

# PROPHECY SEMINAR



**THE SMALL TEST WITH BIG RESULTS**

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In our study of the book of Daniel, we have discovered that Daniel and his friends faced test after test. In every instance, they stood true to God. In Lesson 3, we briefly examined the initial test that Daniel and his friends faced, as revealed in Daniel 1. The fact that they stood true to principle in that seemingly easy test when all the other Hebrews compromised, enabled them to stand faithful to God on all subsequent tests.

We have also learned that the stories of the book of Daniel illustrate the predictions of the prophecies. We have seen that the prophecies predict that the people of God will go through a crisis at the close of human history. The only ones who stood firm for truth in Daniel's day were those who passed the diet test in Chapter 1. Could it be that the ones who will stand firm for God in the final days of earth's history are those who likewise pass a similar test?

In this lesson, we wish to re-examine Daniel 1, study in greater detail the test that Daniel faced, and then look at its implications for our day.

## THE END OF SIN

### 1. What did the king allow Daniel and his friends to eat? Daniel 1:5

"A daily provision of the king's \_\_\_\_\_ and of the \_\_\_\_\_ which he drank."

NOTE: Daniel and his friends were offered the best that Babylon had. However, what the world thinks is good many times is not really the best. God had something better for His children, and Daniel and his friends knew that.

### 2. What decision did Daniel make regarding the king's wine and food? Daniel 1:8

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not \_\_\_\_\_ himself with the portion of the king's \_\_\_\_\_, nor with the \_\_\_\_\_ which he drank."

NOTE: Daniel and his friends knew that if they were going to remain true to God in this heathen court, they must not weaken their minds by eating the rich food and drinking the wine of the king. They realized that they must partake only of simple, nutritious food that would keep their minds pure and clear.

### 3. What was the result of Daniel and his friends making this decision? Daniel 1:20

They were \_\_\_\_\_ times better than everyone else.

NOTE: With God, people are always better off.

## ROMANS 14:3, 6, 14, 17, 20

Here is one final passage that is often taken out of context to indicate that it is all right to eat unclean foods today. Remember that the Greek word translated "meat" in this passage is *bromata*, meaning "food." The discussion in Romans 14 is not about unclean animals. The issue that confronted the early church during this period was whether or not they should eat food that had been offered to idols (I Corinthians 8:1-13).

In both I Corinthians 8 and Romans 14, Paul is dealing with the same basic issue: we are not to judge another Christian because he has or has not eaten food that has been offered to idols. This may include flesh food and other food, but the issue here is judging one another and despising the weaker brother who does not feel the same as we do on such an issue as eating food offered to idols. However, if a person's conscience bothers him for eating such food, or if it causes offense to another person in the church, he should leave it alone. Again, the clear issue in the passage is that of judging one another (see Verses 4, 10-12).

It is simply not good interpretation to make passages refer to something that they are not referring to, nor is it correct to quote passages out of context. We must let the Bible speak for itself and not try to read our preconceived ideas into a text to make the Bible say something it was never intended to say. The distinction between clean and unclean animals was not an issue in the early church. The New Testament believers fully accepted the distinction that had been made since the beginning of time between these two classifications of animals. The cross of Christ in no way affected the healthfulness of pork, shellfish, and other unclean animals. If they were not good for a person's health before the cross, they are not good for a person's health after the cross.

particularly in women.

"The results showed that for women who drank one or more cups of coffee a day, the risk of developing bladder cancer was two and a half times greater than for those who drank less than this or none at all." **Newsweek**, July 12, 1971.

"A grim question was raised in mid-March about a habit enjoyed by half the American population: Does coffee cause cancer?

"**The New England Journal of Medicine** reported that researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health had discovered an "unexpected" statistical link between coffee and cancer of the pancreas, a gland behind the stomach that secretes digestive juices and insulin. Pancreatic cancer strikes some 24,000 Americans a year, nearly 99 percent of them fatally.

"The statistics indicated that a person who drank two cups of coffee a day ran twice as great a risk of pancreatic cancer as non-drinkers." **U.S. News & World Report**, March 23, 1981, p. 8.

"International incidence and mortality data have shown correlations of renal cancer with per capita intake of coffee, milk, meat, total fat, and animal protein" (Armstrong and Doll, 1975; Shennan, 1973). Diet, **Nutrition and Cancer**, ch. 17, p. 16.

