

33. BIBLICAL DIETARY LAWS

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Biblical dietary laws, including the prohibitions of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, are among the many health laws God gave to Israel. Jesus, the apostles, and the early New Testament church observed them too, and they remain in effect today. Scripture indicates that laws pertaining to “clean” and “unclean” animals were recognized and observed from earliest times.

Genesis 7:2–3; 8:20; Leviticus 3:17; 11; Deuteronomy 14:3–21; Matthew 5:17–19; Acts 10:9–15, 28; Isaiah 66:17

DOCTRINAL OVERVIEW

Topics Include:

- The Creator best knows our bodies
- Is Food a “salvation issue”?
- What is meant by clean and unclean?
- No change in animals since the Flood
- Clean and unclean animals were understood at time of the Flood
- Man did not have knowledge to determine harmful foods
- Even with knowledge, people often make poor food choices
- Not everything is food
- Pigs created to be scavengers, cleaning refuse and filth
- Fats and heart disease
- Scriptures showing pigs to be loathsome
- Did Jesus purify all foods?
- Does modern refrigeration make a difference?
- Instruction about eating the fat or the blood
- Blessings and cursings
- Acts 10 – Peter’s Vision – Is it instruction about food laws?
- Acts 10 – Peter identifies what the Vision is about
- Acts 10 - God accepts worship of gentile God-fearers
- Acts 10 – significant meaning of “common and “unclean”
- Romans 14 – meat offered before idols
- 1 Tim 4:4 – Everything is good?
- Only clean animals offered to God who is Holy
- Our body is the temple of God’s Holy Spirit
- Paul clarifies Old Testament examples are presently relevant
- Which animals are Clean and Unclean?
- To Know More ...

The Creator God is our Maker. If anyone should know how the human mind and body operates, certainly He knows, since He designed and created it. He did not leave us in ignorance about our bodies and how we are to maintain it. The Bible gives us information needed to maintain, understand, and fuel this marvelous and intricate biological system we call the human body. Human beings, however, having human nature and being what they are, often opt to throw away God's instruction, to reinvent the rules of good health. Most of the problems in the world today, can be traced back to man's refusal to consider God's instruction.

The Psalmist writes, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalms 139:14). One could argue that following God's dietary laws is not a matter of our salvation, but who wants to take the chance? Our obedience to them *does* demonstrate our faith and trust in His Word. God looks upon our attitude in response to His laws. Anyone can give lip service, but not everyone exhibits his convictions in God's Word by actually doing what He says. Jesus said with extra emphasis, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. (Matthew 5:17-18). (Clearly heaven and earth have *not* disappeared – and so the Laws of God have *not* disappeared). As the apostle James stated, "You believe that there is one God; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:19-20). And James further emphasized, "You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only... for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:24-26). God would not tell us to do something if it were not in our best interest and the development of faith through the exercising of it, validates its authenticity—that is very important to Him.

Just what is meant by clean and unclean?

Many centuries ago, God revealed His instructions regarding which kinds of animal flesh mankind should or should not eat. You will find an adequate list in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. These fundamental laws were revealed to show man was compatible with his body to assimilate. Unquestionably, Noah was aware of the distinction between clean and unclean animals (Genesis 7:1-5). However, these laws were violated by most of the world's population; therefore, God re-established these laws with His nation Israel (Leviticus 11:1-2). Some will argue these clean and unclean laws were only for the nation Israel, but obviously the nation you're from does not change the makeup of the meat and whether or not it's good for the human body. The point is, it applies to everyone who is human, not just Israel. This fundamental law is not a part of God's great spiritual law, summed up in the Ten Commandments. And it is not normally a part of the ceremonial, ritualistic, or sacrificial laws later fulfilled at the crucifixion of Christ (Hebrews 9-11). The law of clean and unclean meats is a health law and is therefore for all humanity.

