

The
UNCLEAN
and the
CLEAN

Authored by
Terry K. Moore & Arthur V. Braidic

This booklet is offered free of charge by the authors and publisher as an educational service in the public interest. All Scriptures are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

© 2010, 2025 the Eternal Church of God

God declared specific details regarding which kinds of meat people could eat. Despite these divine instructions, countless numbers seem willing to devour almost every conceivable variety of flesh. In fact, mankind's diet is as diverse as his cultures and ethnicities. However, does the meat that we eat have any effect on us? Is there a link between what human beings consume and our physical and spiritual health? Why did the Almighty give us laws regarding unclean and clean meat? Did Christ's sacrifice remove all dietary restrictions? Or is it possible that these guidelines are valid today and forever—offering enormous benefits to mankind?

The **UNCLEAN** and the CLEAN

In our modern age, the earth's inhabitants eat more than 100 million tons of pork each year. Shrimp consumption has risen to the point where Americans alone spend more than \$3.5 billion annually feasting on this underwater insect. Nearly 1.5 million tons of crab is garnered from the world's oceans annually along with 120 million pounds of lobster. The harvesting of catfish has also more than doubled in the last twenty years. With the hundreds of differing cultures around the globe, it seems that almost every animal on earth makes its way onto the menu.

While multitudes of people may find these various meats appetizing, we need to consider some very important questions. Is all animal flesh good for food? Are all animals safe to eat? Were human beings designed to properly digest the flesh of pigs, squid, and crustaceans? Did Christ abolish the law of unclean meats in the New Testament, or is God still concerned about what we should, and should not, ingest?

If you have ever wondered about the biblical food regulations, this booklet may be a godsend. It will clearly answer your questions, proving from the Scriptures that God did not abrogate these laws which are indelibly placed into the Creator's design. It will reveal many of the fascinating reasons why the Almighty created these precepts, and demonstrate that they exist for the benefit of mankind.

The following pages will also reveal the truth regarding the handful of verses religious leaders have misinterpreted, taken out of context, and misused in an attempt to justify eating unclean meats. Finally, it will serve as a reference—listing exactly which animals God told us are proper to eat and which are not.

Dietary Law before Moses

The Bible indicates that the laws regarding unclean and clean meat were given to the nation of Israel thousands of years ago. This fact has led many to believe that these regulations applied only to those particular people living during the period of the Old Covenant. However, the truth is that unclean animals have always been polluted flesh. In fact, there is ample evidence that God made dietary regulations for mankind from the time of our creation.

The first example comes from the Garden of Eden. After creating Adam, God instructed him regarding what was good for food and what was unacceptable:

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but 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 surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17).

While the Eternal does not specifically mention the consumption of animals, in this verse, it is clear that He designated some trees good for food while one was not. God knows what is clean and what is harmful for us, and this is an enduring principle that He intended to be passed down to all generations. We are not to partake of some things that exist in this world. Even though what God declared unclean might appeal to our senses, it is clearly not to be consumed.

In a second example, Cain and Abel made offerings of their first fruits to God. The book of Genesis recounts this event stating:

Now **Abel was a keeper of sheep**, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. **Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock** and of their fat (Genesis 4:2-4).

Neither of these men would ever consider offering unclean animals to the holy God. Even in this early history of man, it was understood which animals were acceptable for sacrifice and which were not.

Additionally, there is another profound example showing us that the dietary laws always existed. This comes from the story of Noah and the flood. In this account we see a commonly overlooked, but extremely important, detail regarding God's instructions to Noah after he prepared the ark:

Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen *that you are* righteous before Me in this generation. You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that *are* unclean, a male and his female" (Genesis 7:1-2).

Most have been taught that God instructed Noah to take a single pair of every animal on earth into the ark to escape the flood. As we can see, such a teaching is not accurate. The Eternal instructed Noah to bring seven pairs of the clean animals, but only one pair of the unclean. In order for Noah to know which animals were clean and unclean, the guidelines for distinguishing between the two had to already exist. This is indicative of dietary laws known to mankind more than 1000 years before a Jewish people even existed.

But Why would God instruct Noah to do bring seven pairs if only one pair was needed to repopulate the earth? The answer is because the dietary laws were very much in effect. They were kept by all those who obeyed God. Seven pairs of clean animals were set aside for the benefit of the surviving family so that they would have food both during their extended stay on the ark and after leaving the vessel. Taking seven pairs of clean animals would also ensure plenty of offspring from these edible creatures as the world began to repopulate.

There is also another reason God required seven pairs of clean animals. This was to provide Noah with the proper sacrificial offerings once he left the ark. As Moses later wrote of this account:

So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, *and* whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of

every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar (Genesis 8:18-20).

It is an abomination to offer any unclean animal to God (Lev. 27:11). Therefore, Noah needed additional clean animals in order to make acceptable offerings.

Of the unclean animals only one pair was taken aboard the ark. Since they were unclean, they would not be eaten by Noah and his family—neither would they be used for sacrifice. The unclean beasts were only brought along to preserve their species. The fact that Noah took seven pairs of clean animals and only one pair of the unclean into the ark is another definitive proof of the existence of God’s dietary law long before the exodus of Israel.

Another important piece of evidence is the stupendous promise the Almighty gave to the childless and aged patriarch Abraham. This faithful man was told that His descendants would one day be like the stars in heaven. Further, the very Savior of mankind was destined to come through his lineage. Why did God give this man such a grand legacy? The Eternal explained:

And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws (Genesis 26:4-5).

The word “laws” in this verse is *torah* in the original Hebrew. This term is a direct reference to the laws found in first five books of the Old Covenant (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, H8541). Clearly this means Abraham would have known and kept the Ten Commandments, the holy days, and the laws regarding the unclean and the clean meat found in those Scriptures. This is another profound proof that God’s dietary laws were in existence from man’s earliest history.

Divine Design

We see from the Scriptures that the Eternal’s laws regarding the unclean and the clean were in effect from the very beginning of mankind’s existence. To understand this truth on a practical level,

we must consider the structure of the animals God made. At creation He fashioned every living thing with a specific purpose. Thus, there is a design to every creature which makes one edible while another is not. Those animals He designated for man's consumption were designed so that their flesh would be both free from toxins and beneficial for human health.

Obviously, one would shudder at the thought of eating spiders or scorpions. Elementary logic tells us that the toxins found in these types of creatures can make us ill if ingested. But what about the many other unclean animals that society deems safe and which please the palate of man? Is there a physically legitimate reason why God puts restrictions on consuming these creatures? The answer is yes!

The Almighty is the Author of all the laws that exist, and He set these regulations in motion throughout the entire universe. While we are well aware of the rules of physics, chemistry, gravity, and thermodynamics, we must also understand that there are physical laws working in our bodies—ultimately regulating our health. The Creator also designed the human body. Obviously He would know which foods we can properly digest, and which are not suited for human consumption.

God did not keep us in the dark about this foundational precept. He outlined the types of meat that are good for food, and the ones that are not. The guidelines are recorded in a set of instructions found in the third book of the Bible when God began this topic by saying

These *are* the animals which you may eat among all the animals that *are* on the earth. Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves *and* chewing the cud—that you may eat (Leviticus 11:2-3).

Cloven Hooves

The decree begins by indicating that God is first talking about animals that walk on dry land. Clean land animals must also have cloven hooves. This is a divine design in order to keep the animal's flesh free from noxious substances while it treads the earth. When an animal's hoof is parted, and they find themselves in unfavorable areas that might contain, fecal matter, trash, or

poisonous plants, this material will tend to pass between the separated hooves and not remain stuck underneath the animal's feet.



On the other hand, animals with undivided hooves are more easily affected by such undesirable substances. When toxins become trapped underneath the hoof, they can migrate through the tissues into the blood lymph and blood vessels of the legs. While such substances usually do not cause serious health problems to the animal, its flesh can become tainted by stored contaminants that are noxious to people who might attempt to eat the meat.

It is important to note that some animals appear to have cloven hooves when viewing their feet from above. But when we look underneath, it is evident that the hoof is joined in the middle. Such animals would be considered unclean.



Chewing the Cud

The second characteristic of a land animal whose flesh is considered clean and edible is an important part of a digestion process known as rumination. Animals that chew the cud are called

ruminants. Rumination is a process designed to thoroughly filter and process vegetation that the animal eats through a stomach that has four chambers. After its food is chewed and swallowed, any undigested material is brought back up the throat and into the mouth to be meticulously chewed again and again. Incredible as it may sound, it is true that most cattle spend up to ten hours a day chewing their cud.

