

The Christian Diet
(Copyright 2006) by Kenneth M. Hoeck
(Woodstock, Illinois)

PAGE 1 **Article**

To Unsubscribe from this newsletter:

Send a blank email to church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

To Subscribe to this newsletter:

Send a blank email to church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

To Submit Items for Print: Send to: the-church-of-god-messenger@hotmail.com or Mail to Darwin & Laura Lee, 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, ND 58501

The "New" Church of God Messenger is an independent publication. All newsletters may be copied and given to others if they are copied and sent in their entirety.

Publisher: Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

Contributors: Kenneth M. Hoeck

Websites:

<https://darwin-laura.com/>

<https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org>

<https://church-of-god-bismarck.org/newsletter/>

<https://shopping-mall-online.biz/> Books

The Christian Diet
(Copyright 2006) by Kenneth M. Hoeck (Woodstock, Illinois)

God's Diet Plan for Man

Do you eat your steak rare and bloody? Did you know that it is a sin to do so?

Acts 15:19-21 ...my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

How many Christians today are cognizant of these matters? Do you give much thought to what you eat?

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

Are All Things Clean?

Did Jesus do away with the dietary laws set forth by God which declare what is and what is not to be eaten? Professing Christian teachers and preachers claim He did. They cite Scriptures such as Mark 7:18,19 which state, "And He [Jesus] saith unto them, 'Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?'" DID He declare all meats clean when He said this, as some modern Bible versions add parenthetically to the text? What did He mean?

The New International Version (NIV), for instance, has Mark 7:19 translated as such:

"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.") 1

Why does this version, as well as many other modern translations, translate the Greek with a different meaning than the KJV translators understood?

One important rule of Bible study is to be sure to read all Scripture in its proper context. Let's apply this rule to the proof text used above and get to its true meaning. We'll therefore start at the beginning of this section of Scripture, in Mark 7:1,2.

Then came together unto Him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

What was the "fault" the Pharisees and scribes found with Jesus' disciples? Was it that Jesus' disciples were eating pork, shellfish, and other unclean lifeforms? No. The Pharisees and scribes had considered the disciples' *unwashed hands* to be defiled. This was not a matter of simple hygiene either, rather it involved ceremonial immersion in water to ritually "cleanse" one's hands of "impurity."

For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. (verses 3-4).

In the marketplace, one may have touched what were considered to be ritually impure things. Adherents of Judaism were compelled to immerse their hands in water up to the wrists to "cleanse" such "impurity" from their flesh. They held to the traditions of Judaism which included ceremonial washings throughout the **day**. *Judaism, by the way, is NOT the Way Of Life taught by God to Adam, Seth, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, or any of His people, BUT it is the traditions of men* (see verses 7-9).

Concerning this section of Holy Scripture, Messianic Jew, David H. Stern writes:

Mark's explanation of *n'tilat-yadayim*, ritual handwashing, in these verses corresponds to the details set forth in Mishna tractate *Yadayim*. In the marketplace one may touch ceremonially impure things; the impurity is removed by rinsing up to the wrist...the rationale for it has nothing to do with hygiene... (David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p.92)

Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And He said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (verses 6-13).

Jesus firmly supported the Law of God here. He proclaimed the scribes and Pharisees to be hypocrites because they said that Jesus' disciples forsook the law (*the law/traditions of Judaism, that is --which the scribes and Pharisees held as more important than the written law of God*) by eating with "defiled" hands, yet they (scribes and Pharisees) forsook *God's* law, showing that *they*, not His disciples, were truly the defiled ones.

And when He had called all the people *unto Him*, He said unto them, Harken unto Me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when He was entered into the house from the people, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. And He saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught [i.e., "toilet"], purging all meats [Greek: *broma* = "food," (not necessarily flesh meats)]? And He said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (verses 14-23).

Jesus explained to His disciples that non-observance of the traditional laws of Judaism would in no way would defile them, and that they need not ceremoniously wash their hands (nor cups, pots, brasen vessels, or tables). Though these Jews felt that "defiled" hands tainted the food, Jesus said that eating without your immersing your hands first will not defile you, because the food does not enter the mind, but passes through the digestive tract and out of the body. He refuted Judaistic traditions by declaring that eating food without ceremonially washing first in no way makes it, or you, unclean. It is the breaking of God's laws (which starts in the heart/mind--see James 1:14,15) that defiles you, as Jesus went on to explain to His disciples.

