospel and therefore on the basis of these testimonies I can safely conclude that Jesus did not disturb the fishes of the sea nor did he catch them for human consumption. Now we can look at the text of Luke 24:41-43 which explicitly says that Jesus asked for food and that he actually ate FISH and HONEY which the disciples gave him:

"He [Jesus] said to them: Do you have any food? And they gave him a piece of BROILED FISH and some HONEY. And HE TOOK IT AND ATE IT in front of them."

This is the only passage in the entire New Testament where we are specifically told that Jesus in fact ATE MEAT. Those who believe in every word of the bible but who also practice vegetarianism [like the Reformed Adventists for example], explain that Jesus only ate of the HONEY but not of the FISH. They argue that FISH and HONEY should not be combined and that if Jesus ate both together he would have been sick. The problem with this theory is that there are Greek manuscripts that omit honey. This fact is also reflected in the English translations - where most translators mention FISH only and exclude the honey. [See for example: The Bible for Today, The Moffat Bible, The New American Bible for Catholics, The Jerusalem Bible, The New English Bible, The Living Bible, The New American Standard Bible, New International Version, Good News Bible, Jewish New Testament, Rotherham Emphasized Bible, The Interlinear Greek English New Testament by Marshall, etc.,]. All these translators omit HONEY since these scholars regard these manuscripts as more important. Therefore it follows that according to most English versions of [Luke 24:42-43](#) Luke, the disciples handed FISH to Jesus and he ATE IT while they watched. If this passage is authentic and inspired then no words could justify vegetarianism - unless of course we reject the authority of Jesus and say that he was an impostor. I however, firmly believe that Jesus was not an impostor but rather the promised Prophet - promised by Moses who was to come. How then do I

explain the passage in question where it is said that the Son of God - as a resurrected and immortal being - actually ATE MEAT? The passage is very simple to explain. It is also a synoptic forgery.

Luke says that Jesus appeared to two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus. One of them was named Clopas. He was invited to their place late in the afternoon on the day of his resurrection. When he broke bread before meal, the two disciples realised that it was Jesus. As soon as they realised this they immediately returned to Jerusalem which was about 10 kilometres from Emmaus. Please note:

“And they rose that very hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the ELEVEN gathered together, and those who were with them, Saying, Truly our Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon. And they [two disciples] also reported those things that happened on the road, and how they knew him as he broke

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bread. And while they were discussing these things, Jesus stood among them, and said to them, Peace be with you...and as they still did not believe because of their joy, and they were bewildered, he said to them, Have you anything here to eat? They gave him a portion of BROILED FISH and of a honeycomb. And HE TOOK IT AND ATE BEFORE THEIR EYES” [Luke 24:33-43].

Luke therefore clearly places Jesus’ first appearance to his disciples at evening AT JERUSALEM, on the day he arose from the dead. He says that ALL ELEVEN WERE PRESENT - even though John, who also says that Jesus appeared to his disciples at evening on the “first day of the week” actually says that Thomas was missing. Matthew and Mark however clearly show that Jesus was not in Jerusalem that evening and that his first appearance to his disciples was not that evening nor even in Jerusalem but rather later in Galilee. On the night of his arrest, Jesus said to his disciples:

“But after I’m raised to life, I’ll go ahead of you to GALILEE”
[Mark 14:28].

The angel said to the women at the tomb:

“Now go and tell his disciples, and especially Peter, that he will go ahead of you to GALILEE. YOU WILL SEE HIM THERE, JUST AS HE TOLD YOU” [Mark 16:7].

According to the testimony of Mark, Jesus clearly told his disciples that after he is risen from the dead he would go to GALILEE and that is where the disciples were going to see him.

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Matthew 26:32 also quotes Jesus as telling his disciples that after he is risen from the dead he would go ahead of them to GALILEE:

“But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.”

Matthew quotes the angel as saying to the women:

“...Now hurry! Tell his disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to GALILEE. Go there, and you will see him” [Matthew 28:7].

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Jesus himself appeared to the women and said:

“Don’t be afraid! Tell my followers to go to GALILEE. They’ll see me there” [Matthew 28:10].

Then in Matthew 28:16 we read the following:

“Jesus’ ELEVEN DISCIPLES went to a mountain in GALILEE,

where Jesus had told them to meet him.”