The function of this process is to ensure that the vegetation clean animals consume is thoroughly refined which in turn exposes more surface area for bacterial breakdown in the stomach. After the food has been efficiently broken down, it passes from the first chamber of the animal's stomach to the second, third, and finally to the fourth chamber known as the abomasum. During this last state of digestion, enzymes and hydrochloric acid are finally secreted.

Though it may sound complicated, there is a great purpose for this form of digestion. It makes thorough absorption of nutrients possible with little chance for toxins to infect the animal's tissue. Since vegetation is a building block for a clean animal's muscle tissue, rumination leaves their flesh in a good state for human consumption. Their meat is easily digested in our stomachs because it contains more of the nutritious proteins that are beneficial to the human body.

On the other hand, animals that do not chew the cud convert their food less perfectly. Their flesh consequently contains contaminants and impurities. Their meat more easily harbors unhealthy bacteria and parasites that can be transferred to those who ingest it.

By this examination of cloven hooves and chewing the cud we can know that there are biological reasons for animals being classified as either unclean or clean for human consumption. God designated their status at the beginning of creation, and pointed out the identifying marks for us to distinguish between the two categories. He makes it clear that both of these defining characteristics must be found in any four-footed animal in order to consider it fit for human consumption.

Unclean Land Mammals

To assure that people had no trouble discerning between clean and unclean animals, God gave a few examples of those that lack one or more of these two characteristics:

Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; the rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, *is* unclean to you; the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, *is* unclean to you; and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, *is* unclean to you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. They *are* unclean to you (Leviticus 11:4-8).

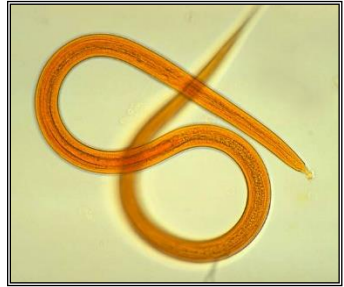
God only lists some of the animals that are unfit for food as an example of the characteristics to consider. These animals can be considered categories of species that are unclean. One of them is a meat that has is eaten by the majority of people worldwide—pork. Whether it is a boar, pig, or hog—all of these are to be considered unclean no matter how they are raised and processed. Despite this command, hundreds of millions love to dine on this unclean meat. But consider the behaviors of this unclean animal.

Swine were created to be part of God’s janitorial crew. They will eat just about anything placed before them, including garbage, decaying flesh, their own feces, and the dung of other animals. While they are fondly known for wallowing in the mud, few realize that this muck in which they roll is soaked with urine, fecal matter, and all sorts of germs that are excreted by these filthy creatures. Additionally, swine do not sweat. Therefore, these land mammals do not easily eliminate toxins which are passed off by perspiration in other animals.



Due to their design and behavior, swine flesh is susceptible to contaminants such as trichinella, tapeworms, and toxoplasma gondii. Therefore, pork must be raised and cooked in a specific manner in order to avoid infection. When not properly prepared, swine can transfer parasites that live in its tissue to those who

consume it. Ingestion of meat containing living trichina larvae produces nausea, heartburn, dyspepsia, and diarrhea within a few days. As the worms encyst in different parts of the human body, other manifestations of trichinosis will appear such as headache, fever, chills, cough, eye swelling, joint and muscle pain, itching, and broken capillaries.



The severity of these symptoms depends on the extent of infection, and will generally fade within a few years as the worms die off. On the other hand, in more severe cases, the worms enter the central nervous system where they cannot survive for long, yet they still can cause enough damage to produce serious neurological deficits such as lack of muscle coordination, retina dysfunction, blindness, brain damage, respiratory paralysis, and death.

Perhaps even more tragic are the effects this tainted meat can have on infants. Babies whose mothers have passed this parasite on to them will suffer terribly with symptoms such as: low birth weight, petechiae or ecchymosis, enlarged liver and spleen, diarrhea, or vomiting, feeding problems, seizures, and jaundice. Many of these symptoms can lead to permanent disabilities such as: abnormal brain and nervous system function, eye damage from inflammation of the retina or other parts of the eye, and hearing loss.



Infant with hydrocephalus due to congenital toxoplasmosis

Does this sound like an animal that we should be serving to our loved ones for dinner? Of course not, and the God who created us and these animals made this clear thousands of years ago! With such risk involved, it is a wonder that this unclean meat remains a staple of many people's diet.

Most think that the way we treat and prepare pork allows for the meat to be considered clean. For this reason, most of today's commercial pork comes from swine that are fed corn, soy, and other commercial feed mixes usually including additives to ensure the animal receives nutrients. Those who raise pigs for consumption attempt to not allow them to wallow in urine and dung by keeping them in small confined spaces, but such behavior is in their nature and difficult to avoid. No matter how people may treat the animal and its flesh, whatever we do to the creation does not negate the Word of God who designed the animal.

According to the standards set by the One who created this animal, a pig's flesh is unclean no matter what kind of diet or environment they experience. God did not attach any "ifs or buts" to His guidelines. He did not make exceptions to the rules. The Almighty did not state that these animals are unclean, unless we feed them well, and keep them unsoiled. Rejecting His command is no less than putting our own judgment above his which breaks the first and third commandments (Exo. 20:3,7).

These animals were simply not designed to be eaten by mankind—period! No matter what they eat, or how well they are cared for, their organs do not function in a manner that makes their flesh beneficial as human food.

Aquatic Creatures

The world's oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams contain an impressive assortment of animal life. Within the earth's waters are thousands of species of fish, crustaceans, squid, whales, sharks, and rays—most of which are hunted, harvested, and consumed by mankind in one form or another. But are all of these animals good for food? What does God say about them?

These you may eat of all that *are* in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers—that you may eat (Leviticus 11:9).

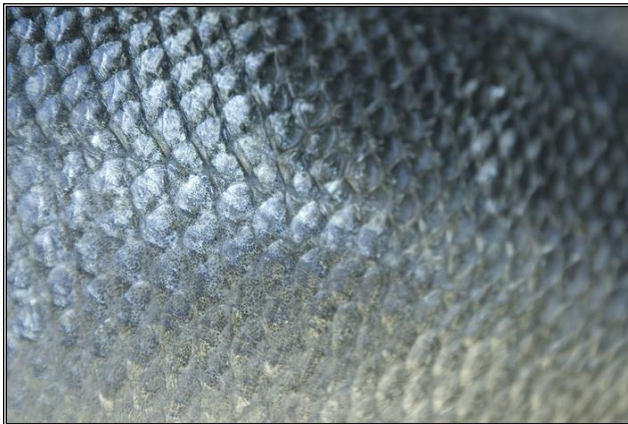
Fins and Scales

Our Maker also set the criteria for determining which fish are suitable for food. They are those that have both fins and scales. Why is this so? Again, we can see that cleanliness is a function of the animal's design.

Fins give a fish the ability to move quickly from one place to another avoiding harmful or toxic environments. Such fish are unlikely to become bound to waters that may contain contaminants that can be transferred to humans through their flesh.

Considering that most of man's pollutants make their way into the streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans, can there be any question why this characteristic is so important? For example, sewage has always been a byproduct of our existence and this toxic mixture of human excrement usually ends up in our waterways. In our present age, we have added large quantities of even more harmful substances to the mix such as oil, solvents, inks, dyes, solvents, mercury, and a multitude of other hazardous wastes.

God designed fins to enable the fish to quickly remove itself from such contaminated water. In addition, the scales of clean fish are also very important. They act as a protective garment. Scales are small flat platelets that prevent the absorption of toxins. Also, scales actually allow fish to perspire. Perspiration facilitates an excretion of toxins from muscle tissue.



Scales



Fins and scales

Unclean Aquatic Animals

After defining those fish that are clean, God described water creatures that are unclean:

But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which *is* in the water, they *are* an abomination to you. They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination (Leviticus 11:10-12).

These divine guidelines mean that such animals as lobster, crab, shrimp, shark, squid, octopus, catfish, oysters, whale, and many others are unfit for human consumption. This also includes the families of crustaceans, mussels, and mollusks. Despite God's enduring wisdom in designing His creation, there are millions of people who eat these unclean creatures. This has resulted in many becoming ill from the toxins residing within these polluted aquatic animals.

Raw shellfish are a major source of food poisoning around the globe. A single clam or oyster filters 25-50 gallons of water a day, which leaves their flesh full of toxins. They harbor bacteria such as salmonella and the infectious Hepatovirus A. Consuming contaminated shellfish can result in paralytic poisoning which begins with numbness in the lips and tongue. If not controlled, the infection can spread to the limbs and is often accompanied by respiratory problems resulting in life threatening complications.

