

The Levitical Dietary Guidelines and the Modern Day Christian

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II Tim 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Hosea 4:6: 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...'

I Corinthians 6:12 &13: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them."

So as a born again Christian we still have the ability to make free will choices to sow good or bad seed, and to sin or not to sin.

Now for the purposes of this study we are going to be looking at the Old Testament dietary guidelines of the Bible. It is important to realize that just because we are not under the Jewish laws of the Old Testament that does not take away from the wisdom of these guidelines. We will see there are specific reasons that God put them in his Word.

We are first going to look at: Lev 3:17 "It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood."

After this proclamation was made in Scripture the Lord labeled those things the Jews could eat as "Clean" and "Unclean" in Leviticus chapter 11 and Deuteronomy Chapter 14.

(I will give out handout at the end)

Now some say that the vision Peter had in acts chapter 10 and 11 was God's way of telling us it was now alright to eat all things. Others say that it was God's way of telling Peter that all mankind was going to be offered entrance into the Kingdom of God. But there is one thing for sure about Peter's vision; blood and fat were not part of it. Meaning that the perpetual statute in Leviticus 3:17 is still in effect.

Now you may say I am not guilty as I do not eat blood or fat. But you may be eating these things and not even realizing it. Consider the following points:

- 1) Certain fried foods you may be consuming may be cooked in animal fat.
- 2) Certain types of sausages are made from 1/3 parts blood or more.
- 3) Modern day slaughter methods do not emphasize the draining of the blood in animal carcasses, they prioritize speed and maximum production of the meat.

Common mammal slaughterhouse stunning methods:

Captive bolt stunning - A "pistol" is set against the animal's head and a metal rod is thrust into the brain.

Electric stunning - Current produces a grand mal seizure.

One other thing to bring up before we go further is the The Mad Cow Disease scare which has brought to light several disquieting features regarding the raising of food animals.

It seems that for decades British and North American farmers have been feeding their beef and dairy cattle, which are vegetarian (or herbivores) cheap protein supplements which have in their ingredient list sheep brains, spinal cords and other animal parts. Certain of these substances were banned as a result of Mad Cow. However in the U.S. and in most other places the practice continues unabated. Indeed, offal (the ground remains of dead animals), from sheep, cattle, pigs, as well as animal feces, is routinely fed to food animals in the form of rendered pellets, powder or meal.

In addition, massive quantities of blood meal, bone meal and other animal byproducts find their way into food animal's feed. It is grossly unnatural and dangerous to feed blood and other animal parts to cattle, which are natural vegetarians. And herein lies the problem. Who knows what diseases are transmitted as a result of this criminal violation of the laws of nature?

There has never been one case of mad cow disease from a cow that was grass-fed as the Lord made them to be. Studies indicate grass-fed beef (cattle raised in pasture) is much healthier to eat than grain-fed beef (cattle raised in confinement). Grass-fed beef is up to three times leaner than grain-fed beef, and can have up to 15 fewer calories per ounce than meat from a grain-fed cow. Grass-fed meat also provides more balanced omega-3s, omega-6 fatty acids, beta carotene, vitamin E and folic acid.

It would behoove those who believe that, under the gospel dispensation, mankind is free to ignore the Old Testament prohibition of eating blood with the meat tissue, to seriously consider the special consensus that the Council of Jerusalem took regarding this specific topic in the year A.D. 50. The apostle James, chairman of this ecclesiastical council, in his closing remarks summarized the unanimous resolution arrived at by the church at large through the Holy Spirit. Here are his words in Acts 15: 28&29:

"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."

Let us not overlook that this resolution took place under the guidance of the Holy Spirit after the death of Christ on the cross and His resurrection. Thus Biblical evidence supports the concept that the health-related regulations of Leviticus 3:17 in the Old Testament are still in effect today.

