

Leviticus 11:1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,

Leviticus 11:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These *are* the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that *are* on the earth.

In this chapter we will learn the difference between clean and unclean animals. Of interest, we know that this is not the first time that we find reference to this difference in scripture. I am reminded that the distinction was significant regarding the animals that Noah took into the ark.

Genesis 7:1–2 “And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.”

Although it is clear that man had already been given some instruction in this area, it is in this chapter that we find the first record in scripture as to the instructions God gave man concerning the difference between clean and unclean animals.

I also thought it was interesting to note that God spoke to both Moses and Aaron regarding how to instruct the people as to which animals they were allowed to eat.

Leviticus 11:3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, *and* cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

Leviticus 11:4 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.

Leviticus 11:5 And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.

Leviticus 11:6 And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.

Leviticus 11:7 And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he *is* unclean to you.

Leviticus 11:8 Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they *are* unclean to you.

In this first section the instructions pertain to land animals. The only acceptable animals that could be used for food were those with a divided hoof that chew the cud. The camel and rabbit (coney) were unclean because although they chew the cud, they do not have a divided hoof. Pigs are unclean since they do not chew the cud although they do have a divided hoof. The dead carcass of an unclean animal was also considered unclean and was not even to be touched.

Following is an excerpt from my journal on Deuteronomy 14 that provides interesting spiritual application pictured by this instruction.

I knew I had read or heard something somewhere regarding a spiritual application to some of these instructions. As I started searching for the source, I found an article by Ray Stedman, The Need for a Standard, at www.pbc.org/files/messages/3541/0512.html. Below are some interesting excerpts from that article.

“What do these mean? What is the chewing of the cud a picture of? If you have ever watched an animal that chews its cud you know that you have before you a beautiful picture of the art of meditation, of taking in knowledge and ideas and concepts, and tentatively swallowing them undigested at first, but then bringing them up again to rethink, re-chew, work over again. Thus there is proposed for us in the handling of the Scriptures a method for distinguishing between that which is wisdom from above and that which is wisdom from below, because both are in the Bible.

But it is not only the chewing of the cud, but also the dividing of the hoof that is important. What does that mean? That is a picture of the principle of separation, of discrimination, discernment, of the need to distinguish between that which is from above and that which is from below, to take note of the fact that the Bible reports the lies of Satan and the confused thinking of men, as well as the revelation of the mind of God.

The book of Ecclesiastes, for instance, has given rise to many false ideas which have been widely disseminated and said to come from the Bible -- which they do. But the book begins with Solomon's warning that it is a collection of the wisdom of man, gathered from under the sun. Thus it is not to be trusted but is to be tested against the revelation of God. So, in this area we are to feed, but we are to apply to the food we take in, even from such a wonderful source as the Word of God, this double practice of meditation and of recognizing the principle of separation.”

Leviticus 11:9 ¶ 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.

Leviticus 11:10 And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which *is* in the waters, they *shall be* an abomination unto you:

Leviticus 11:11 They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomination.

Leviticus 11:12 Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that *shall be* an abomination unto you.

This section provides instruction regarding creatures from the lakes, seas and rivers. Only fish having fins and scales are clean; all others are unclean and are to be considered filthy and detestable (from the Hebrew). Again, the dead carcasses of the unclean creatures were also considered unclean.

Another excerpt from Mr. Stedman: “Well, fins are that which gives a fish the capacity to move, to progress, to penetrate through the waters, to employ the element through which it moves for its own progress. And scales are that which

protect it against harm, which resist the effect of the element in which this food is found, which preserve it from harm from the element.

The Christian is to handle the knowledge of the world in this way. He is to keep moving on all the time. He is to keep asking, "Where does this lead? Where does this idea take me?" He is to penetrate to the heart of it. He is not to be content with mere superficial knowledge of a subject but is to move right into the heart of it and to carry its implications beyond the bounds of this life, to see how they affect life in the realm of the mind and heart and spirit. But he is to resist being captured or held by any human concept. He is not to be possessed by these kinds of ideas."

Leviticus 11:13 And these *are they which* ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

Leviticus 11:14 And the vulture, and the kite after his kind;

Leviticus 11:15 Every raven after his kind;

Leviticus 11:16 And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,

Leviticus 11:17 And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl,

Leviticus 11:18 And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle,

Leviticus 11:19 And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

Leviticus 11:20 ¶ All fowls that creep, going upon *all* four, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

Instruction in this section of verses addresses fowl or birds both in the air and on land. Unlike the previous two sections, this instruction provides a list of all fowl that are considered to be unclean. It is significant to note that all of these birds are carnivorous; they eat flesh whether dead or alive. I think the application is clear that we are not to indulge the flesh at the expense of others, neither are we to harm one another.

Moses also points out that any fowl that creeps on all fours is also unclean. This instruction seems directly connected to other flying creeping creatures as instructed in the next section.