Catfish are perhaps the most contaminated of all water creatures. Being bottom-feeders, these fish ingest sludge containing feces and many industrial pollutants. Even those raised in controlled environments such as fish farms are still tainted because they were purposefully designed to clean up the excrement left behind by all other organisms.

Despite the risks involved many people ignore the danger and embrace such impure meat. For those who dare to indulge, special preparation is often necessary for these animals because of the high level of toxicities in their flesh.

Shockingly, some will even dare to defy death by consuming the lethal puffer or blowfish. This highly venomous creature must be prepared with the utmost care. Chefs are required to train for three years, and then eat one serving that they have personally prepared, before unleashing their culinary skills on the public. Not surprisingly, lusting after the flesh of this unclean fish has resulted in dozens of fatalities with many more becoming extremely ill after consuming its meat.



Fugu chef about to prepare a blowfish

Fowl for Food

Next God outlines winged creatures. When determining the criteria for fowl that may be eaten, the Eternal only lists those that are NOT to be consumed:

And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, the kite, and the falcon after its kind; every raven after its kind, the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat (Leviticus 11:13-19).

The vast majority of unclean birds mentioned in these verses are birds of prey. These are fowl that feed on the flesh of other creatures—including rotting flesh. Because of their nature, it is obvious that consuming them can be harmful to people. It would be as if we were eating the same putrid meat that they consumed. Consider eating a vulture that just dined on the flesh of rotting road kill. Nobody in their right mind would do such a thing, and the result might just put an individual in the hospital.

No clean fowl are listed in this passage of Scripture. Approximately two-dozen species of unclean birds are named out of many found around the world. These unclean birds illustrate the characteristics of ALL unclean fowl. They fall into several categories, each of which is unclean “after its kind.” Since these verses do not describe which birds are clean, how can we be certain of the characteristics that designate birds fit for humans to eat?



It is important to understand that when giving offerings to God, unclean animals were never allowed. Therefore, the criteria of clean fowl are determined by the dove and the pigeon—birds traditionally used for sacrifice (Luke 2:24; Lev. 1:14-17). By comparing the differences between these clean birds and those listed as unclean, we arrive at the following characteristics for fowl that may be eaten:

1. They must not be birds of prey.
2. They must have an elongated middle front toe and a hind toe.
3. They must spread their toes so that three front toes can be placed on one side of a perch and the hind toe on the other side.
4. They must have craws or crops (an expanded, muscular pouch near the gullet or throat).
5. They must have a gizzard with a double lining which can easily be separated.

Clean birds have all these characteristics. Unclean birds lack one or more of these traits. Additionally, when considering all of the clean fowl, we see that they feed on vegetation, worms, and various insects. The most commonly eaten fowl are chicken, turkey, duck, pheasant, and goose. It is also worth noting that, although it proved to not be a blessing, God provided Israel with quail to eat (Num. 11). The Eternal would never give His people unclean meat to it, and thus we see that quail bear the characteristics of clean fowl for food.

Insects

Arthropods also play a prime role in cleaning up our environment. Because of their predetermined design, most of them host microbes, and many are poisonous. As you may have already concluded, few are considered clean. In fact, God reveals only one class of insect that may be eaten:

All flying insects that creep on *all* fours *shall be* an abomination to you. Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on *all* fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth. These you may eat: the locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. But all *other* flying insects which have four feet *shall be* an abomination to you (Leviticus 11:20-23).

The clean insects are those of the locust, grasshopper, and some species of cricket. They are from a family of insects called Acrididae that only eat vegetation and are usually found in sanitary

areas. If they find themselves in an unfit environment, they have the ability to jump and fly away from anything noxious.

It is written that John the Baptist's diet consisted of locusts and honey (Mat. 3:4). Christ stated that there was none greater than John (Mat. 11:11), and like all of God's people, John kept the Almighty's dietary laws. This is another piece of evidence proving that God considers these creatures to be clean—containing many beneficial nutrients and fiber that is valuable to our bodies.



Simply because these insects are clean does not mean that we should eat them. In our culture, the majority of Americans would find the thought of eating grasshoppers repulsive. However, for those so inclined, these strange looking creatures are clean and designated as being good for food. God's words are specific. They make it clear that all other flying insects are unclean and not fit for human consumption.

More Unclean Animals

The Eternal gave a list of other animals that are also unclean. In addition to what was previously mentioned, the following are also unfit for human consumption:

And whatever goes on its paws, among all kinds of animals that go on all fours, those are unclean to you... These also shall be unclean to you among the creeping things that creep on the earth: the mole, the mouse, and the large lizard after its kind; the gecko, the monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon. These are unclean to you among all that creep (Leviticus 11:27-31).

And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth *shall be* an abomination. It shall not be eaten. Whatever crawls on its belly, whatever goes on *all* fours, or whatever has many feet among all creeping things that creep on the

earth—these you shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination (Leviticus 11:41-42).

Such animals being consider and an “abomination” does not mean that they are evil. It means that it is both physically and morally wrong to eat them. Even touching the carcass from these dead animals renders the person unclean for a period of time (Lev. 11:24). The physical reasons are evident when we examine the biology of their design and behavior. The moral reasons are shown in a separate set of mandates indicating that discerning between the clean and the unclean is compared to the holy and the profane.

All animals that have paws are mentioned and includes every species of dog, cat, fox, wolf, bear, and rodents such as possum, weasel, mice, and rats. Other creatures are mentioned as well including all insects that do not fly and are not a part of the Acrididae families. God also declared that all creatures which move on their belly are unclean. This is referring to the kind of movement made by various reptiles such as snakes, lizards, worms, alligators, and turtles. Lastly God made it clear that all spiders are unfit for food. The reasons should be obvious. Not only do they consume other insects that are considered unclean; many are poisonous.

God’s Cleanup Crew

Now that we understand the characteristics of unclean and clean animals, we need to recognize the answer to another important question. If the Almighty made some animals clean for food, and others which are not, why did He create these unclean creatures? Couldn’t He have simply made all animals and insects clean and acceptable for food?

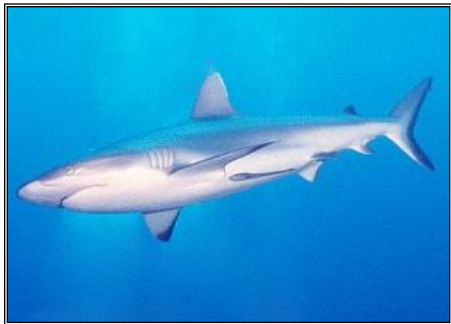
God could certainly do anything He desires, but the fact remains that He did not make all creatures clean to eat. Instead, He made each with a specific purpose. Every living thing on earth was created for a reason, and our recent history has shown us that when some creatures do not exist the environmental balance deteriorates.

The only way a harmonious environment can exist is if all the elements God created are in their proper place. The earth was amazingly designed with stability in nature so that our world will flourish. As the Creator stated:

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was very good...* (Genesis 1:31).

God designed this world with all the necessary elements to maintain healthy and clean surroundings. Everything He made was magnificent, but this does not mean that everything was good to eat! In order to maintain a homeostatic setting, there must be plants and animals to work as filters to cleanse byproducts and potentially harmful substances.

Just as the Eternal created numerous varieties of plants and trees that clean the gases from the air and create fresh oxygen, He also created certain animals that serve as custodians to keep the earth sanitary. These creatures are God's cleanup crew. They were designed for the purpose of maintaining a healthy environment—not for humans to eat!



God created various rodents to ingest the world's filth. He formed birds of prey and reptiles to clean up dead, rotting carcasses, and to keep the rodent population under control. He allows

carnivorous creatures to destroy the weak and diseased in order to maintain a vigorous gene pool of beasts—as well as limiting population growth. He made insects that consume germs and bacteria. He created spiders to keep the insect populations in check.

The Almighty created varied bottom dwelling fish to suck up the sludge and the excretions left by other animals fish. He made whales to filter the oceans and sharks to set boundaries on the marine populace. He made crustaceans, which are also bottom feeders, to ingest rotten residues left on the ocean floors and to filter impurities out of the world's lakes, streams, rivers and oceans. It's not surprising that many of these unclean sea creatures even look like giant underwater insects!

