

Torah Portion #26: Shemini (שמִּינִי) "Eighth"

Torah ~ Lev. 9:1-11:47 | Haftarah ~ 2 Sam. 6:1-7:17; Dan. 1:8-16 | Brit Chadashah ~ Acts 10:1-35; Heb. 7:1-19

God's Diet Plan

The Lord instructed Moses in *Leviticus 11* on what animals He made for food and what He did not make food. The word "unclean" in *Leviticus 11:4* is better understood as "unfit for human consumption", "off-limits", or "not food". Unclean animals were not acceptable for sacrifice and could not be brought inside the Temple. Both *Leviticus 11* and *Deuteronomy 14* says that the unclean animals are an abomination or detestable to the Lord.

Land Animals ~ Leviticus 11:1-3

Clean: Bison, Cattle, Deer, Elk, Goat, Moose, Sheep.

Unclean: Swine, Bear, Rabbit, Squirrel, Horse

Fish ~ Leviticus 11:9-10

Clean: Anchovy, Bass, Bluegill, Carp, Cod, Flounder, Pollock, Salmon, Tilapia, Trout, Tuna.

Unclean: Catfish, Clam, Crab, Frog, Lobster, Mussel, Octopus, Oyster, Scallop, Shrimp, Squid.

Birds ~ Leviticus 11:13-19

Clean: Chicken, Dove, Duck, Goose, Pigeon, Quail, Swan, Turkey.

Unclean: Bat, Buzzard, Crane, Crow, Eagle, Hawk, Ostrich, Owl, Seagull, Stork, Vulture.

Clean and Unclean instructions was known from the Beginning.Abel made a sacrifice in *Genesis 4:2-4* from his flock of "sheep", which is a clean animal.

Genesis 7:2 "Take with you seven pairs of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate" NIV

So why did God create unclean animals?

Everything that God created has a purpose, these animals were made to clean up the earth, in other words a "trash can." Eating animals that is unclean (not food) is bad for us and the planet. God created these animals precisely to clean up the pollution of other animals and humans. When these animals are eaten, the environment is severely impacted.

Examples of God's Diet being FollowedIn *Daniel 1:8-16*, Daniel refused to eat the unclean food of King Nebuchadnezzar and was found to be much healthier.

In the Middle Ages, Jews were accused of sorcery because they escaped many of the sicknesses (black plague) that afflicted others. It was not due to sorcery but it was because they observed God's dietary instructions.

A growing body of scientific evidence proves eating meat that is "not food" causes disease and even death. The unclean animals tend to be scavengers, and their meat carry more harmful elements than the clean animals. Stats show that it takes much longer than seven days for the body to release the toxins ingested from unclean animals.

Does the New Testament abolish the dietary laws?

1. *Mark 7* is not referring to God's dietary laws, it is referring to rabbinic rules. Nor does *Mark 7* make all meats clean.
2. In *Acts 10:28* the Lord told Paul that he was to "not call any man common or unclean". This is not referring to food.
3. In *Romans 14:14* is referring to meat that is fit for food (kosher) but has been offered to idols, making it non-kosher.
4. *Colossians 2:16-17* is often misunderstood. To understand these verses you must read the full context in verses 6-18.

In Closing

Keeping the dietary instructions is yet another way for us to honor the Lord in all we do, even when we eat. It is yet another way that we are to be set apart from the rest of the world. We will be healthier when we eat what the Lord has made for food and avoid what the Lord has not made for food.

1 Corinthians 6:19 "your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit" NKJV

Romans 12:1 "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" NKJV