

WAS JESUS VEGAN OR VEGETARIAN? POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF EXEGESIS AND OTHER METHODS OF INTERPRETING CHRISTIAN SOURCES

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ABSTRACT

The question of the textual and historical sources of the beliefs of religions is often inextricably linked with the question of the validity of those beliefs. Consequently, it is imperative that research be conducted with the utmost thoroughness, gathering all available information in order to provide a well-founded contribution. This article employs the case of the question of a potentially vegan Jesus to illustrate the types of sources and methodologies that can provide answers. In order to achieve this objective, the methodologies employed in theological inquiry and other avenues of historical research are initially subjected to critical analysis. The applicability of current methods of social science research to biblical and historical texts is also examined. The objective is to ascertain why and in what manner contemporary authors can arrive at results that cannot be achieved with the scientific methods of theology and also with social science methods. In this article, the approach is intended to describe the possibilities and limitations of different types of methods so that researchers can draw inspiration for their own choice of methods when evaluating historical and religious sources if they wish to investigate similar aspects that may arise due to the way of life and thinking of the present day.

Keywords: Validity of belief, historical research, contemporary methods.