Would any of us ever consider boiling a cockroach and eating its innards? Of course not! Then why do we see this as an acceptable practice with crabs and lobsters? These unclean animals have important functions in the world we occupy, but they were never designed for humans to eat.

Their purpose is to ingest potentially harmful substances from the environment, in an effort to uphold a safe and healthy setting in which the earth's inhabitants can dwell. Because of their god given profession, their flesh is tainted by impurities that were never meant to enter the mouth of mankind.



Cockroach



Lobster

Were the Dietary Laws Abolished?

Were these divine dietary laws done away upon Christ's crucifixion? Are they no longer required today? Is all flesh now clean to eat? To further answer this question, we must consider several undeniable facts.

First, we must consider the structure of the animals God had made. Upon their creation God made every living thing with a

specific purpose. Those that He designated for mankind to eat were designed so that their flesh would be both free from toxins and beneficial for human consumption. As important and as far reaching as Christ's sacrifice was, His death did not change the composition of beasts or the digestive system of man. God's creation continues to function the same way it has for thousands of years. That which was unfit for man to eat in the beginning is still unfit today. The unclean animals that were unclean before the flood were still unclean after the water receded and they are still unclean today!

Understanding this, we must also recognize the unchanging nature of God. Does it seem reasonable that the pure and holy God would suddenly put a stamp of approval on that which He has always considered to be unclean? Of course not! God has never accepted this meat for food in the past, and He does not accept it today. Consider the enduring words of our Creator:

For I *am* the LORD, I do not change (Malachi 3:6).

Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever
(Hebrews 13:8).

Christ is the mighty God who thundered the Ten Commandments to Israel in the wilderness. He is the great "I AM" who commissioned Moses to confirm the dietary laws to His people (1Cor. 6:1-4; John 5:39; 8:58). He did not accept sin in the Garden of Eden, He did not accept sin when dealing with Israel in the wilderness, He did not accept it while He walked the earth as a man, and He certainly does not accept sin today! His crucifixion only allows us to be washed from our past sin. It did not give us license to continue practicing sinful ways (Rom. 3:25; 6:1).

The Ten Commandments and dietary food laws have always been holy, just, and good (Rom. 7:12). They were in effect before the flood and prior to Christ's birth. Christ kept these laws. His disciples continued to hold fast to them, the New Testament church observed these laws, and the Eternal expects Christians to keep them today!

These undeniable truths demonstrate that the regulations regarding food were always adhered to and have never been

rescinded. Still, this does not stop some theologians from attempting to force their prejudice into the Scriptures.

To validate their mistaken belief, so-called scholars have wrested a handful of verses in the New Testament from their context. They have put their own personal twist on them in an effort to convince religious people that the New Covenant does away with God's dietary laws. One of the most often misused verses is found in the Apostle Peter's vision of unclean animals.

Peter's Vision

Virtually all Bible students agree that God placed restrictions on what animals His people could eat in the Old Covenant. Yet, most Christians have been taught that Christ did away with these standards thereby opening the door for us to eat whatever we please. Countless numbers of professing believers have accepted this assumption based on an interpretation of Peter's vision recorded in the Book of Acts.

The record of this event begins with a man named Cornelius—an Italian gentile. Although not Jewish, he was a God fearing man who prayed regularly, gave alms to the poor, and his entire family revered God (Acts 10:2).

Because of the deep devotion demonstrated by Cornelius and his family, God sent an angel who instructed him to send men to Joppa where Peter abode. Servants were sent. Prior to the arrival of these men, Peter went on a rooftop to pray:

Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "**Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.**" And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again (Acts 10:11-16).

In this revelation Peter was told to kill and eat all manner of unclean creatures. This array would have included horses, pigs, dogs, cats, rats, lizards, snakes, and even detestable insects such as spiders and cockroaches. Peter's response to this command was far from compliant. He refused, saying, "I have never eaten anything common or unclean." Peter's reaction indicates that he was reared to keep the scriptural dietary laws, and he had never eaten anything unclean his entire life—including during his discipleship with Christ.

Peter had been with Christ day and night for over three years. Therefore, the apostle clearly understood His teaching in regard to the dietary laws. It matched what he had been taught all his life. There were some animals simply unfit for humans to consume. Peter was certain that this precept stood just as firm a decade after Christ's crucifixion as it did when God affirmed it to ancient Israel.

Because Peter knew God did not want him to eat unclean animals, he wondered what this vision could possibly mean. What did the Almighty truly cleanse? What was this visualization designed to impress upon Peter? The answer to these questions begins to be understood in the verses immediately following the vision:

Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them" (Acts 10:17-20).

Notice that Peter instantly doubted what this vision meant. He did not assume, as so many have today, that God suddenly changed the dietary laws after thousands of years. Instead, Peter pondered the meaning before being instructed to go with these men without distrusting their intent. In order to fully grasp the meaning of Peter's vision, it is important to understand what was taking place at the time and why he might have reservations about going with these individuals.

They were gentiles, and the Jews were taught to have nothing to do with the uncircumcised. Without God's instruction, Peter would have naturally questioned their intent and sincerity. Emboldened by God's words, Peter confidently left with these servants to meet Cornelius.

Upon reaching their destination, Peter realized the true meaning of the vision. Cornelius excitedly brought Christ's apostle into his house, where many others who believed in God were also waiting. It was here that Peter announced the profound meaning of his strange vision, stating:

Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But **God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean**" (Acts 10:28).

Until this time, the apostles had only known the Jewish faith. They believed that God worked with the Israelites alone. They thought of other races as being common people and therefore unclean. Therefore, the Jews had nothing to do with gentiles unless they converted to the Jewish faith and were circumcised.

Peter realized that the vision was symbolic. It pictured this view that Jews had toward the gentiles. He understood that Christ had broken down the wall of spiritual separation between Israelites and gentiles (Eph. 2:14-15). God had now made salvation available to ALL men and women.

After the actual meaning of this vision was understood, it was expressed in the Scriptures two more times. On the second occasion, speaking of the vision's significance, Peter stated:

In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him (Acts 10:34-35).

When the Apostle Peter returned from visiting Cornelius, the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem required him to explain his actions. He again described the vision, what occurred afterward, and its meaning, saying:

“If therefore God gave them the same gift as *He gave* us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?” When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life” (Acts 11:17-18).

Note that Peter witnessed the vision three times, three men were sent to retrieve him, and the meaning of the vision was explained three times. This illustrates the biblical principle which states that there must be two or three witnesses in order for testimony to be considered valid (Deu. 19:15). For this reason, God’s interpretation of the unusual imagery was explained three times as a legal witness for all to understand.

Not only is eating the meat from unclean animals not justified by these verses, this passage proves that the laws separating the unclean meats from the clean were still very much in effect long after Christ’s death. Because these laws continued to be such a vital part of the lives of God’s people, the Almighty used them to teach an enormously important lesson to Jewish Christians who had previously viewed gentiles as unclean.

The vision was simply an illustration to relate how God had spiritually cleansed the gentiles. They were to be admitted into His church without the requirement of becoming Jews and being circumcised. Peter’s visualization did not mean that the structure of unclean animals was miraculously changed so that they were now considered clean.

Despite this obvious truth, some still try to use this passage to justify eating whatever they desire. In order to do so they must misinterpret, twist, or misuse God’s true purpose for giving Peter this vision.

Many religious people will admit that these three statements by Peter properly explain a correct interpretation. They will confess that the vision does refer to the gentiles, and yet they still believe that the vision is somehow dual in its meaning—supposing that it also means we can eat whatever we please. As we have seen, they are sadly mistaken.

Paul's Letter to Timothy

There are many Bible students who will contend that the dietary laws are no longer binding based on verses they find in one of Paul's letters to Timothy. They believe that in this epistle, the apostle reveals virtually any kind of meat is acceptable as long as we eat it thankfully. But is this what Paul actually said to the evangelist? Consider his words:

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer (1 Timothy 4:1-5).

Notice that Paul was speaking to Christians who believe and know the truth. Thus, they understood the Bible which consisted of only the Old Covenant books at that time. When Paul wrote a second letter to Timothy, he plainly stated:

All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Scriptures to which Paul refers are unmistakably for "instruction in righteousness," and they include the laws regarding the animals that are clean and good for food. They are also for our reproof and correction commanding avoidance of all unclean meats (Lev. 11; Deu. 14).

It is the doctrine of devils which requires people to "abstain from foods which God created to be received." These people knew which types of meat God had created for man to receive, and they were also aware of those that were absolutely forbidden for consumption. The only meats to be eaten with thanksgiving were the clean animals that the Almighty's Word set apart as suitable for

food! Further evidence of this everlasting principle is found when we review Paul’s words that tell us:

For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer (1 Timothy 4:4-5).