In a study of the demographic characteristics of people who use caffeine, it was found that "high consumers were also less active in religion." "Somatic Manifestations of Caffeinism," Bruce S. Victor, Martin Lubetsky and John F. Greden, M.D., **Journal of Clinical Psychiatry**, May 1981, p. 186.

"We found that caffeine impaired recall ability by about 20 percent." **Self**, Dec. 1984, p. 32.

## ALCOHOL

"Investigations into the effects of alcohol on the brain now indicate that drinking at moderate levels can impair cognitive powers even on the next day, when the drinker is sober." L. Gross, **How Much Is Too Much? The Effects of Social Drinking**, New York, NY: Random House, 1983, p. 161

"During the baseline memory task moderate drinkers had significantly lower memory ratios than did light drinkers, suggesting that the heavier drinking may differentially impair the ability to retain information or possibly result in a faster decay of memory traces." "The Relationship of Age and Drinking Habits to the Effects of Alcohol on Memory in Women," Marilyn K Jones and Ben Morgan Jones, **Journal of Studies on Alcohol**, Vol. 41, No. 1, 1980.

#### 4. Since Daniel and his friends had passed the diet test, what other tests were they now able to pass? Daniel 3:17, 18; 6:10, 11

- a. The three Hebrews refused to \_\_\_\_\_ the golden image.
- b. Daniel continued to \_\_\_\_\_ to his God as he did before.

NOTE: Having passed the diet test, Daniel and his friends were able to pass the image test and the test that prohibited prayer to God.

## THE DIET TEST IN DANIEL

#### 5. What two things did Daniel refuse to partake of that were on the king's table? Daniel 1:8

- a. the king's \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. the king's \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 6. Why did Daniel not partake of the king's wine? Proverbs 20:1

"\_\_\_\_\_ is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not \_\_\_\_\_."

NOTE: Daniel knew that he could not think clearly if his mind would become clouded because of alcohol. Those who benumb the mind with alcohol will never be able to pass the severe tests that are coming. That's why Daniel would not defile himself with the king's wine.

#### 7. What are kings and princes not to drink? Proverbs 31:4

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ drink.

#### 8. What happens when kings and princes drink wine and strong drink? Proverbs 31:5

They "forget the \_\_\_\_\_, and pervert the justice."

#### 9. Who are kings in the New Testament? Revelation 1:5, 6

"And has made \_\_\_\_\_ kings."

NOTE: The Bible indicates that kings should not partake of wine and strong drink because it perverts their judgment and leads them to forget the law of God. The book of Revelation makes it clear that every Christian has been made a king unto God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is God's purpose today that Christians, who are kings, not partake of wine and strong drink.

#### 10. What does alcohol do to the brain?

"Every time a person takes a few drinks of an alcoholic beverage, even a few

beers or cocktails at a social function-he permanently damages his brain by cutting off the oxygen supply to enormous numbers of small areas of brain tissue, thereby killing large numbers of brain cells prematurely... There is only one way to be safe from the danger of alcohol ... that is to quit it cold." Dr. Melvin Knisely, Professor of Anatomy at Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, as reported in Listen magazine of December, 1969.

NOTE: Alcohol kills brain cells and beclouds the mind. The first brain cells that it kills are those affecting willpower, reason and judgment. No wonder God says that those who are kings of Jesus Christ will not touch alcoholic beverages. The Christian realizes that even a few beers or cocktails can permanently damage his brain and affect his spiritual judgment. God wants us to have clear minds for the closing scenes of earth's history. (For further information on alcohol, see Exhibit 2.)

**11. What foods did God forbid His ancient people, Israel, to eat? Leviticus 11:2-8**

The \_\_\_\_\_ animals.

NOTE: Obviously, Daniel would have encountered unclean foods on the king's table; therefore, he did not eat them. While most of us today would never think of eating roasted rat, many people today eat some of the foods mentioned by God as unclean, such as the rabbit and the pig.

**12. What other foods did God say were unclean? Leviticus 11:9, 10**

Fish that did not have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: This eliminated from the diet such things as clams, oysters, shrimp, lobster, crab, eel, catfish, etc.