Animals that properly digest their food and which nourishes the human body were originally created that way. There was never any change made in the structure of the human body at the time of the Flood, or at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, or at any other time. It cannot be found in scripture where God made drastic changes in the makeup of animal flesh, resulting in what once was unfit for food will now be suitable and supply the needs of the body—that's simply not true!. The unclean animals before the Flood are the same unclean animals—and today, remain unclean—nothing has changed.

Before the Flood, Noah brought into the ark of the clean animals to be eaten for food, by sevens; but of the unclean, of which he was not to eat during the Flood, by twos, only enough to preserve their lives (Genesis 7:2). The inference seems to be that the additional clean animals were for food and sacrifice once Noah and his family were back on dry ground. Prior to the Flood, vegetables seem to have been the main constituent of diet. After the Flood, God gave Noah not merely the green herb (vegetables), as the major part of his diet, but of every type of living creature - clean animals, clean fish, clean fowl (Genesis 9:3; Leviticus 11). This verse does not say that every living, breathing creature is clean and fit to eat, but that “as the green herb have I given you all things.” God did not give poisonous herbs as food. He gave man the healthful herbs of the earth.

Even if mankind desired to determine what flesh was good, or bad at the time—he was unable. That is why God reveals in His Word, which meats are clean for us. Since the Flood, every moving, clean, healthful, non-poisonous type of animal life is good for food, in the same manner as God gave the healthful non-poisonous herbs. Therefore, the instruction received in Leviticus 11 is not some ritualistic regulation for the Mosaic period only.

It should be understood by mankind that God is the Creator of all, and the author of all law. He gave mankind a dominion mandate: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it...” (Genesis 1:28). This involves the fundamental responsibility for research, development, education, and all other lawful activities of mankind for the purpose of improving the quality of his health, life, and environment. This dominion mandate gives humans stewardship under the Creator to “subdue the earth.” Certainly, if man has this authority from God, you would think after nearly six thousand years, he should know what food is good for consumption—yet most don't even follow the simplest dietary food laws discovered by the professionals in the fields of medicine and science. Many simply insist having their own way, eating whatever tastes good, in violation of God's food laws, and possibly shortening their life by these poor choices.

When God said, “Every moving thing that lives shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things” (Genesis 9:3), He did not mean that we should eat the flesh of unclean animals. Assuredly, we understand God did not intend for us to eat poisonous toadstools, poison oak, or poison ivy. Since we know enough not to eat poisonous green herbs, why not apply the same logic to unsafe and unfit or

“unclean” meats? God states the only flesh He permits us to eat (among land animals) comes from animals that *divide the hoof and chew the cud* (Leviticus 11:2-3). Animals such as the antelope, buffalo, cow, deer, gazelle, giraffe, ox, and sheep are clean animals.

His instructions are easy to understand concerning clean and unclean meats. Notice concerning the hog (swine). “And the swine [pig], though *he divide the hoof yet chews not the cud* it is unclean to you” (Leviticus 11:7). There is always purpose and order in everything God does or creates. Why, then, the “hog”? The hog was created as a scavenger. He was made to help clean the earth of refuse and filth. In order to survive on this diet, God equipped the hog with elimination tubes or glands just above the hoofs on each foreleg. Through these openings the hog eliminates a puss-like substance—a fluid of waste and poison. This causes the hog to exude such a malodorous stench. God created these animals to roam the land and forests, but man has penned them up and forced them to wallow in their own filth and excrement.

Out of all the animals that God pronounced unfit for human consumption, the hog (swine) is shown to be the most despicable and loathsome (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14). God pronounced it an abomination to eat its flesh (Isaiah 65:4). God speaks in no uncertain terms; He is coming in anger and fury, rebuking with flames those who defy His clear instructions and warnings. The world continues to disobey through ignorance, and willful disobedience, suffering degeneration and physical depravity as a result; and without excuse! “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, says the LORD” (Isaiah 66:16-17).