When Paul says that the meat is “sanctified by the word of God,” what exactly did he mean? The term, sanctify, means to make holy, or set apart for a right use. In this context we need to consider what meats are documented as set apart for proper use in the Eternal’s Word. The only meats designated for human consumption in the entirety of the Bible are indelibly recorded in the Books of Leviticus chapter eleven, and Deuteronomy chapter fourteen. These chapters define God’s laws of unclean and clean meats.

Therefore, Paul’s statements make this truth even more apparent. The animals which God created and sanctified are only those defined as clean in the Bible. They alone have the kind of flesh that can be received with thanksgiving and prayer.

It is an apostate doctrine of devils to teach that we can eat any animal we wish. You will not find a single Scripture stating that God had ever set apart snails, oysters, clams, snakes, octopus, shark, lobster, crab, swine, dogs, cats, or rats as fit for human consumption.

Notice also that Paul’s statement is a reference to events occurring in the “latter times”—a time following the founding of the New Testament Church. This tells us that instead of simply giving a stamp of approval regarding eating all kinds of animals, Paul is warning us against those who would later forbid marriage and require abstinence from the clean meats God had created to be received with thanksgiving (v. 3).

Understanding this, are there any who teach such things today? The answer is yes! The Catholic faith arose centuries after the establishment of the New Testament Church, and they teach exactly what Paul warned against. Their priests are required to abstain from marriage, and they command their members to refrain from eating meat on certain days of the week.

These are false doctrines—exactly the kind of heresy to which Paul referred. The Almighty’s apostle was certainly not

warning against those who advocate eating clean meats which are whole-heartedly endorsed by the God of your Bible.

Romans 14

Another passage that is sometimes improperly used to support eating unclean animals is found in the letter Paul sent to brethren in Rome. He wrote:

Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables (Romans 14:1-2).

While some may claim that the words “all things” validate consuming unclean meats such as pork and shellfish, it does nothing of the sort. Instead, Paul addressed an issue of passionate vegetarians who were causing division in the Church. This is blatantly obvious from the very beginning of the chapter.

The context of these first two sentences makes it clear. Paul was speaking about a conflict between those who believed that they may eat all things, and those who were weak in the faith and would only eat produce. Paul only addressed the issue of eating meat in contrast to vegetarians who abstain. Therefore, he told the brethren that eating meat is not an impure act as the vegetarians believed. The Scriptures clearly state that we may eat clean animals.

It must also be understood that when Paul says, “one believes he may eat all things,” he absolutely does not mean that these people thought they could devour any animal on earth. Paul made no comparison between unclean and clean meats. That is not the issue being addressed. Paul is only referring to those who believe we may eat both clean meat and herbs as opposed to those who feel that only vegetables are to be consumed.

The point the apostle was making is that, just because the weak of faith may not have yet come to this realization, they are not to be ridiculed, viewed as inferior, or offended by those who understood that it is permissible to eat meat. Additionally, those who did not eat meat should not judge those who did. Paul was very clear about this continuing to state:

Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him (Romans 14:3).

If these individuals were called by God, absolutely no one has a right to view them as contemptible. God accepted their present state as fit for instruction of the truth, and therefore both the vegetarian and the meat eater were to respect one another. Paul exhorts them not to condemn one another or attempt to force their dietary preference upon their brethren. They were both within the guidelines of the Scriptures.

Paul makes this statement because, if the vegetarian believed that eating clean meat was wrong, and ate it anyway, to that person it would be an impure act. It would not be an act of faith. It would violate their conscience which is a sin (Rom. 14:23).

Paul wanted these Christians to understand that the conscience is a precious thing. It guides us as a type of moral compass. When presented with an option that does not oppose God's law, the Almighty desires that we follow our conscience. Not honoring our inner sense of right and wrong hardens the heart, making us less sensitive to God's correction. Conversely, if we continue living by what we believe is right, we can eventually be guided toward the truth. Because of this Paul encouraged the Corinthians not to quarrel about the issue of meat as opposed to agricultural foods:

Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed *are* pure, but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense (Romans 14:19-20).

Paul's conclusion regarding this matter makes the context irrefutable. He only addressed the matter of vegetarianism versus eating meat. When he stated that it was acceptable to eat meat, he did not mean we could eat any kind of flesh that we might desire. It must be understood that the only animals God's people would ever consider eating were those designated by God as clean. That which God labeled as unclean would never be considered as an option.

As previously noted, Peter's staunch refusal to eat anything unclean demonstrates that the dietary laws were still observed by Christians well after Christ's death. To make a change in these regulations would have been an issue of immense proportion. If Paul's words were actually an amendment of such enormity, it would have been clearly stated in the Scriptures. He would certainly not address such an important issue with vague references that never even mention the words unclean or clean.

If Paul's words supported the consumption of swine and squid, there would have been very clear and direct statements in this regard. In fact, a change of this magnitude would have been treated just as the issue of circumcision. It would require a hearing by the council of the Jerusalem elders, similar to the conference recorded in Acts chapter fifteen.

Instead, there is absolutely no biblical evidence whatsoever of a decision reversing God's prohibition against eating unclean animals. Thus, Christians today are to continue adhering to the dietary laws as instructed by God and confirmed by the New Testament Church.

Mark 7

Despite the myriad of evidence proving that the dietary laws are still in effect, some religious folks continue to eat unclean meat. They attempt to justify their consumption by taking Scriptures out of context, adding their own words, or conjuring up personal interpretations of the Bible.

In another example, some mistakenly claim that Christ Himself gave a stamp of approval on eating unclean meats. The passage they refer to as evidence is found in the book of Mark, chapter seven. There the gospel writer documented one of the many confrontations between Christ and the Pharisees. After these religious leaders found fault with His disciples for not washing their hands according to the Pharisees' particular rules, Christ answered them with the following words:

There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man (Mark 7:15).

What exactly is Christ saying? Could He possibly be telling us that it does not matter what we eat? Is He conveying that we can eat anything we want because that which we consume does not pollute us? Absolutely not! In order to understand the intent of the Savior's words we must recognize the context of His statement. Beginning with the first verse, we understand the subject matter has nothing whatsoever to do with meat:

Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. **Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault.** For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, *like* the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches (Mark 7:1-4).

The issue was the method in which the disciples washed their hands—not clean and unclean meats! These religious zealots had formed their own criteria for what was holy. They had created various ritualistic washings which they required to be done before one could eat or drink. They had created manmade ceremonies as an intrinsic part of their religion instead of God's pure instruction.

For example, according to the Pharisees, one was expected to wash a series of times depending on the type of food being eaten and how many people were dining together (*The Babylonian Talmud*, Berachot 53b, Shabbat 62b, sotah 4b). Thus the Pharisaic adversaries of Christ accused His disciples of wrongdoing based on their personal traditions—not the Eternal's law. Their next statement makes this abundantly clear:

Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" (Mark 7:5).

This verse shows that the issue being discussed was simply a tradition of men in which the manner of washing hands was in

question. The issue was NOT an edict declared by God such as unclean and clean meats.

It is also important to realize that this account does not say that Christ and His disciples were eating with dirty hands. Instead, it indicates that they simply did not wash a series of times, up to the elbow, or in a manner that was according to the criteria set by the Pharisees. Neither Christ nor His disciples broke a biblical command—they did not violate any godly principle. His only disregard was to the unbiblical tradition of the Pharisees.

Our Wonderful Counselor responded to their false accusation, giving them some very good advice. With searing rebuke, He said:

“Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” He said to them, “**All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition**” (Mark 7:6-9).

The Pharisees had built their own regulations around God’s law while blatantly ignoring the true principles of His Word. Christ declared that these ritualistic washings were no more than a vain, hypocritical show. After chastising these critics, He explained that their physical ritualistic washings did not make them spiritually clean or pure.

The Son of God did not say, or even insinuate, that we may eat whatever we want because nothing that we consume can defile us. Eating noxious substances certainly can defile a person. In fact, many unclean meats are a subtle form of poison. Christ was making the point that we cannot wash our hands up to the elbow seven times and consider ourselves righteous for doing so. Whether we ceremonially wash or not does not spiritually cleanse or defile us. It is the words and behaviors that come from the mind and heart which defile men and women.

In this context, it is also important to understand that the Pharisees strictly kept the dietary food laws. We never see Christ chastising them for eating only clean meat. Neither do we witness the Pharisees rebuking the Savior and His disciples for eating unclean meat. This is because Christ kept these laws as commanded in the Old Covenant.