Now let's look at I Timothy 4:1,3-5: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith... ..**commanding** to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Now this is the proof text used by many to eat any and all foods. But you need to ask yourself a few questions in regard to this verse:

1) Does this portion of Scripture give us justification to eat any way we like? If this is the case we could just live off Twinkies, Hotdogs and Pizza. But remember what I Corinthians 6:12 says: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient, all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any..."

2) Does this portion of Scripture negate or cancel the validity or merit of the Old Testament dietary guidelines of clean and unclean animals? Or put another way does the Old Testament dietary guidelines of clean and unclean animals suddenly become useless in light of the I Timothy Scriptures we read previously? Remember God gave these to the Jews for their protection, not because he was trying to be cruel.

3) If praying over unhealthy junk food automatically changed or transformed that food into healthy food, then why do Born again Christians (that pray over their food) experience and die from the same diseases that the unsaved people die from? If we could eat unhealthy food and get away with it, shouldn't born again Christians be living much longer lives regardless of how they eat? Yes food is sanctified through prayer but an order of deep fried pork rinds does not become health food through prayer.

Now going back to the Old Testament list of clean and unclean foods if you look closely at those animals the Bible declared unfit to eat, you will discover many foods that several modern day health advocates declare as unhealthy.

Dr. David Macht of Johns Hopkins University reported on the toxicity levels of the flesh of 88 animals and sea creatures. In Dr. Macht's research, all unclean creatures measured toxic with the pig ranking extremely toxic at about the same level as the rat and groundhog. As a result of his research he concluded with the following quote: "Every word in the Hebrew Scriptures (or the Old Testament) is well chosen and carries valuable knowledge and deep significance."

Now it is proven fact that the wrong kinds of foods can actually cause cancer, heart disease and a host of other diseases. So why not error on the side of safety, and try to avoid these foods if possible?

Are we under the law? No, but you still reap what you sow even in the Biblical dispensation of grace we are living in.

Galatians 5:13 “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh....”

So one way to sow bad seed is to put the wrong kinds of foods in our bodies. Remember virtually every choice we make will affect us either positively or negatively. We are 3 part beings: body, soul and spirit; and these 3 parts are affected by the freewill choices we make on a daily basis in either a good or bad way depending on the choices you make to sow good or bad seed. Now remember the seed you plant today will grow and produce more fruit over time, whether the fruit is good or bad a seed always produces much more than the original seed.

What is our responsibility for the Light we are shown?: One question we could ask ourselves as Christians is: Am I practicing true temperance in all things? Is my diet such as will bring me into a position where I can accomplish the greatest amount of good for the Lord Jesus Christ?

If we cannot answer these questions in the affirmative, we could stand ashamed before God, for He will hold us all responsible for the light which has shone upon our path. The time of ignorance God winked at, but as fast as light shines upon us, He requires us to change any detrimental habits, and place ourselves in right relation to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Which Animals Does the Bible Designate as 'Clean' and 'Unclean'?

God reveals which animals-including fish and birds-are suitable and unsuitable for human consumption in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Although the lists aren't exhaustive, He reveals guidelines for recognizing animals that are acceptable for food.

Why does God identify some animals as suitable for human consumption and others as unsuitable? God didn't give laws to arbitrarily assert control over humans. He gave His laws (including those of which meats are clean or unclean) "that it might be well" with those who seek to obey Him (Deuteronomy 5:29).

Although God did not reveal the specific reasons some animals may be eaten and others must be avoided, we can make generalized conclusions based on the animals included in the two categories.

In listing the animals that should not be eaten, God forbids the consumption of scavengers and carrion eaters, which devour other animals for their food.

Animals such as pigs, bears, vultures and raptors can eat (and thrive) on decaying flesh. Predatory animals such as wolves, lions, leopards and cheetahs most often prey on the weakest (and at times the diseased) in animal herds.

When it comes to sea creatures, bottom dwellers such as lobsters and crabs scavenge for dead animals on the sea floor. Shellfish such as oysters, clams and mussels similarly consume decaying organic matter that sinks to the sea floor, including sewage.