**13. Why did God prohibit the eating of ports, shellfish and other unclean foods?**

NOTE: God does not tell us the reason why He prohibited His ancient people from eating these foods. However, modern medical science has helped us to understand some of the reasons why God saw that these foods were not fit for human consumption. The purpose of these animals on the earth was not to be a part of the food chain for people, but to be garbage collectors. The pig was to be the garbage collector of the earth, while shellfish were the garbage collectors of the ocean. Pork is one of the worst carriers of the trichina worm, and causes trichinosis. Likewise, pork is very high in cholesterol. Most fish do not contain much cholesterol; however, shellfish contain as much cholesterol as pork sausage. No wonder God said to leave it alone. That's one of the reasons a physician removes pork from a heart patient's diet as soon as it is discovered that there is any kind of heart problem. How much better it would be to not have our arteries clogged in the beginning! That's why God said not to eat these foods. (For further information on medical research on



# EXHIBIT 2

## For Daniel Lesson 19

### PORK

"In Japan, Hirayama (1977) found that the intakes of fat and pork were associated with mortality from breast cancer in 12 different prefectures." **Diet, Nutrition and Cancer**, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. 1982, ch. 16, p. 12.

"MacLennan **et al.** (1978) evaluated the diets consumed by adult men from Kuopio, Finland and compared them with the diets consumed by a similar sample from Copenhagen, Denmark, where the incidence of colon cancer is 4 times higher. They found that the high incidence group consumed more refined wheat breads, meats (especially pork), and beer, but less potatoes and milk than did the low incidence group in Finland." **Diet, Nutrition and Cancer**, ch. 17, p. 8.

### SHELLFISH

"In the first stage of nerve action, there is a massive flow of ions through channels in the walls of a nerve cell into the body of the cell itself. It was found that saxitoxin (ingredient found in shellfish) somehow clogs these channels and prevents the ion transfer from happening. Without the transfer, the cells fail to fire and paralysis occurs." **Newsweek**, "The Poison in Shellfish," January 10, 1972, p. 39.

### CAFFEINE

"While it (caffeine) stimulates, it leaves the brain more fatigued after its action is over. It can do nothing but cause general nerve and brain fatigue unless adequate sleep is obtained." Olive T. Osborne, **Principles of Therapeutics**, p. 214.

"With the link between cigarettes and lung cancer already firmly established, it seemed only a matter of time before the epidemiologists would get around to showing that another breakfast tradition, the morning cup of coffee, may pose some dire hazards of its own. Coffee, in fact, has for some time been suspected as a promoter of heart disease; and now in the British journal *Lancet*, a Harvard researcher reports that it may also be linked to cancer of the bladder—

The Jews in the time of Christ had added significantly to the commandments of God by instituting all kinds of ritualistic washings and ceremonies that had to be performed before a person ate. Jesus' disciples did not perform these ceremonies. According to Jewish law, what they ate was therefore unclean.

Please note that this discussion has nothing to do with clean and unclean animals as described in Leviticus 11, but instead is talking about the ceremonial washing of hands that made foods clean ceremonially. God never commanded His people to do this; it was a Jewish tradition. Mark 7:3-5 continues with an explanation of the charge of the Jewish leaders against the disciples of Jesus. Mark 7:6-13, contains Jesus' tremendous denunciation upon the Pharisees because they had rejected the commandment of God and yet were so meticulous about their own traditions. Verse 8 in particular notes that the tradition Jesus is speaking about is ceremonial washings. Jesus categorically states that if people worship by these traditions instead of the commandments of God, they are worshiping God in vain.

Finally, in Verses 15-20 Jesus specifically addresses the issue of the food that they eat being unclean because it did not go through the ceremonial washings. In Mark 7:19 Jesus declares He has purged all meats. The word translated "meat" is the Greek word *bromata*, which means "food." It does not refer to flesh food; it simply refers to any kind of food. Again, remember the context. The charge was that the disciples had eaten without going through the ceremonial washing of hands that the Jews required. Therefore, to the Jewish Pharisaical mind the food that they ate was thereby unclean. Jesus now categorically declares that whether they have gone through these elaborate washings or not does not affect the food. It does not make the food unclean, because food simply goes into the system and is excreted. As Jesus says in Verse 15, it cannot defile people or make them unclean simply because they did not go through these ritualistic washings.