This point absolutely must be understood. If Christ had eaten unclean meat, He would have sinned—leaving us with no Savior! The Messiah would only eat meat that was clean and we are to follow His example (1John 2:6).

Because His disciples were brought up under this Pharisaic tradition all their lives, they wondered about His statement. Christ then explained exactly what He meant:

When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, *thus* purifying all foods?” And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man” (Mark 7:17-23).

Christ made this issue crystal clear. The Pharisee’s accusation was not about eating pork, shrimp or lobster. It was a matter of eating without washing in the manner the religious leaders specified. Christ explained that this ceremonial cleansing did not make a person clean internally. The food that was eaten would run its course and be discharged regardless of how a person washed prior to eating.

Further, while considering Christ’s comment regarding “purifying all foods,” two points must be remembered. First, they were not eating flesh, or even talking about animal tissue. This biblical reference has nothing to do with meat whatsoever! The disciples were originally questioned about eating “bread.” As Mark recorded the beginning of this encounter:

Now when they saw some of His disciples **eat bread** with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault (Mark 7:2).

The second point is that the Greek word for “food” in verse 19 is the *broma*—a term that applies to food in general (*Strong’s*, G1033). In the context of their time and culture, food would ONLY include those meats that were clean.

In this light, the entire argument becomes even more obvious. Christ was simply speaking of the fact that any supposed contamination to the food resulting from unceremoniously washed hands would automatically be cleansed by the body. As *John Gill’s Commentary* states:

purging all meats; that which it leaves behind, is pure and nourishing; and whatever is gross and impure, is carried with it into the draught, so that nothing remains in the man that is defiling (*John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible*, Mark 7:19, e-sword).

Now that we understand the undeniable truth, it must also be noted that many Bible students have been misled by some mistranslations of this verse. These errors in translating are the result of prejudiced men who allowed their opinions to become involved in their work. Sometimes, their mistaken ideas produced inaccuracies in the Scriptures.

For example, ignoring the obvious context of Christ’s statements, some translators included the words, “Jesus declared all foods clean.” However, it must be understood that uninspired men created this phrase, and it, or anything similar to it, has been unlawfully added to the Bible. These words are not in the original manuscripts. You will not find them in older and more accurate translations.

Originally the phrase, “thus He said making all meats clean,” was an inaccurate marginal note. Eventually this error came to be inserted into the actual text. Some works will place these words in parentheses or italics to show that they were added by translators and not in the original manuscripts. Notice some examples:

Good News Bible: ...because it does not go into your heart but into your stomach and then goes on out of the body” (In saying this, Jesus declared that all foods are fit to be eaten).

New International Version: For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean”).

This parenthetical inclusion was used to signify that these words were not part of the original. However, this marginal notation led some more modern works to ignore the rules completely. They boldly included this bogus phrase without any notation, indicating that it was an addition. By so doing, these translators have committed the heretical act of adding their personal opinions to God’s Word. Consider how this practice led to the following mistranslations:

Contemporary English Version: It doesn’t go into your heart, but into your stomach, and then out of your body. By saying this, Jesus meant that all foods were fit to eat.

English Standard Version: ...since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled? Thus he declared all foods clean.

These translations have led some Bible readers to think that Christ cleansed unclean meats. No matter how desperately one may desire this verse to permit eating unclean meat, the subject was never about unclean animals.

This fact reveals a surprising irony. The truth is that unclean meat is never even considered food for God’s people in the Bible—not in one single place! Consuming unclean animals is only biblically mentioned in the context of behavior of the ungodly (Isa. 65:4; 66:17). Only meats that are clean are considered food. Thus, this spurious phrase exposes the translator’s prejudice, gall, and blatant error.

It is clear that Christ was only stating that our bodily digestive process purifies the food we eat of any unseen dirt. Therefore, there was no need for the Pharisaic extra-biblical ceremonial washings. Christ was NOT making a pronouncement

reversing God’s laws regarding which meats could be eaten. The King James, Literal, and Darby translations of the Bible best translate the context of this event.

These more modern translators, who corrupted Holy Writ, have made a very grave mistake. They have gone against the Word of God in several ways. They have disregarded the context of the verse. They have omitted the first century culture, times, and practices. They ignore Christ’s real intent, Mark’s specific words, and have simply published what they wanted the verse to convey.

These heretical acts directly violate God’s edict which states, “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it...” (Deu. 4:2). Worst of all, these so-called scholars have led millions of believers astray—causing them to partake of that which God clearly defines as a sin.

The Physical Principle: A Matter of Health

Our bodies were amazingly and wonderfully designed with specific needs. We cannot put just anything into them and expect to function properly. Prolific author and teacher Herbert W. Armstrong gave us food for thought in his article entitled *Is All Animal Flesh Good for Food?*

In a very real sense, your stomach is your fuel tank. Your automobile’s tank is its stomach. You wouldn’t think of pouring just any old thing that will pour into the “stomach” of your car. You know that your car was not made to consume and “digest” fuel oil, water, milk, or kerosene.

What happens to the food you eat? In the stomach the digestive process takes place. And, once digested—if you have eaten fit and digestible food—a portion of the essential minerals and vitamins—the life-giving properties in the food—filter through the intestinal lining into the bloodstream to replenish and build up decaying cells, to provide energy, body warmth, good health.

Your body is wonderfully made! It is the most wonderful mechanism in the world. But, just as you must use the right kind of gasoline in the gas tank and the right kind of oils and greases in the other parts of your car or impair its performance, so you must put the right kind of

food into the most delicate mechanism of all, your body
(*The Plain Truth*, Feb. 1980, pp. 15-16).

As this article points out, we are very careful about what type of fuel we put into our automobiles. We would never mix sand with milk, put it into our gas tanks, and expect our vehicles to function properly. However, when it comes to our bodies, most people are indifferent when choosing the food necessary to empower their metabolism.

This is not how it is supposed to be. We were designed to be fueled by specific vegetables, fruits, grains, legumes, and meats. God made all things for a specific purpose and he has not kept us in the dark about what we are to eat. He made this clear from the very beginning of our creation. We are to only eat that which has been predestined as clean food.

However, is maintaining vigor the only reason for giving us the dietary food laws? Is it only a matter of health—or is there a far-reaching principle that God desires for us to learn.

The Enduring Moral Principle: A Matter of Salvation

The Eternal has perfect wisdom and judgment. We can fittingly say that He has done rightly when outlining which animals are unclean and clean. He is able to do so because He created all things. He knows exactly how each part of His creation functions. There can be no question that the Eternal can distinguish between what is good for us and what is not. But this is not the sole purpose of His food laws. They are much more profound than functioning as a mere set of guidelines designed for our physical health.

God is holy. He does not tolerate sin. Therefore, our Creator designed these physical laws to serve a vital spiritual purpose—demonstrating God’s way of life to all mankind. While the Eternal’s dietary laws are clearly for our physical benefit, they are also symbolic—portraying a profound truth that we should apply to all the choices we make in life!

In fact, God’s primary purpose in creating these rules is to help us understand a principle that is absolutely essential to our salvation! But how are these things related? The truth begins to be understood as the Almighty explained His reason for giving us these laws:

For I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I *am* holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. For I *am* the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy. This *is* the law of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth. To distinguish between the unclean and the clean (Leviticus 11:44-47).

After instructing His people to be holy, and not to be defiled with unclean meat, God told us exactly why this mandate exists. It is an acted oracle showing us the way to live morally both in body and in spirit. This is the transcendent principle that we are to learn. It is to practice discerning between two ways of life. Certainly, the clean meat was created for our benefit, but what may be the primary reason for these laws was to provide us with a first-hand example of how we are to live!

Unclean food portrays profane aspects of human behavior and thought that are to be avoided. Clean meats represent those acts that are holy and which should be included as part of our lives. This does not mean that we have to eat meat. Certainly, vegetarians are welcome, but the precept is about being holy! We are not to put what is unclean into our mouths, and this is a type—a pattern—designed to be an object lesson. It teaches an all-encompassing truth. We are to distinguish regarding everything we allow to be a part of our lives.

As we are not to put unclean food into our bodies, we must not allow ourselves to partake of unclean entertainment, impure thoughts, impure behaviors that defile our body or mind. Amazingly, this is the ultimate purpose of God's clean and unclean dietary laws.