The apostle Matthew had been present at this event and he recorded his account of it in Mt 15:1-20. Notice in verse 20 that Matthew likewise records the subject as being ritually unwashed hands, not unclean meats. Neither Mark or Matthew even mention *ANY* meat--that is, animal flesh--as being part of this meal anyway, but rather both state that the meal consisted of bread.

Peter was also present at this meal. We'll soon see what he understood the Lord's parable and explanation to mean.

As we have seen, these Scriptures have absolutely nothing to do with God's dietary laws, but rather, traditions of Judaism concerning eating food with ceremonially unwashed hands. Realize this, *IF* the Pharisees and scribes took Jesus' words to mean that he declared unclean meats clean, they most certainly would have been in an uproar over it, but their only concern was unwashed hands--the breaking of man's traditions.

Let's now examine some other scriptures used by mislead teachers of the Bible today who claim the dietary laws are abolished.

What God Has Cleansed

Many believe that the vision Peter received in Acts 10 was a sign from God showing that the animals which are unclean for food, were now to be considered clean. Is this the meaning of the vision? Is this how Peter understood it? Let's read the account of this in Acts 10:9-19.

On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, 'Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.' But Peter said, 'Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common [Greek word is "*koinos*" which means "polluted, unholy"] or unclean' [Greek word is "*akathartos*" which means "impure by nature"]. And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, *What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.* This was

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

done thrice [that is, three times]: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.....Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean....Peter thought on the vision...

There are a few things to take notice of here. In verse 14, Peter stated that he has *never* eaten anything that is common or unclean. Realize that this vision took place years after the death of Christ (false teachers claim God's law was "nailed to the cross with Christ"), yet Peter still had not broken God's dietary laws. He was directly commanded by God three times to kill and eat these unclean things and three times he refused. Was Peter really breaking a command from God by refusing to eat? No! This commandment was only figurative--did Jesus literally mean to pluck out your eye if it causes offense? Peter knew God's Law is still in effect and that this had nothing to do with foods. Remember, he was with Jesus during the confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees which we examined above. Apparently, Peter understood Christ in the same way as Matthew and Mark--unclean meats are still unclean, and therefore he still observed the food laws. Also, notice that Peter doubted as to what this vision should mean (verse 17). He did not jump to the conclusion that it was now lawful to eat pigs, snails, lobster, or crab, nor snakes, beetles, spiders, vultures, or any other unclean thing.

So, what was Peter's conclusion on the meaning of the vision? The answer lies in Acts 10:28:

And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation [*this is another law of Judaism. It is not by commandment of God - see Ex 22:21; 23:29; Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19*]; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Peter had indeed understood the meaning of the vision. He knew in the Prophets that gentile nations were oftentimes depicted by unclean animals (such as Daniel 7--the lion, the bear, the leopard; & Ezek 17--the eagle), yet he was uncertain as to if his interpretation was correct at first. Recall that Peter had doubted as to what this vision meant (v.17). God, through His spirit, told Peter that gentiles were coming to him to hear the Gospel, and that, "doubting nothing," he should go minister unto those that He had sent (v.20). To put it simply, God was telling Peter, "Don't doubt your understanding of the vision, for indeed, I am sending gentiles to hear the Word--they shall join Israel and be partakers of salvation. I am cleansing them.....do not call them polluted or unholy anymore." Peter had come to the proper conclusion that this vision had nothing to do with common or unclean meats, but rather with people. The Jews regarded Gentiles (non-Jews) and the circumcised Gentile-converts to Judaism, as common and unclean, but God showed Peter that His true followers should not regard them as such. God does not esteem one better than another (Acts 10:34). *IF* God's purpose for the vision was to convey to Peter that it was now lawful to eat unclean creatures, then He would have followed it up by having three Israelites, literally eating these creatures, appear to Peter rather than just having the three gentiles appear to receive the Gospel. Read Acts 11:5-18 to get more insight as to how Peter came to understand the true meaning of the vision.

Nothing Unclean of Itself?

There are a few other scriptures we must examine, which are often misunderstood or twisted in like manner of the ones we've studied so far. Let's turn to the book of Romans, the 14th chapter. In verse 14, Paul writes, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean."