Jesus was here declaring that ceremonial washings have nothing to do with food being either clean or unclean. This text has absolutely nothing to do with the clean and unclean animals of Leviticus 11. The issue is clearly whether or not Jesus requires His followers to practice the ritualistic washings of the Jews before they eat. He is answering the charge that the disciples are ceremonially unclean because they did not follow these ritualistic washings. Therefore Jesus declares that the ritualistic washings do not affect whether a person is clean or unclean, or whether his food is clean or unclean.

The context, then, deals not with biological uncleanness, but with uncleanness supposedly incurred from the omission of ritual washings. See Verse 15. The kind of food the disciples ate (Verses 2 and 5) is not even referred to, but the way in which they ate it! Throughout, Christ is dealing with the commandments of God versus the traditions of men. To make this verse refer to the clean and unclean animals of Leviticus 11 is to ignore completely the meaning of the Greek and the context of the passage.

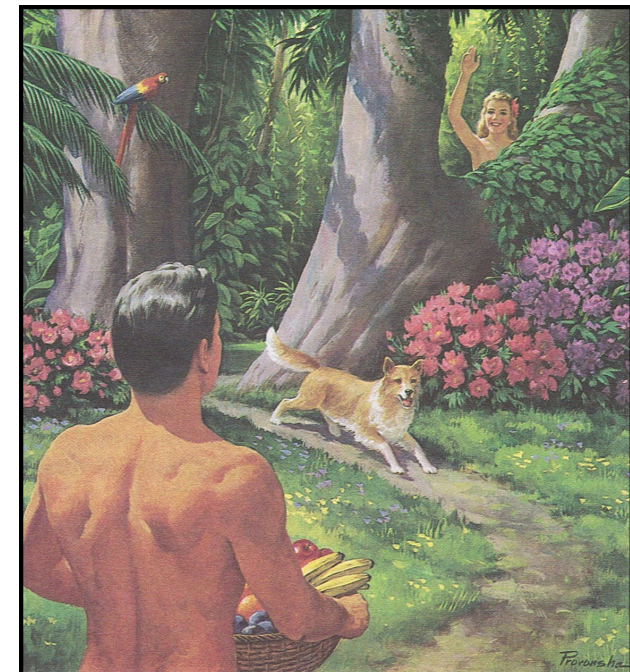
pork and shellfish, see Exhibit 2.)

#### 14. What kind of diet did Daniel ask to receive? Daniel 1:12

"Give us \_\_\_\_\_ to eat and \_\_\_\_\_ to drink.

NOTE: "Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink" (New International Version). Daniel requested a vegetarian diet. This was more than God required, for God had only prohibited the eating of the unclean animals. He had allowed people to eat the flesh of clean animals. But when Daniel got to this time of extreme test, he went on a very simple vegetarian diet because he knew that his mind must be as sharp and clear as possible to face the crisis ahead.

Originally, God gave a vegetarian diet to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1:29). Today, we are approaching the crisis of the last days. Perhaps it would be a good idea for us to return to God's original diet so that our minds might be clear to face the crisis at the close of time. Certainly we should begin by leaving off those foods that God has expressly commanded us not to eat; namely, pork, shellfish and other unclean foods mentioned in Scripture.



**15. At what event does God first mention unclean animals? Genesis 7:1, 2**

At the time of the \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: The distinction between clean and unclean animals did not originate at Sinai with the children of Israel, but the distinction was known before the Flood, as well.

**16. What will happen to people using unclean foods at the second coming of Christ? Isaiah 66:17**

"Those who \_\_\_\_\_ themselves and purify themselves, to go to the gardens after an idol in the midst, eating \_\_\_\_\_ flesh, and the abomination and the \_\_\_\_\_, shall be \_\_\_\_\_ together,' says the LORD.

NOTE: Those who claim to be in a saved, sanctified relationship with Christ, knowing that God does not want them to eat the unclean foods, yet still persist in eating them, will be destroyed at His second coming.

Obviously, God does not intend for His last day people to eat these foods. (In spite of the clear indication of Scripture that these foods are a not to be eaten by Christians, some people have suggested that it is all right for Christians to eat them today. They have quoted a few texts to support this theory. For an explanation of these texts, please see Exhibit 1.)