God could have made all animals good for food. He is all-powerful. He can do absolutely anything He desires. Why didn't He design all animals so their meat is clean? It is because our Creator wants us to practice making physical choices in what we eat as a teaching tool—training us in that which we are to do spiritually. In the same fashion that some food is unfit for humans to ingest, there are things in life that are morally unclean—unfit for human use.

Certain behaviors are repulsive to God, and we must learn to avoid them in the same way we are to shun unclean foods.

Thus, we are to act out this spiritual principle every day when we pick and choose what to order at the restaurant and what to purchase at the market. We should be scanning the menus and labels of ingredients to make certain there are no unclean things in our food. In like manner we are to examine all parts of our lives in which we pick and choose what to say, think, and experience.

This spiritual principle was again stated when God tells of what His ministers in the Kingdom will do. Through the prophet Ezekiel, the Eternal foretells a message that will be given to the priests of the future millennial temple:

And they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean (Ezekiel 44:23).

That which will be taught in the future reflects what was taught in the past, and what we should be practicing now. This physical act of refusing that which is unclean and only eating the clean is a lesson reminding us not to bring anything unholy into our lives.

Sadly, this deeply insightful concept has been lost to most religious people today. It is obvious that the profound spiritual application of this law is no longer being followed by most who claim to be Christian. Instead, the morals and ethics of our professing Christian society, and most of the world, continue to reflect a misled majority. Countless numbers persist in boldly defying God's instructions to make a distinction between the holy and the unholy.

A World Filled with Uncleaness

We have all become accustomed to the perversion, violence, and immorality spreading like wildfire throughout the world. When we watch television, read newspapers, and listen to the radio, we are exposed to it every single day. A quick glance at the entertainment industry alone reveals that most people appear to actually enjoy various forms of deviance. The moral quality of film and television has plummeted into the darkest depths of the filthiest sewer.

Violence, sex, anti-family, anti-parents, and anti-God themes now dominate the media.

For example, a 2007 Federal Trade Commission report revealed U.S. media corporations were routinely ignoring their own rating restrictions by actively marketing violent entertainment to children and teens. The study showed that R rated movies, mature video games, and music with explicit content were routinely being marketed to youth under the age of seventeen (<http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2007/04/marketingviolence.shtm>, retr. 12/14/12). The Parents Television Council reported that sexual topics, such as oral sex and pornography which were virtually absent from television a decade ago, are now commonplace during what is considered the family hour. The report also showed what was once considered foul language has increased by nearly 80 percent. This study focused on programs to which an estimated 10 million children were tuning in every day from the years 1998 through 2006. Additionally, the offensive violence displayed during the 8:00 p.m. programming time increased 45%. By 9:00 p.m. aggressive and brutal behavior increased 92%. By 10:00 p.m. this number jumped 167% (<http://www.parentstv.org/ptc/publications/reports/violencestudy/exsummary.asp>, retr. 8/29/2010).

Sitcoms today have made promiscuous behavior a primary subject of their storylines. Network administrators no longer even attempt to hide the smut and filth. Shows such as *Sex and the City*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Passions*, *Lipstick Jungle*, and *Gary Unmarried* are just a few of the recently popular licentious television programs. They portray immorality as normal, and act as if their marketing of sin is something desirable. Thus, depravity is now expected by viewers. It is considered acceptable behavior as millions gawk at, and take pleasure in, the utter garbage being marketed on screen. Worse yet, many live their lives vicariously through these ungodly programs. This acceptance in the media is teaching society that profane and deviant behaviors are acceptable as well as desirable. As a result, many now entertain the desire to make such television fantasies a reality.

The movie industry increasingly pushes the envelope of sick fascinations. Motion pictures today are so violent and sexually graphic that people with biblically based morals walk away shocked and appalled by what they see. Sadly, their response is uncommon.

Most people remain fixated on the screen with the thrill of ever escalating sex and violence.

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) has a rating system based upon content of movies. The rating of G is for general audiences. Films in this category are not to include sexual acts, strong violence, drug use, or a theme that the board feels would offend parents with younger children. PG suggests parental guidance, where any of the above content may be included in “moderation.” PG-13 is a sterner warning to parents, suggesting that children under the age of thirteen should not view this material. R indicates that a film contains adult themes and activity, ranging from hard language, intense violence, sexually oriented nudity, or drug abuse.

The MPA expects parents to take this rating system seriously. Nevertheless, these ratings are frequently ignored—especially when the children are in the adolescent or early teenage years. Parents will often bring their children to inappropriate movies thinking that their presence somehow makes everything okay. More often than not, adolescents and teenagers are left at a movie theater to decide for themselves what they will watch.

Additionally, this system of categorizing unclean movies has become extremely lenient over the years as society has become more and more desensitized to sin. G rated films today are often PG, PG has become R rated, and R has actually transitioned to blood baths and soft pornography. Instead of discerning between the unclean and the clean, we simply put a mild warning label on the film—ostensibly giving it a legitimate stamp of approval. The truth is that most modern movies are a lot like unclean meat. They are dirty, impure, and not fit for human consumption!

Because of our twisted perspective of freedom, and our lust for what is considered taboo, promiscuous behavior has spun completely out of control. Literally millions of adults, teenagers, and even children, are fornicating out of wedlock on a regular basis. The pornography industry has infiltrated nearly every computer on the planet and made addicts of countless numbers.

The world has its method of discernment, but God has a far superior rating system! The Almighty, Creator of all things, knows better than we do. He told us:

For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:9).

God is holy. His ways, standards, and values are the distinguishing marks for which we should strive. But do any of our modern ratings come close to matching up to His? Absolutely not! God's values far exceed the filth mankind churns out, and we ought to adopt His criterion—not that of our morally depraved society! We should not hesitate to turn the television off, walk out of a theatre, exit a website, or change the radio station if a program, song, or movie is inappropriate. We cannot allow our ethics to deteriorate, and become fixated on much of the sin-filled entertainment peddled today.

The patriarch Job gave us an example of making a difference between the unclean and the clean. He is quoted, saying:

I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman? For what *is* the allotment of God from above, and the inheritance of the Almighty from on high? *Is* it not destruction for the wicked, and disaster for the workers of iniquity? (Job 31:1-3).

Job stated that He made a pact with his eyes. He would not give in to looking upon another woman lustfully. Why? The answer is that he knew it was the first step to breaking the seventh commandment, and was a sin itself (Mat 5:28). Such iniquity distances us from God, and we ultimately suffer for it.

Have we made a covenant with our eyes, or do we allow images of sex and violence to cloud our vision in the name of entertainment? Do we let our computers drift to unclean places on the Internet? What about the music to which we listen?

Today the music industry is aggressively promoting promiscuous behavior and violence. Many of the compositions young impressionable adults listen to now include extremely dark overtones in both their sound and language. The messages of anti-family, anti-God, sexual abandon, hatred, envy, drugs, and violence are found almost everywhere in modern songs. Tragically America has opened her arms to such themes, which ultimately leads many to acting out such behaviors. Our society has declined to the point

where prestigious schools are compromising their standards by offering courses in depravity!

In the halls of some of the most elite, and expensive, educational institutions, students are taking classes in subjects such as homosexuality, witchcraft, and zombies. Some are dishing out as much as \$5,000 a class to be schooled in immorality! Below is a list of just a few classes that have been offered in some of America's institutions of higher learning:

- The Phallus (Occidental College)
- Queer Musicology (University of California at Los Angeles)
- American Degenerates (Brown University)
- The Horror Film in Context (Bowdoin College)
- Alternative Sexualities in a Transnational World (UC Berkley)
- Witchcraft and Possession (University of Pennsylvania)
- The Art of Sin and the Sin of Art (Rhode Island School of Design)
- Transgender History (Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences)
- Taking Karl Marx Seriously (Amherst College)
- European Witchcraft (Oneonta College)

As we can plainly see, society is not making a difference between the unclean and the clean in their food, music, entertainment, or education. We no longer have high standards when it comes to philosophy. We welcome spiritual rubbish into our lives and have created an environment of moral squalor. Mankind has actually become like bottom feeders who love to digest filth. We cannot allow ourselves to be influenced by the moral decline of civilization! It is our responsibility to distinguish between the unclean and the clean—between the holy and the profane!

Consider Elijah, who was a prophet in Israel. He was called to confront a sinful nation that had turned from the true God to worship a false deity. As this righteous man opposed the pagan priests of Baal, he looked toward Israel and stated:

“How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word (1 Kings 18:21).

Just as Elijah questioned the people of Israel who had wavered in their faith, God is asking us—how long are we going to

keep silent and remain undecided? How long will we continue to partake of that which is unclean, both physically and spiritually?