Wherever we find swine mentioned in the Bible, it depicts a low, or lowest state to which any person can fall. The prodigal son, after squandering all his wealth, ended up feeding husks to swine, and even eating the husks himself. To eat the food pigs had touched was degrading beyond belief—he had truly sunk to the depths (Luke 15:15). We are strongly advised by Jesus not to cast pearls (God’s truth) before swine (Matthew 7:6). In the book of Proverbs, God compares a woman who does not practice discretion to the snout of a swine containing a jewel of gold (Proverbs 11:22). The apostle Peter, speaking about individuals that learned about Christ and salvation and greatly influenced by the truth, but then turn and reject that truth and return to sin—as being like a dog or sow. “But it happened unto them according to the true proverb, “The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Peter 2:22).

Because of what Jesus said in the book of Mark, many people believe Jesus abrogated the distinction between clean and unclean, “making all meats clean.” In the New Testament, Jesus never said one word about all unclean meats being made clean. In Mark 7:1-13 Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and calls them hypocrites because they were more concerned about ceremonially washings than they were about the important

matters such as honoring parents (verses 10-12). They were more concerned about the small amount of dirt they might eat because they did not wash their hands, but would transgress the law of God. Notice again, there is not one mention of clean or unclean meats. Jesus continues to scold them because they lay aside God's commandments, teaching the commandments of men (verses 6-9).

Finally, in verse 19, we see the verse people assume gives them license to eat any kind of meat they want to. But notice the explanation Jesus gives His disciples. "Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him" (Mark 7:18). Why is this true? "Because it does not enter his heart, but his stomach, and is eliminated, *thus* purifying all foods?" (Mark 7:19). This does not say all meats are clean! Jesus is speaking of a normal bodily function that expels all foods as well as the small-amount of dirt you might get on your food if you eat with unwashed hands or pots and pans. Jesus went on to enumerate all the things that defile the man (Mark 7:20-23). Dirt does not defile a man; it is the evil thoughts of the heart and the resultant actions that defile the man. As we point out later in this statement, Peter clearly does not believe Jesus made all meats "clean" (Acts 10:14)

Because of advanced farm feeding methods and refrigeration, many believe the flesh of the hog to be safe for human consumption. However, a hog is still a swine. Nothing can change that. Swine are scavengers and their flesh is susceptible to a greater number of diseases than any other domestic animal, with most of their ills transmissible to man. Some of the diseases passed from swine to man are *trichinosis, tapeworm, swine erysipelas, swine influenza, roundworm, undulant fever; food poisoning, hog cholera, boils, and a host of others*. The animals pronounced unfit for human consumption by God can, under normal conditions, become infected with the trichinosis parasite. Herbivorous domestic animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats do not become infected with the parasite since they are not scavengers and do not eat meat.

God's instruction in the Bible is not to eat the fat or the blood either (Leviticus 3:17; Leviticus 7:23; Deuteronomy 12:16). Other scriptures speak against eating animals that are found dead, or killed by other animals (Leviticus 22:8). Modern understanding by science and nutritionists agree there are "health reasons" for caution when eating blood, fat or animals that may have died from unknown causes such as disease. Interestingly, scripture allows Israelites to give or sell meat - to foreigners - from animals that died from unknown causes (Deuteronomy 14:21). In seeking to understand the intent of these scriptures, some see these as "health laws", while others see these as rules related to the "sacrificial system" and the holiness of Israel before God. The reason this distinction is important, is since Christ (Hebrews 9-11) is the fulfillment of the various sacrifices, some believe we can now eat fat and blood (which were parts of the sacrifice reserved for God). Most within the CGI consider these teachings as scriptural "health" principles (supported by science and scripture), concluding not to eat fat, blood and animals found dead of unknown causes.

Our God is our Lawgiver, Creator, and Savior, and He is also Our Master Dietitian. His instructions are given in love and concern for our wellbeing. In the book of Deuteronomy, God enumerates the blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28). He has set before us blessings and cursings and said choose rightly. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). By building godly character, by means of choosing God's way, and overcoming every obstacle standing between God and ourselves, we can become sons and daughters of God, blessed with long life and good health!