## THE DIET TEST TODAY

Only Daniel and his friends passed the food test in this time of prosperity. Likewise, only Daniel and his friends passed the severe test that came in a time of adversity. When the really big tests came, such as the fiery furnace, the only ones who passed that great test of utmost loyalty to God were those who first of all passed the food test. The small test on food enabled Daniel and his friends to stand firm in more important areas. Don't miss the point: those who failed the food test failed the test on the image. Those who passed the diet test passed the test on the worship of the image. Since the book of Daniel has so many implications for the last days, God may be preparing His last-day people for the final test on the image of the beast (see Lesson 5) by first of all testing them on food.

**17. What was the first test given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 3:1-6**

They were asked not to \_\_\_\_\_ the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

NOTE: Sin entered this planet because man ate that which God had forbidden. The first great test came on the food question, and Adam and Eve failed.

right to eat the unclean foods is I Timothy 4:1-5. Let's notice this text:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrines of devils' speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats [the original reads "foods"], which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For IT IS SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER."

Many in attempting to justify their usage of the unclean foods quote this text as far as verse 4 and then conclude that it is all right to eat anything, as long as we thank the Lord for it. But does this mean that it is all right to eat the mouse or the rat? Yet this is the inevitable conclusion, if such an interpretation is held. But notice the last verse, verse 5. Here we are told what creatures may be eaten with thanksgiving: namely, those that the Word sanctified or specifies should be eaten. Does the Word of God sanctify the usage of the unclean foods, such as pork or shellfish? Absolutely not! That's why this text cannot be used to support the eating of the unclean foods.

Thus, rather than support the idea that it is all right to eat the pig, this text actually tells us that we are to eat only those foods that the Word of God sanctified. And that does not include the unclean foods. Again, let's allow the Bible to interpret itself instead of attempting to read our ideas into the Bible

## MARK 7:15-20

Here is another passage that is often taken out of context in an attempt to prove that Jesus did away with the distinction between clean and unclean animals. Let's notice the text:

"There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man."

In order to correctly understand this text, we must carefully examine the context of the passage. Mark 7:1,2(1464) [992] indicate there was a contention between the Pharisees and certain of Jesus' disciples because the disciples did not go through the ceremonial washing of hands before they ate.

However, God did not want the Christian Church to be restrictive. He did not want them to think that salvation was ONLY for the JEWS, that all others were UNCLEAN, and therefore could not have the gospel of salvation brought to them. Thus God chose to give Peter this vision to teach people the great lesson that NO PERSON, NEITHER JEW NOR GENTILE, should be considered unclean. Notice how the force of the vision comes to Peter in verse 28:

"And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call ANY MAN COMMON OR UNCLEAN."

Here then was the explanation of the vision. They were not to call ANY MAN COMMON OR UNCLEAN. God wasn't talking about food at all when He gave the vision to Peter. He was talking about the Jewish practice of calling anyone of another nation unclean.

This is the Biblical interpretation of the vision. Any other interpretation stands in direct contradiction to a plainly interpreted passage of Scripture. To attempt to apply this text to the unclean foods is a great misuse of Scripture, and certainly reveals the flimsy evidence that there is for attempting to justify the use of the unclean foods today.

But does God intend that we should still NOT eat the unclean foods today? Notice Isaiah 66:15-17:

"For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst eating SWINE'S FLESH, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be CONSUMED together, saith the Lord."

Please notice that Isaiah is speaking about the time of the second coming of Christ when the Lord will come with fire. This is definitely after the cross, and is a direct reference to the time just preceding the coming of our Lord—our day. Isaiah firmly declares that at that time, when the Lord comes, those who are attempting to hide from God and disobey Him by eating such an abominable thing as the pig and the mouse, shall be consumed at the second coming of Christ. Certainly the

Lord intends that we today enjoy just as good health as did His people anciently by abstaining from these foods that injure the body.

## I TIMOTHY 4:1-5

Another text often taken out of context in an attempt to prove that it is all

### 18. What was the first test that Christ faced In the wilderness of temptation? Matthew 4:1-4

To turn stones into \_\_\_\_\_.