We cannot be double minded forever. We must choose one pathway or the other. If we believe that God and His ways are right and good, then we must follow Him! But if we believe that the standards established by so-called experts and theologians supersede God's Word, then we will naturally follow those.

The Dietary Laws Enforced When Christ Returns

The God of the Bible has a high standard of morals and principles. These standards are to be lived both physically and spiritually. He has given us His criteria regarding how we are to live and what we are to consume.

Our Creator understands the innermost workings of all living things. He knows what is good for us and what is not. He is the one who defines sin (1John 3:4). The Ten Commandments are a testament to this truth. Obviously since the laws defining sin have not been abolished, the laws regarding unclean meats have also never been abrogated (1John 2:4; Rev. 22:14). The Bible clearly shows that these regulations are to be kept continually. If we unwisely choose to reject this command, we will be among those who Christ will fatally rebuke when He makes His triumphant return. As Isaiah prophesied:

For behold, the LORD will come with fire and with His chariots, like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword the LORD will judge all flesh; and the slain of the LORD shall be many. "Those who sanctify themselves and purify themselves, *to go to the gardens after an idol in the midst, **eating swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse, shall be consumed together,***" says the LORD (Isaiah 66:15-17).

Those who continue to reject God's dietary laws defile themselves, and they will ultimately drink from the cup of His wrath. We can avoid this tragic end, however. We have been given a vast array of wonderful clean meats to nourish us and sustain healthy lives

and we have also been given the ability to choose to not partake of, or participate in, that which is clearly defined as unclean.

Today the vast majority are choosing the latter. But if we claim to love God, we cannot lower our standards and conform to the decadence of the majority. In an age where almost any bizarre lifestyle seems acceptable, we must always be on guard—constantly aware of our environment. Morals have declined immeasurably, values are changing for the worse, and the integrity of most people is quickly fading. We must distinguish in what we choose to eat, think, say, and do.

Whether it is unclean movies, pork, vile music, lobster, adultery, homosexuality, catfish, lying, or crab—any impure meat or behavior must be avoided. We have to realize this fundamental truth. If we do not strive to obey God in all our ways, we open ourselves to partaking of the filthy, profane and vile acts found in this world.

Such an approach will eventually lead us to that which is unclean before God Almighty. It will cause us to SIN and we will suffer the physical and spiritual consequences! Therefore, the indiscriminating mode of this world cannot be the path true Christians take. We cannot allow our standards to be influenced by the contaminated world in which we live. We must scrutinize both our physical and spiritual menus each day. We must examine our thoughts, actions, and entertainment. As we inspect the contents of labels and menus, we are reminded to analyze our entire life. We **MUST** do as the Eternal instructs—rightly discern between the holy and the unholy—the unclean and the clean:

You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean (Leviticus 20:25).

Clean Fish All varieties of every species mentioned are clean

Albacore	Grunt	Redfish
Alewife	Gray Sea Trout	River Herring
Anchovy	Gray Sole	Robalo
Australian Bass	Gulf Pike	Rock Bass
Bass	Haddock	Salmon
Black Crappies	Hardtail	Sand Sea Trout
Black Drum	Hake	Sardine
Black Grouper	Halibut	Scup
Black Sea Bass	Hardtail	Sea Bass
Blackfin Chub	Herring	Sea Herring
Blackfin Tullibee	Horse Mackerel	Sea Trout
Bloater	Ice Fish	Sergeant Fish
Blueback	Jack	Shad
Bluebill Sunfish	King Salmon	Sheepshead
Bluefin Tuna	Kingfish	Silver Hake
Bluefish	Lake Herring	Silversides
Blue Runner	Lake Trout	Skipjack Tuna
Bonitos	Largemouth Bass	Smallmouth Bass
Boston Bluefish	Lemon Sole	Smelt
Bowfin	Long Nose Sucker	Snook
Branch Herring	Long Jaw Chub	Spanish Mackerel
Brook Trout	Mackerel	Spotted Bass
Brown Trout	Menhaden	Spotted Sea Trout
Buffalofish	Moronidae	Striped Bass
Butterfish	Mullet	Summer Flounder
Carp	Muskeilunge	Tilapia
Chilean Sea Bass	Nassau	Trout
Chub	Northern Sucker	Tuna
Chum Salmon	Patagonian Toothfish	Weakfish
Cod	Pickerels	Winter Flounder
Coho Salmon	Pig Fish (God did not give it this name)	White Bass
Common Sucker	Pike	White Crappies
Crappie	Pilchard	White Fish
Crevalle Jack	Pink Salmon	White Grunts
Cutthroat	Pollack	White Sea Trout
Dab	Pollock	White Sucker
Flounder	Pompano	Whiting
Fresh Water Mullet	Porgy	Yellow Grunt
Frost Fish	Rainbow Trout	Yellow Perch
Gag	Red Drum Red Horse	Yellow Tail Flounder
Giant Sea Bass (endangered)	Sucker	Yellowfin Tuna
Guadalupe Bass	Red Salmon	Yellowfish Grouper
Glut Herring	Red Snapper	
Grouper	Red Striped Sucker	
	Redfin	

Unclean Fish and Other Unclean Aquatic Creatures

All varieties of every species mentioned are unclean

Abalone	Limpet	Seal
Bullhead	Lobster	Scallop
Calamari	Marlin	Sculpin
Catfish	Mussel	Shark
Clam	Octopus	Shrimp
Crab	Otter	Squid
Crayfish	Oyster	Stickleback
Cuttlefish	Paddlefish	Sturgeon
Dolphin	Porpoise	Swordfish
Eel	Prawn	Toadfish
European Turbot	Puffer	Walrus
Jellyfish	Ray	Whale

Unclean Amphibians

All varieties of every species mentioned are unclean

Caecilian	Newt	Snake
Frog	Salamander	Toad

Clean Fowl

All varieties of every species mentioned are clean

Chicken	Peacock	Sageh
Dove	Peafowl	Songbird
Duck	Pheasant	Sparrow
Goose	Pigeon	Swan
Grouse	Prairie chicken	Turkey
Guinea fowl	Ptarmigan	
Partridge	Quail	

Unclean Fowl

All varieties of every species mentioned are unclean

Albatross	Grosbeak	Penguin
Bat	Gull	Plover
Bittern	Hawk	Rail
Buzzard	Heron	Raven
Condor	Kite	Roadrunner
Cormorant	Lapwing	Sandpiper
Coot	Loon	Seagull
Crane	Magpie	Stork
Crow	Osprey	Swallow
Cuckoo	Ostrich	Swift
Eagle	Owl	Vulture
Falcon	Parakeet	Water Hen
Flamingo	Parrot	Woodpecker
Grebe	Pelican	

Clean Land Mammals

All varieties of every species mentioned are clean

Antelope	Gazelle	Ox
Bison	Giraffe	Ram
Buffalo	Goat	Reindeer
Caribou	Hart	Sheep
Cow	Ibex	Yak
Deer	Lamb	
Elk	Moose	

Unclean Land Mammals

All varieties of every species mentioned are unclean

Alpaca	Fox	Muskrat
Armadillo	Gorilla	Onager
Ass	Groundhog	Opossum
Badger	Hare	Panther
Bear	Hippopotamus	Pig
Beaver	Hog	Porcupine
Boar	Horse	Prairie Dog
Burro	Hyena	Rabbit
Camel	Jackal	Raccoon
Cat	Kangaroo	Rat
Cheetah	Llama	Rhinoceros
Chimpanzee	Leopard	Squirrel
Chipmunk	Lion	Swine
Coyote	Mole	Tiger
Dog	Monkey	Vicuña
Donkey	Mouse	Wolf
Elephant	Mule	Zebra

Clean Insects

All varieties of each species are clean

Locust, grasshopper, and some crickets

Unclean Insects

All insects are unclean except for those mentioned above

Unclean Reptiles

All species of reptile are unclean

The Eternal Church of God offers a variety of books, booklets, articles, audio, and video to help people better understand the Bible. Some of the printed material available includes:

Evidence for Eras

The Truth about Tithing

The Calendar Controversy

A Good and Faithful Servant

Understanding the Mark of the Beast

The Truth about Halloween

The Shocking Truth about Valentine's Day

The Truth about Freemasonry

The Truth about Heaven

Easter or Passover

Sabbath Confessions

The Magnificent Meaning of God's Holy Days

The Eternal Church of God

PO Box 80248
Billings, MT 59108
USA

eternalcog.org