Was there a question as to if certain meats were unclean or not? It should be noted that the word translated "unclean" here is "*koinos*," which we saw from Acts 10 should be translated "common" (meaning "polluted, defiled, unholy"). "Common" meats were considered defiled or polluted due to being offered to idols.

Verse 2 of this chapter gives us some insight as to what problem Paul was addressing. There were disciples in Rome, weak in faith, who would only eat herbs (vegetables & fruits), while others, those not weak in faith, would eat both herbs and meat (clean meat, that is).

W.J. Conybeare notes that these vegetarians were likely members who "feared lest they should (without knowing it) eat meat which had been offered to idols or was otherwise ceremonially unclean (which might easily happen in such a place as Rome), that they abstained from meat altogether" (Conybeare and Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, Vol.2, p.188).

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

It is an issue somewhat similar to that which we saw Jesus address in Mark 7 and Matthew 15. In the confrontation between Christ and the Pharisees, the issue at hand was that the bread would be "polluted" (made "common") by eating it without ceremoniously washing one's hands. However, in Romans, these weak brethren felt that any meat set before them *may* have been "polluted," perhaps by an idol through sacrifice unto it, and therefore, they would eat only vegetables. They did not know for certain if the meats or wine had been offered to an idol, and therefore would not partake of any of it. The Corinthians, as we shall examine shortly, were likewise concerned over this issue. Paul had taught them that they should eat whatever is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience about whether the meat had been sacrificed to an idol, but if they knew that it indeed was, they were to avoid eating it. In like manner, Paul told the brethren at Rome not to assume that all meat and wine sold in the marketplace had been offered to idols.

As Paul, I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing defiled *of itself*--for Jesus' words were preserved for us which state this very truth: "...Do you not perceive that whatsoever thing from without entering into the man, it cannot defile him?" (Mark 7:18). Paul noted this teaching, writing, "*there is nothing defiled of itself*" (Rom 14:14), and expounded upon it further by declaring, "but to him that esteems any thing to be unclean, to him *it is unclean*." Paul had went on to tell them that anyone who believed this way, was to follow his conscience and abstain from such meat and wine because "...he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin." (verse 23). In other words, if you believe something is sinful, and you do it anyways, to you it is sin (compare this with verse 14).

Let No Man Judge You in Food and Drink?

Colossians 2:16 is another scripture that is often misunderstood or twisted by the unlearned and unstable (II Pet 3:16).

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath days.

Antinomians read this verse as, "Let no one judge you to be a sinner if you eat creatures which were declared unclean in the Old Testament, or in drinking, or if you do not keep the annual holy days, new moons, or Sabbaths."

Is this what Paul meant here? What was the problem affecting the church at Colosse? Reading verses 4, 8, & 18 will give you some insight into the situation they were in. Gnostics (based on the Greek word "*gnosis*" which means "knowledge," for they considered themselves to be the "knowing ones") were bringing in their false doctrines which included, among other things, a complete denial of sexual and other bodily appetites--asceticism on one hand, and unrestrained indulgence of the body on the other. They judged God's people in Colosse for the *particular way* in which they (the church) observed the holydays, new moons, and sabbaths--for their feasting on these days. Part of the problem of understanding this lies in the King James translation. The words "in meat, or in drink" should be translated "in eating or drinking." Correctly translated, this verse reads as such: "Let no one therefore judge you in eating or drinking, or in the particulars of a Feast, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbaths."

So we see, Paul was addressing the problem of will-worship and self-denial (read verses 20-23) brought in by the Gnostics and that this scripture has nothing to do with questioning the law of clean and unclean meats--nor does it state that the Sabbaths and Holy Days are no longer required to be observed, for that matter.

Eat Such Things As Are Set Before You

Now, there are three sets of Scriptures that appear to some to convey the idea that one should eat anything, clean or unclean, that is set before them. These are Luke 10:7,8; I Corinthians 10:27; and I Timothy 4:3,4. Let us first examine the story in Luke.

*After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also [i.e. aside from the twelve apostles], and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come. Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house. And if the son of peace *be* there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things*

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. (Luke 10:1-9).