After reading about Peter's vision (Acts 10) of an enormous sheet or sailcloth tied at the corners being let down to the earth containing all kinds of quadrupeds, wild animals, reptiles of the earth, and birds of the air, many interpret God was telling Peter the dietary laws were abolished (Acts 10: 11-12). There came a voice to him saying, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat" (Acts 10:13). Peter was with Jesus throughout His ministry. Certainly if Jesus had taught the Old Testament dietary laws were abolished and meats previously termed "unclean" were now cleansed, it could hardly have gone unnoticed. This would have been a highly controversial (and very significant) change. Peter could hardly have missed the significance of it. Peter's reply to the Lord was, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean" (Acts 10: 14). Then the voice from heaven replied, "What God hath, cleansed, that call not thou common (Acts 10:15).

These events occurred three times, and the vessel was received up again into heaven (Acts 10:10-16). Notice verse 17, Peter doubted what this vision meant. Whatever response we expected from Peter it seems unlikely he would have "doubted himself" about the vision's meaning. Yet, Peter's initial doubt makes no sense if Jesus plainly taught the cleansing of all meats. The context of Acts 10 shouts that Peter's vision had to do with people, not meat. "You know how it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28).

It is obvious -- unclean meats were still unclean -- but *people* who had been considered "unclean" were no longer considered unclean. God was showing Peter and the pious Jews of that day, who treated Gentiles (people of other nations) as unworthy of Godly acceptance, that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation that fears Him and works righteousness is accepted with Him" (Acts 10:34-35). While Peter yet spoke these words an amazing event unfolded: "The Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the "circumcision who believed" were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-45).

Among the Jews of the first century, uncircumcised Gentiles (people of other nations), were considered unclean, and it was considered unlawful according to the Jewish tradition, not the Law of Moses, for a Jew to enter the house of a Gentile and

eat with him. But the intentions of Jesus Christ was to have all people, regardless of nationality, in the Church He was building, provided they would repent of their sins and accept Him as their Savior. The purpose of the vision, then, was to make this intention of Christ's quite clear to Peter. As time passed, many Gentiles accepted Christ as their Savior and entered the church. They also embraced the Sabbath, annual Holy Day festivals, and clean/unclean laws, along with the Ten Commandments.

Cornelius was a Gentile, and he accepted all of God's laws. "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that-fears God with all his house, which gave much aims to the people, and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:1-2). It is quite clear Cornelius knew the Hebrew's God, and kept God's Old Testament laws, and had a good reputation among the Jews. Scholars tell us during the first century there were three classes of people. There were the pagans, both the idol worshipers and irreligious. There were the proselytes of Judaism who submitted to the rite of circumcision and became Jews; and lastly, there were those who were known as "God fearers" who, though uncircumcised, worshiped the true God, believed the Scriptures, and even went to the synagogues on the Sabbath Day. Cornelius was a "God fearer." He is described as "one that feared God" (Acts 10:2, 22). Most of the converts to Christianity at this time were "God fearers." It is most unlikely these people would abandon any of God's laws they had so devoutly embraced.

Peter's vision was not about Jesus Christ-changing His Father's clean/unclean laws, but instead, was all about accepting all people into God's church and not calling them common or unclean. There are two different words in the Greek, often carelessly translated "common" or "unclean." Peter used both of these words when he said, "Not so Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common (koinos) or unclean (akarhartos)" (Acts 10:14). Koinos means polluted through external misuse. Akathartos means unclean and impure by nature. A hog (swine) is unclean (akatharros) by its very nature and not suitable for human consumption.

A cow is clean, suitable for human consumption, but can become common (koinos) by (1) improper killing or bleeding of the meat (strangulation), (2) disease, (3) or being offered to idols. Paul used the Greek word for "common" (koinos) throughout (Romans 14:14). He did not use the Greek word for "unclean" (akathartos). Clearly, Paul knew no clean foods which God sanctified are by nature polluted, but vegetarians who were weak in the faith, weak in understanding God's Word, thought meats should not be eaten. To such a vegetarian, "to him," not to others, that meat seemed polluted. His conscience defiled the meat for him; he would become upset, were he to eat meat. But that does not make the meat polluted.

