



What to Serve a Goddess When She Comes For Dinner: A Theology of Food

James Robert Deal

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Generally "theology" includes speculations about unknowable things such as what doctrines we should believe, what rituals we should perform, and what happens to use when we die. I am not interested in these aspects of theology.

But, I am interested in the theology of how we should behave. We should do unto others as we would have them do to us. We should do unsolicited good deeds for those in need and love our neighbors as ourselves. We should not respond to violence with violence if not doing so will break the cycle of violence. We should strive to return the earth to its peaceful and clean state in the legendary time of Eden. The seven laws of Noah include a prohibition against cruelty to animals.

Whatever god is, god is inseparable from the quest for ethics, natural law, and the project to attain the moral perfection of humanity.

What is the connection between food and a theology of ethics? I advocate eating a green diet, an all vegetable diet, avoiding entirely a red diet of meat and a white diet of milk products. Such a diet will make us healthier and longer lived. It will better the environment and lessen global warming. I contend one cannot rightfully call himself an environmentalist and not pursue a green diet.

In his Nobel Prize winning "An Inconvenient Truth" Al missed an important aspect of the theology or ethics of our return to an Edenic environment. He said nothing about the methane emissions of 40 billion factory farmed animals (which would not otherwise exist), a stronger global warming factor than all CO2 emissions from all transportation modes combined. Methane is 24 times as potent a greenhouse gas as carbon dioxide. Google for the UN report "Livestock's Long Shadow." This is a truth too inconvenient for middle-of-the-roader Al.

Eating a green diet will avoid the goulsh mistreatment of animals which goes on in secret behind the high walls of the saturated fat industry.

We have elevated ourselves morally to the point where we no longer excuse slavery or violence against Blacks, Jews, Gypsies, women, or homosexuals. But we still say, "Oh, come on, James, they are just animals." We have shed our bigotries towards these others, but we remain unconscious of our bigotry toward animals.

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Lloyd Gilbert:

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