People point to Jesus' words here and say, "See, He said to eat whatever things that are set before you." Well, what did He mean by this? Where was He sending these seventy to? What kind of food would be set before these people there? Note in verse one that Jesus said that He was sending the seventy into every city that He Himself was going to enter. Did Jesus just go to cities of Israel or to the gentiles as well? In Matt 15:24, Jesus stated, "...I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Note further that He also sent the twelve to no one but Israel:

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt 10:5,6).

Comparing Matt 10 and Luke 10, one can see that this ministry given to the twelve, and the ministry given to the seventy, were like-ministries. The seventy, like the twelve, were sent to only the lost sheep of Israel. Now, being that they were entering cities and houses of Israelites only, do you think they were being served pork or shellfish? No way! So, what was meant by Jesus' statement to "...eat such things as are set before you..."? Why did He say this? The answer lies in verses 4 & 7. He had told them not to bring any money with them on their journey. He knew they would feel unworthy to eat the food of their hosts, being that they had no money to pay for it. Therefore, He told them they are worthy of receiving the food because they laboured in this ministry. It was a matter of reassuring them that they deserved to eat what they may have felt were unearned meals.

Concerning Corinthians 10, Paul was addressing the eating of things sacrificed to idols. This chapter (as well as chapter 8 of this epistle) ties in with Romans 14 which we examined above. That this concerns things sacrificed to idols, and not unclean foods, is very apparent when read in context:

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity [Greek: *agape* "love"] edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him. Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat [Greek: *broma* "food"] make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh [Greek: *kreas* "flesh"] while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.... Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But *I* say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. If any of them that believe not bid you *to a feast*, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience? For

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (I Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:19-31).

Paul is telling the Corinthians that now that they have the "knowledge" that idols are nothing, not to abuse the liberty that this brings them. If they, being strong in faith, are offered meat, they are free to eat it without asking if it has been offered to an idol--for idols themselves are nothing and the Corinthian Church now understands as such. But, if there be a non-Christian there, one who still views idols as gods, and he/she notes that the meal has been offered to an idol, then Paul advises not to eat for the non-believer's sake. Now, while it is true that an idol is nothing (meaning, an idol itself can do one no harm or good--i.e., Jeremiah 10:2-5), this does not mean that Christians are free to partake of foods offered to idols, whether a "weaker" brother is around or not. When Paul states, "We are no worse off when we don't eat, and we are no better off if we do" (I Cor 8:8), please note that he does *not* say, "We are no worse off if we eat it, or are no better off if we don't." While the idol itself is nothing, there are demons "behind" them and therefore to partake of a meal offered unto them is to be in fellowship with demons (I Cor 10:14-22).

Every creature of God is good for food?

Now how about I Timothy 4? Was Paul telling Timothy that all creatures, both clean and unclean, are good for human consumption and not to be refused as long they are received with thanks given to God? Let's look at this section of scripture in its proper context:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and 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. (I Tim 4:1-5)

Notice in verses 1-3, while speaking of the end time apostasy, that it's those who give heed to seducing spirits (demons) and their doctrines, who command to not eat foods which God has created to be received thankfully by them who believe and know the truth. Now if one says that this command to "abstain from meats" spoken of here, is a command to not eat the meats declared by God to be clean in Leviticus 11, they in turn would be calling God's dietary law a "doctrine of demons." Remember the ones who give this command received it from evil spirits. God's Law is not a doctrine of demons!! Also, these foods spoken of were created by God to be received as food by those who believe and know the truth. What is truth? God's word is truth (John 17:17), and His word shows us which creatures were created to be consumed by mankind. Paul further qualifies this statement in verse 5 as we'll soon see.

In verse 4, does Paul mean every creature ever created by God is good for food and not to be refused? Does God want you to eat slugs or mice? Paul clarifies his statement in the next verse by saying the creatures he is speaking of are sanctified (i.e., set apart) by the word of God and prayer. Did God set apart certain creatures for food in His written word? Yes, He did. The law which shows what is and what is not fit for human consumption is recorded in Lev 11 and Deut 14. No amount of prayer will change His word. Our prayers are to be conformed to God's will. His will is shown to us in the Bible. Let's read the witness of Leviticus 11:1-23.

And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth. Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you. Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcass shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you. These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you: They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomination. Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you. And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle,

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

and the ossifrage, and the ospray, And the vulture, and the kite after his kind; Every raven after his kind; And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, And the swan [*"swan" is a mistranslation which should be rendered "barn-owl"* (Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses*)], and the pelican, and the gier eagle, And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat. All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you. Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth; Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle [*this is another mistranslation and should be rendered "wingless locust" or "cricket"*] after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind. But all other flying creeping things, which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you."