Therefore, the context of Romans 14 is whether to be a meat eater or a vegetarian. Another reason for not eating meat is some people thought it had been made common by becoming polluted or defiled, possibly because it had been offered to an idol. If you recently repented from idol worship, it would bother your conscience to eat meat offered to an idol, because you think it is defiled. Those who believed this were to

follow their conscience and not eat such meat because if you believe a thing to be sinful, you should not do it; even-though it really is not sinful. “And he that doubts is damned if he eat, because he eats not of faith: for whatever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23). The only circumstance in which clean meats are ever common or polluted is when the clean animals have died of themselves or the blood has not been properly drained. That is why the apostles and elders when gathered at Jerusalem forbade the use of meat from strangled animals and meat with blood in it (Acts 15:20). Such animal flesh was called “common” because it could be given to strangers or aliens in Old Testament times if those people wanted to eat it. They were the common, or polluted, people of other nations, not the chosen and clean people, Israel (Deuteronomy 14:21).

In New Testament times, clean meat offered to idols was prohibited if it was polluted by strangulation or the blood remained in it. Otherwise, it was permitted to be eaten if it did not offend anyone. Paul devoted the entire eighth and tenth chapters of 1 Corinthians to instructions on not raising the question of meats offered to idols. “But if any man say unto you, ‘This is offered in sacrifice unto idols,’ eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake” (I Corinthians 10:28). In other words, if clean meats offered to idols were not polluted, you could eat them unless it offended someone. Under those circumstances the meat became common, not to you, but to others who raised the question about idols. Notice: “Conscience, I say not thine own, but of” the other” (verse 29). That is why Paul said, “But to him that esteemeth any thing to be common, to him it is common” (Romans 14:14).

One other scripture used -- to try to eliminate Biblical Dietary laws -- is 1Tim 4:4 which says “For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving”. This snippet of scripture is interesting, but even as a snippet one has to question what it is saying because if “everything is good and not to be rejected” ... what about a salad consisting of Poison Ivy? Or the poison sacks of venomous snakes?!? This makes no sense until you look at the context of the verse (and even the whole sentence, since the snippet chops off the end of the sentence). The whole passage says:

1Tim 4:1-5 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

Clearly this passage is dealing with asceticism (not food laws), and the sentence is clearly qualified by saying “everything is good” *that is consecrated by God’s*

word as being “good to eat”. God’s word does not consecrate unclean foods as being “good to eat”.

Is it really important for a follower of Christ to keep the clean/unclean laws found in the Old Testament? In Leviticus 1:1, God spoke to Moses out of the Tabernacle and instructed him to teach the children of Israel the law of offerings (see Leviticus chapters 1-7—also notice all these sacrifices were burnt—none of it was eaten; it was a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord). Only clean animals were acceptable to God, such as the bullock, sheep or goat, turtledove, and oxen. No unclean animals were ever offered to God by His priesthood. In Leviticus 11, God gives instructions as to what is clean and unclean. He goes on to say, “For I am the LORD your God that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am Holy (Leviticus 11:45). God expected the Israelites to eat as He instructed them and not eat unclean animals—to not obey would make you unholy!

God’s Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. and the worship of God in that Temple ceased. We might ask the question, where is God’s Temple today? “What know you not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19). Those who have accepted Christ Jesus as Savior are duty bound not to follow the dictates of their fleshly desires, which leads to the detriment of their bodies -- for they are like slaves bought at a slave auction with the blood of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:20). Paul also warned the Corinthians not to defile the Temple of God. “If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is Holy, which Temple you are” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

As Christians, it is easy for some to dismiss the Old Testament as being without relevancy in their lives, but Paul did not think so. He reminded the early church, just as Israel was baptized unto Moses, they, and Christians today, are united in Christ by baptism (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). Paul went on to say those things that happened to the Israelites were examples for us today (1 Corinthians 10:11). Again Paul, speaking to the Romans, admonished them to lay aside their own daily desires and follow Christ, offering themselves as living sacrifices. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). Dare we pollute our bodies with unclean meat, or for that matter, anything that’s unclean, since our bodies are a living sacrifice to God?

