

food to an idol does not bring about any change in the meat itself that would make it unfit for use. So if part of an animal that was offered in sacrifice were sold in a meat market it would be just as good as any other meat. Certainly a Christian would never ask for this meat in preference to other meat, feeling that it was "holy meat," but, on the other hand, he was not under obligation to make inquiry to find out if the source of supply was a religious temple or a regular slaughterhouse. So the point under discussion in 1 Corinthians 10:25 was the purchasing of meat in a market that obtained some of its supplies from a religious temple.

Christians are also commanded to abstain "from blood and what is strangled." (Acts 21:25) The Scriptures do indicate that one may eat meat but that he must not do it as an act of idolatry; however, nowhere does the Bible say that believers may eat blood under any circumstances. Furthermore, the prohibition on the consumption of blood is directed, not only to those who do their own slaughtering, but to all "the believers." Therefore those believers who do not do their own slaughtering may have to make inquiry to find an acceptable source of supply if they want to eat meat. If you know from your own experience or from inquiry that it is customary in your locality to drain the blood from butchered animals and from fowl killed for food, and you are doing business with a reliable person, then it may not be necessary to ask further specific questions on the matter when meat is purchased. However, one who purchases meat from worldly persons in those communities where Caesar's laws do not specify that blood must be drained from slaughtered animals would not be able to avoid eating "blood and what is strangled" without making inquiry.

So the points of counsel are harmonious and are in agreement with the rest of the Word of God.

● In view of the Bible command on abstinence from blood, how are fish and insects to be prepared in order to be acceptable for food? —B. F., U.S.A.

Fish was a common food among the Jews. Jesus himself ate it, and on different occasions he directed successful fishing operations, both with a net and with a hook. (Num. 11:5; Matt. 14:17; 17:27; Luke 5:1-11; 24:42, 43) Some insects, too, were used for food. (Lev. 11:21; Mark 1:6) Of course, the amount of blood

contained in these creatures may be very small, so that it is impossible to *pour out* their blood; yet that is what was required to make the meat of a creature acceptable for food. (Lev. 17:13) It was not required that the meat be squeezed or that it be soaked; simply that the blood be poured out. If there is not enough blood to pour it out, Christians are not under obligation to take extreme measures to be sure that some blood is extracted. Of course, if, on cutting the creature open, an accumulation of blood is clearly in evidence, this can easily be removed, and it would be proper to do so.

● Since the Bible forbids the eating of blood, how are Christians to view the use of serums and vaccines? Has the Society changed its viewpoint on this?—J. D., U.S.A.

The Bible is very clear that blood could properly be used only on the altar; otherwise it was to be poured out on the ground. (Lev. 17:11-13) The entire modern medical practice involving the use of blood is objectionable from the Christian standpoint. Therefore the taking of a blood transfusion, or, in lieu of that, the infusing of some blood fraction to sustain one's life is wrong.

As to the use of vaccines and other substances that may in some way involve the use of blood in their preparation, it should not be concluded that the Watch Tower Society endorses these and says that the practice is right and proper. However, vaccination is a virtually unavoidable practice in many segments of modern society, and the Christian may find some comfort under the circumstances in the fact that this use is not in actuality a feeding or nourishing process, which was specifically forbidden when God said that man was not to eat blood, but it is a contamination of the human system.

So, as was stated in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1958, page 575, "It would therefore be a matter of individual judgment whether one accepted such types of medication or not." That is still the Society's viewpoint on the matter.—Gal. 6:5.

However, the mature Christian is not going to try to find in this a justification for as many other medical uses of blood substances as possible. To the contrary, recognizing the objectionableness of the entire practice, he is going to stay as far away from it as he can, requesting other treatment where such is available.