This is the law of God and it is still in effect today for all of God's people. It existed even before Moses went up Mt. Sinai, for even Noah knew which animals were clean and which were unclean (Gen 7:2). Only clean animals were to be offered to God (Gen 4:2; 15:9; 8:20, Lev 27:11) --by all His people, through all time--by the patriarchs, and in the tabernacle, and in His temple. "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are." (I Cor 3:16,17). You defile God's temple if you bring unclean animals into it (by eating unclean creatures) and God shall destroy those who willfully defile His temple. A Christian's body is not his own, it was purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ and now belongs to God (I Cor 6:19, 20; 7:23). We should therefore take care of it as its owner commands (Lev 11). Does not the Creator know what is best for His creation?

Let's look at a couple more scriptures that verify God's dietary laws are still in effect. Paul, when writing to the Gentile converts to Christ in Corinth, exhorted them to "...come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Paul continued to show support for God's law here, even to the gentiles, showing that he did not believe Christ abolished the law, but rather, that He upheld it.

In Revelation 18:2, John recorded the words of an angel who descended from heaven in a vision of the ENDTIME events, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." (compare with Jeremiah 50:39). This occurs during the Day of the Lord, and thus God has shown that at that end time there is still a distinction between the clean and the unclean.

And in Isaiah 65:3,4, it states, "A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens ...which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels." Yes, this is Old Testament Scripture, but let's notice the time setting here: "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 will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many. They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves in the gardens behind one *tree* in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD." (Isaiah 66:15-17). There can be no doubt that this is referring to the Day of the Lord--the second coming of Christ. God is provoked to anger by the willfully disobedient eaters of swine's flesh (pork) and other abominations. He says He will slay them and consume them with fire. As we see, even at the endtime, God still expects us to observe His food laws.

Let us now clarify what is clean and what is unclean:

UNCLEAN MEATS

Unclean Land Animals (lacking clean characteristics of cud chewing & parted hoof):

SWINE - pig, hog, boar, peccary

Food products of these are: pork, bacon (*watch for bacon bits in salads and potato soup*), ham, hotdogs (*read label*), pepperoni and almost all other sausages (*unless otherwise noted on package, sausages are ground up pork pieces stuffed in a pig intestine - even some non-pork sausages have natural pork casings, so READ YOUR LABELS*), certain meatloafs and meatballs, head cheese, lard (*refried beans, crackers, and cakes may have been cooked in lard*), animal shortening, gelatin (*found in Jello dessert, marshmallows, some vitamins, "geltab" medications, some yogurts, various candies such as Gummi bears & Mentos, some mints--such as Altoids, some jellies, dry roasted peanuts, and more*).

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

CANINES - dog, coyote, fox, hyena, jackal, wolf

FELINES - cat, cheetah, leopard, lion, panther, tiger

EQUINES - donkey, horse, mule, zebra

SMALLER ANIMALS - badger, coney (hyrax), hare, ferret, monkey, opossum, porcupine, rabbit, raccoon, skunk, squirrel

LARGER ANIMALS - bear, camel, elephant, gorilla, hippopotamus, kangaroo, llama, rhinoceros, wallaby

Unclean Water Creatures (lacking fins and scales):

FISH - catfish, eel, marlin, shark (some fish oils may be derived from sharks), sturgeon (Caviar comes from sturgeon), turbot

SHELLFISH - abalone, clam, crab, crayfish, lobster, mussel, prawn, oyster, scallop, shrimp

SOFT BODY - cuttlefish, jellyfish, limpet, octopus, squid (calamari)

SEA MAMMALS - dolphin, otter, seal, walrus, whale

Unclean Birds (birds of prey, scavengers, and others):

THIS INCLUDES - albatross, bat, bittern, buzzard, condor, cormorant, crane, crow, cuckoo, eagle, falcon, flamingo, glede, grosbeak, gull, hawk, heron, hoopoe, kite, lapwing, loon, ossifrage, osprey, ostrich, owl, pelican, plover, raven, stork, swallow, swift, vulture, water hen, woodpecker

Unclean Creeping Things:

AMPHIBIANS - blindworm, frog, newt, salamander, toad

REPTILES - alligator, crocodile, lizard, snake, turtle

OTHERS - arachnid (spider/scorpion family), groundhog, mole, mouse, rat, snail, slug, weasel, ALL insects EXCEPT the locust family. Some insects are used for food coloring such as Cochineal, which is listed as cochineal extract, carmine, and other like-names, and is used to dye foods tints of red.