A common denominator of many of the animals God designates as unclean is that they routinely eat flesh that would sicken or kill humans. When we eat such animals we partake of a food chain that includes things harmful to humans.

As nutritionist David Meinz observes: "Could it be that God, in His wisdom, created certain creatures whose sole purpose is to clean up after the others? Their entire 'calling' may be to act exclusively as the sanitation workers of our ecology. God may simply be telling us that it's better for us believers not to consume the meat of these trash collectors" (*Eating by the Book*, 1999, p. 225).

The following list, based on Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, identifies many of the animals God designates as clean and unclean. The list uses their common names.

Clean Animals			
Animals That Chew the Cud and Part the Hoof	Fish With Fins and Scales	Minnow Mullet Perch (or bream) Pike (or pickerel or jack) Pollack (or pollock or Boston bluefish) Rockfish Salmon Sardine (or pilchard) Shad Silver hake (or whiting) Smelt (or frost fish or ice fish) Snapper (or ebu, jobfish, lehi, onaga, opakapaka or uku) Sole Steelhead Sucker Sunfish Tarpon Trout (or weakfish) Tuna (or ahi, aku, albacore, bonito or tombo) Whitefish	Birds With Clean Characteristics Chicken Dove Duck Goose Grouse Guinea fowl Partridge Peafowl Pheasant Pigeon Prairie chicken Ptarmigan Quail Sagehen Sparrow (and other songbirds) Swan* Teal Turkey Insects Types of locusts that may include crickets and grasshoppers
Antelope Bison (buffalo) Caribou Cattle (beef, veal) Deer (venison) Elk Gazelle Giraffe Goat Hart Ibex Moose Ox Reindeer Sheep (lamb, mutton)	Anchovy Barracuda Bass Black pomfret (or monchong) Bluefish Bluegill Carp Cod Crappie Drum Flounder Grouper Grunt Haddock Hake Halibut Hardhead Herring (or alewife) Kingfish Mackerel Mahimahi (or dorado, dolphinfish[not to be confused with the mammal dolphin])		
Unclean Animals			

Animals With Unclean Characteristics	Groundhog Hare Hippopotamus Kangaroo	Shellfish	Grebe Grosbeak Gull Hawk Heron Kite Lapwing Loon Magpie Osprey Ostrich Owl Parrot Pelican Penguin Plover Rail Raven Roadrunner Sandpiper Seagull Stork Swallow Swift Vulture Water hen Woodpecker
Swine	Llama (alpaca, vicuña)	Abalone Clam Crab Crayfish Lobster Mussel Prawn Oyster Scallop Shrimp	
Boar Peccary Pig (hog, bacon, ham, lard, pork, most sausage and pepperoni)	Mole Monkey Mouse Muskrat Opossum Porcupine Rabbit		
Canines	Raccoon Rat Rhinoceros	Soft body	
Coyote Dog Fox Hyena Jackal Wolf	Skunk Slug Snail (escargot) Squirrel Wallaby Weasel Wolverine Worm	Cuttlefish Jellyfish Limpet Octopus Squid (calamari)	
Felines	All insects except some in the locust family	Sea mammals	
Cat Cheetah Leopard Lion Panther Tiger	Marine Animals Without Scales and Fins	Dolphin Otter Porpoise Seal Walrus Whale	
Equines	Fish	Birds of Prey, Scavengers and Others	Reptiles
Ass Donkey Horse Mule Onager Zebra (quagga)	Bullhead Catfish Eel European Turbot Marlin Paddlefish Sculpin Shark Stickleback Squid Sturgeon (includes most caviar) Swordfish	Albatross Bat Bittern Buzzard Condor Coot Cormorant Crane Crow Cuckoo Eagle Flamingo	Alligator Caiman Crocodile Lizard Snake Turtle
Other			Amphibians
Armadillo Badger Bear Beaver Camel Elephant Gorilla			Blindworm Frog Newt Salamander Toad

