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INTRODUCTION

*'Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'*¹

An apple itself probably never killed anyone, but much of the food that we consume today certainly is killing us. We've allowed ourselves to be persuaded that it's better to buy and eat foods that men have manufactured or produced artificially than the more natural foods on which people have lived throughout most of human history. Like Adam in the Garden of Eden, we think we know better than God. The result is that the nation's health is suffering and many people are dying prematurely. We die precisely because we do *not* know the difference between good and evil, between good food and bad food, and even when we do, we don't believe it matters enough to change our diet for the better.

Belief is a powerful ingredient in the recipe of life. Believing my daughter to be inside our burning house back in 1981 I went inside to find her without thought of personal safety. When my wife believed that our youngest son had swallowed some poisonous berries she immediately took him to an accident and emergency centre. What we believe determines what we do. The year that we all contracted food poisoning from some infected ice cream, did we continue to feed that same ice cream to our children? Of course we didn't. And if you believed that a certain food or drink would harm your children's health and might even kill them prematurely, would you continue to feed them with it? Of course you wouldn't, not if you really, really believed that it would harm them.

Perhaps your children are not among the one in three children who will be obese by the time they leave primary school and who, by definition, will suffer health problems as a result. Perhaps none of your family will contract the type 2 diabetes, which some children as young as eleven are getting, endangering their sight, heart and kidneys. Perhaps you are fully aware that much of dietary advice given by successive governments during the last 50 to 100 years has actually caused many of the public health problems that have arisen during the same period, and perhaps instead of following that advice you are feeding your children only things that people ate and drank in earlier generations when obesity, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, many forms of cancer and even tooth decay were virtually non-existent.

Or maybe, just maybe, you have to stop believing the diet of falsehoods on which we have all been fed and you need to change dramatically what your family eats and drinks. If so, then somehow I have to make you believe this. For if you don't really believe it then you won't change anything.

Unfortunately it is very hard to change what anyone believes. I know how hard I have resisted changing my own beliefs about a number of major issues in life! It is especially difficult to do this in the areas of food and health, where multimillion dollar food producers and retailers and pharmaceutical companies are daily telling our government and us how their products are good for us, especially the products that make them the biggest profits. So how can I, one small voice, imagine that I can convince you that what they say isn't always the truth? Well, I managed to make the switch in my own thinking, so I'm going to do my best to

¹ *The Holy Bible*. Genesis chapter 2, verse 17. Revised Standard Version, Collins, 1971.

help you to do the same, if you are willing to read on. I will do it by means of facts, explanations and some earnest prayers. I'll spare you the earnest prayers, but I'll back up every fact with sound supporting evidence, and I'll make my explanations as clear as I possibly can. I'll conclude by telling you how to feed your family in a way that will provide them with the healthiest possible start in life. Then you'll be able to give them a huge reason for being glad that they had you for a parent.

Nutritional science can be horrendously complex. As I was drafting this introduction I came across a research paper entitled, '*Isolation of NF-E2-related factor 2 (Nrf2), a NF-E2-like basic leucine zipper transcriptional activator that binds to the tandem NF-E2/AP1 repeat of the beta-globin locus control region*'. I'm not going to quote from that particular paper, because I haven't a clue what it was about either. I need you to understand what I am telling you, so if there is something that I feel I can't explain reasonably simply then I'll have to omit it.

By profession I am not a nutritionist but an engineering research scientist. Yet perhaps as an outsider to the subject of nutrition I have not been brainwashed into believing conventional wisdom, but can study the facts with scientific detachment and draw some more reliable conclusions from them. Having authored technical books, manuals and information sheets, and conducted nationwide seminars that consistently received 5-star feedback ratings, I can fairly claim that I am a professional at acquiring knowledge and presenting it in a useful form for the benefit of others. You can make your own judgement on that if you keep reading!

The prophet Daniel wrote that in the final days of this age knowledge would increase. That has certainly happened in our generation with the unbelievable explosion of information freely available on the Internet. What Daniel didn't say was that wisdom would also increase, and that certainly hasn't happened. Governments in the Western world have all been unwise in much of the dietary advice they have given, and most of us have been equally unwise in following that advice and in the way we have lived. It's my prayer that in these pages you will find the knowledge you need to provide yourself and your family with a truly healthy diet and lifestyle, and that you'll have the wisdom to put that knowledge into practice.

In preparing this material I owe a debt of gratitude to the many researchers and scientific institutions who have been willing to allow public access to their findings by publishing them on the Internet, in many cases without charge. That doesn't mean that everything one reads on the Internet is true: far from it. It must all be taken with a pinch of salt, but only a small one, because we are told we should all cut down on our salt intake...

CHAPTER 1: WHAT WE USED TO EAT

Much of the advice about healthy diets that the government and other bodies have been giving us has been wrong. When I was in primary school in the 1940s and 50s we fried our food in pork lard, ate beef dripping sandwiches, put butter on our bread and drank full-cream milk. Nowadays those are all foods that the government tells us to avoid; yet almost nobody was overweight, and we are the generation that is now living so long that pension funds have run out of money.