NOTE: The first great temptation our Lord faced in the wilderness was on appetite. Jesus must gain the victory at the very same place that Adam fell. The same victory that Christ gained, He offers to every believer today through the power of His indwelling Spirit. Victory over depraved appetite is available to the Christian today because of Christ's victory in the wilderness of temptation.

### 19. How are Christians today to glorify God? 1 Corinthians 10:31

In their \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

NOTE: Christians today are to bring glory to God by choosing to follow His directions regarding appetite.

### 20. What is the temple of the Holy Ghost for Christians? 1 Corinthians 6:19

Our \_\_\_\_\_.

NOTE: God, through the Holy Spirit, dwells in Christians who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of their lives. Their bodies now belong to God. They are temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

### 21. What should Christians do who have been bought with the price of Calvary? 1 Corinthians 6:20

"\_\_\_\_\_ God in your \_\_\_\_\_."

Christians must always remember that their bodies do not belong to them, because they have been purchased by the blood of Calvary. Therefore, their eating, their drinking-everything they do will glorify God. They will pass the appetite test.

### 22. What are some habits that born-again Christians should leave alone?

**a. Smoking** . Recognizing that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, born-again Christians will not smoke. Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, and a host of other problems. It clogs the mind and prevents clear thinking. Since our bodies belong to Jesus Christ and are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, Christians realize that putting a cigarette in one's mouth is actually placing it in the mouth of Jesus. How can Christians do that and glorify God?

**b. Using alcoholic beverages**. Like Daniel, Christians will purpose in their hearts not to defile themselves with the king's wine. They recognize that they belong to the King of kings, and as kings, they will not touch

alcohol and pervert their judgment and forget God's law.

**c. Eating unclean foods.** Like Daniel, Christians will purpose in their hearts not to eat the king's meat, for it is out of harmony with the Word of God. As they face earth's final crisis, they will seek to bring their dietary habits into harmony with the original Edenic diet. They will begin by leaving off unclean foods, such as pork and shellfish.

**d. Drinking coffee, tea & caffeinated soft drinks.** These clog the system, cloud the brain and prevent clear thinking. Coffee, tea and some soft drinks contain the drug caffeine. To use them makes Christians become drug dependent. (See Exhibit 2.)

**23. What are some positive things Christians can do to improve their body temples?**

Born-again Christians who recognize that their bodies are the temples of God will get plenty of rest, sunshine, fresh air and water, inside and outside. They will avoid excessive amounts of sugar, and make sure that they get sufficient exercise.

**24. Who came out better in ancient Babylon, Daniel and his friends with their healthful diet, or those who ate the king's junk food? Daniel 1:20**

\_\_\_\_\_ and his \_\_\_\_\_.

NOTE: If you, as a Christian, want to be in better health, follow God's plan. Purpose in your heart not to defile yourself with "the king's delicacies" or "the wine which he drank". Make certain that your mind is clear and sharp as you face the tumultuous events so soon to come upon planet earth.

**25. Is it your desire to bring glory to God in your body by passing the health test now so that you can have a dear mind for the final crisis?**

\_\_\_\_\_

PS-19



# EXHIBIT 1

## For Daniel Lesson 19

### PETER'S VISION

Many individuals have quoted from Peter's vision in Acts 10 in an attempt to prove that it is all right for New Testament Christians to eat the unclean foods. Here is a prime example of how a text can be lifted out of its context and made to teach something that the original writer never had in mind. Let's notice the vision:

"On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice; and the vessel was received up again into heaven. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate" (Acts 10:9-17).

Most interpreters read the vision this far, stop and then devise THEIR interpretation of the vision. But such is only MAN'S interpretation. How much better to let the Bible explain itself.

First of all, notice that this was a vision, and not an actual occurrence. Peter did not literally eat these unclean animals. He merely saw them IN VISION. Second, notice in verse 17 that Peter did NOT understand the vision. He did NOT know what it meant. One thing he DID KNOW, and that was that it DID NOT MEAN that it was all right to eat the unclean foods. In the days when the early church was just beginning, most of the converts to Christianity were from Judaism. At first, there was no thought that the gospel message must also go to people of other nations. The Jews regarded anyone who was not a Jew as ceremonially unclean. They felt that such people had no right to have the gospel brought to them. The early Christians still had these same ideas.