According to Matthew, the ELEVEN APOSTLES went to GALILEE to a mountain Jesus specified. There, IN GALILEE, the disciples saw Jesus for the first time after his resurrection. The account of Luke therefore cannot be reconciled with the text of Mark and especially that of Matthew. Therefore the text of Luke so often cited as proof that Jesus was a meat eater and therefore not a vegetarian - as many sources prove - is a synoptic forgery. Now we can take a look at John 21.

Most critical and independent scholars believe that John's gospel ended with chapter 20 and that this chapter is a later addition or interpolation. Be it as it may, whether interpolation or part of the original Greek version, it does not prove what is claimed here. We are told that Peter with some other disciples decided to go fishing. This was after Jesus rose from the dead and after he supposedly already appeared to them two times.

They fished all night but caught nothing. At sunrise Jesus allegedly appeared to them and told them to cast a net on the right hand side of the boat. When they did they caught a multitude - 153 fish, to be exact. As they came to the shore they saw a charcoal fire lighted with fish on it. He told them to bring some of the fish they caught. Then in verse 13 we are told that Jesus gave the disciples bread and fish to eat. Verse 14 states that this was the very **THIRD** appearance of Jesus to his disciples since his resurrection.

This very verse proves that the passage in question is a forgery and not a historical event. According to the gospel of John, Jesus' first appearance to his disciples was at evening on the first day of the week - the very day of his resurrection. In this respect John's gospel agrees with Luke although it says that Thomas wasn't present that evening while Luke's version has all **ELEVEN** present - including Thomas. John 20:19 confirms the first appearance. Then in verses 26-27 we are told that a week later Jesus again appeared to his disciples and that this time Thomas was present. This was the second appearance. The third was allegedly the time he served bread and fish to his disciples as we have seen.

It was already pointed out that Jesus did not appear to his disciples at evening on the day he rose from the dead but rather later in Galilee. This is an irrefutable teaching of Mark's and Matthew's gospels. Since John's gospel is wrong about the first and second appearances, it must also be wrong about the third appearance. In Mark 16:9-19 - the additional verses - we also read of THREE appearances.

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told that that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not then which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the

gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

The first appearance was to Mary Magdalene. The second to two disciples on the road to Emaus. The third to the ELEVEN. The third appearance was the FIRST and LAST appearance to the ELEVEN. Therefore John 21 contradicts Mark and Matthew. In John 21 Jesus supposedly appointed Peter a shepherd over other disciples. But the Book of Acts disproves this and shows that James the Just - the brother of Jesus - was in charge of the Twelve. Now we are ready to deal with the issue of feeding the multitudes with loaves and fishes.

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In the Gospel of the Holy Twelve which is said to have been translated by Rev. GJ Ousely we are told that the crowd was fed by bread and clusters of grapes. The problem is that it cannot be proven nor disproven that this gospel was not forged by Ousely. Some scholars believe that fish was not served but rather FISHWEEDS. Church Father Irenaeus does not mention fish when he quotes the feeding of the 5000 or 4000 but only bread. This could suggest that the inclusion of fish is a later interpolation. Indeed, according to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus commanded his disciples to collect only bread in baskets and not fish. Later when he referred to the feeding of the 5000 and 4000 he always mentioned only the baskets of bread and never any baskets of fish. This, again, indicates that inclusion of fish could have been later interpolation. It is also worthy of note that the people were with Jesus two days before he fed them. It was spring - since they sat on the green grass. The young boy had two fish with him which he obviously took from home fried or cooked. Would the fish have been suitable to eat at least two days later? However, I have no problem at all if the story is true and if Jesus indeed multiplied the fish and if he served them to the hungry crowd. Jesus did not catch these fish nor did he kill them. They were already dead. He simply multiplied the dead fish. Having said that, I doubt very much that either grapes or fish were involved. I believe that Jesus multiplied only the loaves of bread. Be it as it may, this does not prove that Jesus condoned the butchery of animals and the eating of animal flesh. In some parables Jesus spoke of the feasts where animals were killed and meat served. But he spoke to the people who practiced this and obviously it was logical to use the manner of speech they could relate to. I, myself, sometimes do

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the same even though I am vegan, usually for convenience sake. At no time does this speech prove that I condone the practice I may use for an example. The same is true of Jesus. In the parable of the Prodigal Son the father commanded his servants to kill a fattened calf. The father represented God. Obviously God does not butcher animals in His realm. Jesus used the speech that related to the meat eating people.

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