CLEAN MEATS

Clean Land Animals (parted hoof & chew cud):

CATTLE - beef, hamburger, certain hotdogs (*such as Vienna PURE BEEF*), certain sausages [*BE SURE to check ALL ingredients including the casing (sausage skin)*], steak, veal.

SHEEP - lamb, mutton

OTHER - antelope, buffalo (bison), caribou, deer (venison), elk, gazelle, giraffe, goat, hart, ibex, moose, reindeer

ALSO: their products - butter, cheese, and milk

Clean Fish (have fins and scales):

THIS INCLUDES - anchovy, bass, bluefish, carp, cod, crappie, drum, flounder, garfish, grouper, grunt, haddock, halibut, hardhead, herring, mackerel, minnow, perch, pickerel, pike, rockfish, salmon, shad, sheepshead, skipjack, smelt, snapper, sole, sunfish, tarpon, trout, tuna (albacore, bonita, yellowtail), whitefish.

Clean Birds:

THIS INCLUDES - chicken, cornish hen (other gamehens), dove, goose, grouse, guinea fowl, partridge, peacock, pheasant, pigeon, songbird, sparrow, quail, turkey

ALSO: the eggs of these birds

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
October 7, 2023 --- Issue No. 140

*** Some claim the duck and the swan are clean, while others claim they are unclean. The KJV lists "swan" as being unclean, but there is a discrepancy over the meaning of the Hebrew word translated "swan" by the KJV translators. Many Hebrew scholars believe that it is a reference to a "barn owl." With this said, I think it best to note it for the controversy, and play it safe, and avoid it anyway. Simply, the meaning of the Hebrew words concerning some of the birds in the list of unclean animals are not clearly known. It is best to avoid these birds since their status is questionable.

Clean Creeping Things:

LOCUSTS - grasshopper, katydid, locust

Why *locusts*, you ask? God said so! He is the final authority. Many surmise the food laws were given for our health, but Scripture never claims this. The Scripture says they were given for holiness (Leviticus 11:44)

It is my heartfelt prayer that all come to the realization that God has given us these dietary laws for our benefit--because He loves us. Surely the Creator knows what is best for His creation. We have to love God *and* follow His laws, which are all given to us in love. They are not a burden, but a warning from God out of His abundant love for us that we may live long upon the earth.

1. Mark 7:19 as in The Holy Bible: New International Version. 1996, c1984. Zondervan: Grand Rapids
2. See also *The Code of Jewish Law*, by Ganzfried & Goldin; as well as other tractates of the Talmud (of which *Mishna* is part), such as these: "A person who despises the washing of the hands before a meal is to be excommunicated" (*Ber. 47b*); "Whoever eats bread without first washing his hands is as though he had sinned with a harlot" (*Sot. 4b*); "Whoever makes light of the washing of his hands will be uprooted from the world" (*Sot. 4b*); "Whoever eats bread without scouring his hands is as though he eats unclean bread" (*Sot. 4b*).

OBEY GOD



"And the swine, though he divideth the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you. Of their flesh ye shall not eat..." Leviticus 11:7-8

©1998, 2001, 2006 Truth On The Web Ministries: All the articles originated by Kenneth Hoeck or Brian Hoeck may be freely distributed or mirrored as long as presented in their entirety, attributed to Truth on The Web, and that proper author credit is given.

See Kenneth M. Hoeck's other articles at:

[Hoeck, Kenneth M. – Church of God, Bismarck \(church-of-god-bismarck.org\)](http://church-of-god-bismarck.org)

Reprinted with permission from: Truth on the Web Ministries

<https://www.totw.org/>

Holy Days 2023

Passover – April 6, 2023 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 6-12, 2023

Pentecost – May 26, 2023

Trumpets - September 16, 2023

Atonement – September 25, 2023

Tabernacles –September 30, 2023 to October 6, 2023

Last Great Day – October 7, 2023

Notes

Notes