It is true that people used to take more exercise. Children were generally more active than today's kids are with their Xboxes and PlayStations and car lifts to school. Men worked as dustmen and coalmen and navvies, and women did housework without the benefit of washing machines and other gadgets. But even then not every adult was engaged in manual labour. Even in the 1950s most people who went to work spent their day in factories, shops, banks or offices, or they drove buses, trains or delivery vehicles. People spent most of their working day standing or sitting, as they do now, yet they were not fat.

Yet exercise doesn't have as big an effect on weight as one might suppose. When you exercise a lot you feel hungry, so unless you are very self-controlled you can end up eating more to compensate and thus don't lose any weight at all. When I was training with a team to climb the Welsh 3,000s some of us actually put on weight. No doubt it was extra muscle, but the fact is that we didn't all lose weight in spite of regular, strenuous exercise.

Even if you could lose weight by taking exercise it would take up a lot of time. A 'Big Mac', a deep-pan pizza or a helping of syrup sponge pudding and custard each contain about 500 calories. Table 1 shows that a British adult of 76kg average weight would have to walk up and down stairs for 66 minutes to burn off that amount of energy rather than store it as fat. For most adults 66 minutes of exercise would be an awful lot to fit into the day for every such treat they ate. Even a plain digestive biscuit provides enough fuel to climb up and down stairs for 10 minutes. That's how efficient our bodies are!

Table 1: Minutes of exercise required to burn 500 kilocalories

Exercise	Your weight in kg				Your weight in lb			
	60kg	80kg	100kg	120kg	150lb	200lb	250lb	300lb
Basketball	62	46	37	32	55	41	33	28
Cycling	62	46	37	32	55	41	33	28
Dancing	83	62	50	42	73	55	44	37
Cross trainer	54	41	33	27	48	36	29	24
Gardening	100	75	60	50	88	66	53	44
Jogging	71	54	43	36	63	48	38	32
Running at 6 mph	50	39	31	25	44	34	27	22
Stairs	83	62	50	42	73	55	44	37
Swimming	63	48	39	32	56	42	34	28
Walking at 3 mph	143	108	86	71	126	95	76	63

Of course exercise is important, which is why I still go jogging three times a week in my seventies. But I don't believe that people used to be slimmer just because they took more exercise than we do nowadays.

So is the reason so many people are overweight now simply that they eat more than they used to? In Britain, and probably in other Western countries too, I think most people do eat more than their forebears did 50 or 100 years ago. In our own family half a pint of custard was enough for six people when I was a child: now it seems to serve only four or five. When our children were growing up a home-made meat loaf served six of us: now, for some reason, it is enough for only five servings. I think supermarkets bear most of the blame for this. They systematically encourage overeating and overdrinking by offering ever larger sizes of sausages, buns, chocolate bars and bottles of fruit juice; ever thicker slices of bread; and ever bigger pre-priced packs of cheese, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and grapes. Multibuy offers such as three for the price of two add to the pressure to buy more rather than less food than we really want or need. The extraordinarily low prices on alcoholic drinks, which all add to our weight, are major incentives to drink more than is good for us.

In spite of all that, I don't believe that we eat very much more than people used to eat, or that eating more is the principal reason for the population's increasing weight. Nowadays a health-conscious individual might have a cup of coffee, a glass of fruit juice and a low-fat yogurt for breakfast. More typically an individual might have a bowl of cereal and a slice of toast with marmalade or something savoury on it. But when my sisters and I went to school we always had for breakfast a bowl of porridge, followed by a boiled egg or scrambled egg or fried sausages or fried bacon and tomatoes, usually with fried bread. That wasn't less than a modern breakfast.

On schooldays we had a cooked school meal, which would always include meat or fish with two veg, followed by a dessert such as semolina and red jam that we called 'murder on the Alps', baked apple with currants where the core had been ('rabbits' lavatory'), tapioca ('frogspawn'), steamed pudding and custard, or perhaps apple crumble and custard. In the evening we'd have tea, which was mostly bread and butter, not bread and margarine, and not bread made by the Chorleywood process, which involves preservatives and other artificial materials. We'd also have home-made cakes of some kind (my mother's rock buns lived up to their name), and these were cooked, as most home-made and bakery cakes were cooked, with a mixture of butter and lard, at least until the end of the war. Once we started to go to secondary school we had a bowl of cereal and milk for supper. Oh! And a third of a pint of full-cream milk on schooldays, and a milky drink at supper time.

I can't remember what we ate for Saturday lunches (I probably never got up in time to find out) but on Sundays there was always a full roast dinner, usually with batter pudding, followed by a proper pudding such as plum duff (a pudding made with suet, which is made from beef fat, and from flour, breadcrumbs, currants and raisins), a rhubarb and apple crumble, a syrup pudding, a steamed fruit pudding, or something like that. The puddings were always with custard, which was generally green, pink or blue, since making the Sunday custard was my job. Even as a boy I believed that variety was the spice of life.

It's true that in our family we used to eat thin sliced bread. The thick sliced bread that most people buy nowadays we'd have called doorsteps, the kind that only road menders and boy scouts would have cut for themselves. But maybe because our bread was sliced thinly we ate

more slices of it, especially at teatime, and that meant relatively more layers of butter and fish paste, Marmite or jam.

So I really don't believe that we ate much less than people eat nowadays. The main difference was that that we ate a different kind of food. We certainly didn't try to keep to a low-fat diet as bodies like the NHS and health charities keep telling us we should. So why do they tell us to do that? The answer is in Chapter 2.