If we defile our physical bodies, which are considered the Temple of God, by eating unclean meat, we have sinned. “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). So, our attitude about clean and unclean meats is very important. By being cavalier and not careful of what we eat, we allow sin to come into the innermost part of our mind (the Holy of Holies), thereby defiling that most holy place where God’s Spirit resides.. If this is not realized and repented of, God cannot continue to dwell there. If we neglect eating clean meats, eventually we could become lax, and neglect to eat the proper spiritual meats. “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils:

you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils" (1 Corinthians 10:21). Real Christians, followers of Christ Jesus, only place on their tables the food God Himself permitted on His altar or table, the clean animals listed in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. When viewed in the light of all the Scriptures, clean and unclean meats become a very important.

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Which Animals are Clean and Which are Unclean?

Mammals

Characteristics: Bear their young (not eggs), suckle their young, breathe through lungs, hair on skin, constant body temperature, four-chambered heart.

Clean

The Bible says animals that chew the cud and part the hoof are permitted for food. These animals are herbivores, have incisors in upper jaws, stomach with four compartments, and hollow or solid horns.

Examples: Cow, sheep, goat, buffalo, deer, gazelle, antelope, ox, giraffe

Unclean

1. Parts the hoof but does not chew the cud. Walks on hooves, possess canine and incisor teeth.

Examples: pig, bear, hippo

2. Chews the end but does not part the hoof; small hooves like nails; walks on cushion-like pads; task-like canines on both jaws and incisor teeth on upper jaws; stomach has only three compartments.

Examples: camel, llama

3. Solid-hoofed Herbivorous; single-stomach; incisor teeth on both upper and lower jaws.

Examples: horse, donkey, mule, zebra

4. Carnivores. Six incisors and two sharp canine teeth on both jaws; four or five toes with claws on each foot and walk either on their toes or their paws.

Examples: lion, leopard, dog, wolf, jackal, fox, hyena, bear

5. Other mammals; neither chews cud nor parts hoof.

Examples: ape, bat (even though found with birds in Leviticus 11:19), elephant, hare, mouse, rat, whale

Fish and Fowl

Fish

"Whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat" (Leviticus 11:39). It is clarified even more in Verse 10: "And all that have not fins and scales in the seas...they shall be an abomination unto you." An often-asked question is, What fish have both fins and scales? It is worth remembering many fish have very small insignificant scales or small patches of scales near the head and tail fin. In either case, such fish are clean and fit for food.

Clean

A complete list of clean fish would be too long to enumerate. The following is a short list of the most important clean fish having both scales and fins. They are albacore, anchovy, barracuda, bass, black fish, bowfin, buffalo carp, characin, cod, croaker, darter, flounder, gaby, grayling, haddock, halibut, herring, jack, mackerel, minnow, mooneye, mullet, needlefish, perch, pike, salmon, sardine, shad, silver side, smelt, snapper, sole, sucker, sunfish, surffish, tarpons, trout, tuna, weakfish, and Whitefish. For further research try your public library.

Unclean

A number of commonly known unclean fish that are scaleless and not fit for food are catfish, eels, paddlefish, sculpins, sticklebacks, sturgeons, and swordfish. These fish do not have true scales. Other forms of sea life unfit for human consumption are abalone, clams, crabs, lobsters, oysters, scallops, shrimp, and whale.

Fowl

Leviticus 11:13-19 and Deuteronomy 14:11-20 reveal specific varieties of birds unfit for human consumption. Strange as it may seem, no clean birds are listed. Only about two-dozen unclean birds are listed out of thousands found the world over. These unclean birds illustrate the characteristics of all unclean birds. They fall into types of which is unclean "after its kind." The important question now is, How do these unclean birds differ from those known to be clean or fit for human consumption? Please note: the characteristics of clean fowl are, determined by the dove and the pigeon (Luke 2:24; Leviticus 1:14-17), which were anciently used for sacrifice. The quail is clean since God provided it as food for Israel (Numbers 11:31-32), and the sparrow is clean since it was sold for food and Christ recognized this use (Luke 12:6). By comparing the differences between these clean birds and those listed as unclean, we can arrive at the following characteristics of clean birds.

Clean

1. They must not be birds of prey.
2. They catch food thrown to them in the air, but they bring to the ground and divide with their bills. (Unclean birds devour it in the air, or press it with one foot to the ground and tear it with their bills.)
3. They must have an elongated middle front toe and a hind toe.
4. They must spread their toes so that three front toes are on one side of a perch and the hind toe on the other side.
5. They must have craws or crops.
6. They must have a gizzard with a double lining which can easily be separated.
Examples: duck, goose, hen, house sparrow, partridge, peacock, pheasant, pigeon, quail

Unclean

Birds of prey. Falcon-like birds are carnivores, have hooked beaks, sharp talons bent like hooks.

Examples: eagle, kite, hawk, buzzard

Vulture-like birds feed on carrion, bare neck (usually), thick bill which is solid, talons blunt and only slightly inclined.

Examples: Griffin vulture, black vulture, Egyptian vulture, bearded vulture

2. Night birds of prey; large head and eyes, four toes (two pointing forward and two backward).

Examples: owl

3. Water and marsh fowls, all are unclean with exception of goose and duck.

4. Other birds.

Examples: crow, swift, ostrich. Some unclean birds such as the roadrunners, woodpeckers, and the parrot family (which divide their toes so that two are on either side of a perch), aquatic and wading birds and gulls that have no crops or craws, no double lining of gizzards, and often no hind toe or elongated middle front toe, are not listed specifically in the Bible.

Amphibians

Characteristics: Amphibians are vertebrates born in water, living in water, on land, or both. During the larva or tadpole stage, they breathe with gills, and the adult stage either with lungs or gills. Their body temperatures will change according to the medium (water, land, etc.) in which they live.

Clean

There are no clean amphibians.

Unclean

Examples: salamander, newt, toad, frog

Reptiles

Characteristics: Creeping and crawling things that have short legs or none at all, so that they move close to the ground or drag along it; live mostly on dry land; have lungs; majority lay eggs with soft shell in which the white and the yolk are mixed; cold blooded (temperature adjusts to the environment); skin covered with scales.

Clean

There are no clean reptiles.

Unclean

Reptiles are included in the general prohibition. “And every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth shall be an abomination; it shall not be eaten. Whatsoever goes upon the belly, and whatsoever goes upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they are an abomination” (Leviticus 11:41-42). The crocodile would be included in this prohibition by “whatsoever has no fins or scales in the water” (Leviticus 11:12). All species of snake are prohibited.

Examples: black snake, viper, cobra

Invertebrates

Characteristics: Largest number of species in the animal kingdom. They have no bony skeleton; their skin is either bare or covered with a shell. They reproduce by a simple division of the body, by laying eggs, or by bringing forth their offspring alive. The smallest creatures of this group are the protozoa, whose existence was not known until the invention of the microscope.

Clean

Among the millions of species of insects, there are only a few permitted for human consumption. “Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goes upon all four which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth; Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust alter his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind” (Leviticus 11:21-22).

Unclean

Most invertebrates are an abomination and prohibited. Those that live in water are under the prohibition either of fish that lack fins and scales or of any living thing that is in the waters. “And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you” (Leviticus 11:10). Those that live on land are forbidden also. “Whatsoever goes upon the belly, and whatsoever goes upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they are an abomination” (Leviticus 11:42).

Examples: snail, oyster, squid, jellyfish, sponges, protozoa.

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