Leviticus 11:21 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;

Leviticus 11:22 *Even* these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.

Leviticus 11:23 But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

This time the list is of the clean creatures—those that walk on all fours and have jointed legs that allow them to leap or hop; they include locusts, the bald locust, the beetle (leaping insect), and the grasshopper.

More food for thought from Mr. Stedman: "Leaping is a momentary linking together of heaven and earth. The Israelites were instructed to reject anything which had contact with the earth and could fly in the heavens but was not able to leap and thus to tie the two -- heaven and earth -- together. Ideas which accurately, successfully tie man's earthly life to his relationship with God may be accepted."

Leviticus 11:24 And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 11:25 And whosoever beareth *ought* of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 11:26 *The carcasses* of every beast which divideth the hoof, and *is not* clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.

Leviticus 11:27 And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on *all four*, those *are* unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 11:28 And he that beareth the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they *are* unclean unto you.

Leviticus 11:29 These also *shall be* unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,

Leviticus 11:30 And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.

Leviticus 11:31 These *are* unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 11:32 And upon whatsoever *any* of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether *it be* any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel *it be*, wherein *any* work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

Leviticus 11:33 And every earthen vessel, whereinto *any* of them falleth, whatsoever *is* in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.

Leviticus 11:34 Of all meat which may be eaten, *that* on which *such* water cometh shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every *such* vessel shall be unclean.

Leviticus 11:35 And every *thing* whereupon *any part* of their carcase falleth shall be unclean; *whether it be* oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: *for they are* unclean, and shall be unclean unto you.

Leviticus 11:36 Nevertheless a fountain or pit, *wherein there is* plenty of water, shall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcase shall be unclean.

Leviticus 11:37 And if *any part* of their carcase fall upon any sowing seed which is to be sown, it *shall be* clean.

Leviticus 11:38 But if *any* water be put upon the seed, and *any part* of their carcase fall thereon, it *shall be* unclean unto you.

Leviticus 11:39 And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.

Leviticus 11:40 And he that eateth of the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

This long section provides instruction as to how to cleanse oneself after touching the carcass of an unclean animal and repeats some of the previous instructions. Anyone who touched a dead carcass was considered unclean until evening. If for some reason you had to pick up the dead carcass, you were to wash your clothes and remain unclean until the evening.

A further listing of unclean animals is provided in verses 29-30. To touch any of these animals when dead made one unclean; in fact, anything that came into contact with the dead carcass was considered unclean. If this involved something made of wood, raiment, skin, or sackcloth, the item was to be put into water and left until evening. If pottery were contaminated, it was to be broken and discarded; any food or water that was in the pot was also contaminated. If, however, the carcass happened to fall into a spring or cistern that had plenty of water, the water remained clean; anyone who touched the carcass, however, was considered unclean. If the carcass fell upon any seed that was to be used for planting crops, the seed remained clean. If, however, the carcass fell upon seed that had been watered, the seed was considered unclean. Even touching the dead carcass of a clean animal made one unclean until the evening. The reference to eating from the carcass must make reference to doing so unknowingly in light of the words of Moses as recorded in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 14:21 "Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God."

Leviticus 11:41 And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination; it shall not be eaten.

Leviticus 11:42 Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they are an abomination.

Leviticus 11:43 ¶ Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.

Leviticus 11:44 For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

This section seems directly connected to verses 21-23 above, giving the other side of the coin.

Verse 44 I think includes the key for this whole section. The LORD God wants His people to be holy and distinct from the rest of the world.

Leviticus 11:45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 11:46 This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:

Leviticus 11:47 To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

As we have become more knowledgeable in the health sciences, we can now see that many of these instructions provided protection against infection and disease.

JFB provides the following interesting info pertaining to health associated with these instructions:

“It is found that in the act of chewing the cud, a large portion of the poisonous properties of noxious plants eaten by them, passes off by the salivary glands. This power of secreting the poisonous effects of vegetables, is said to be particularly remarkable in cows and goats, whose mouths are often sore, and sometimes bleed, in consequence. Their flesh is therefore in a better state for food, as it contains more of the nutritious juices, is more easily digested in the human stomach, and is consequently more easily assimilated.”

“In hot climates indulgence in swine’s flesh is particularly liable to produce leprosy, scurvy, and various cutaneous eruptions.”

I liked these observations from Adam Clarke: “God knows what is in man, and he knows what is in all creatures; he has therefore graciously forbidden what would injure both body and mind, and commanded what is best calculated to be useful to both.”

As stated in reference to verse 44, the LORD wanted to be sure that His people stood out as distinct from the rest of the world. Another good quote from Clarke: “As the *body* exists only for the sake of the *soul*, and God feeds and nourishes it through the day of probation, that the soul may here be prepared for the kingdom of heaven; therefore he shows in the conclusion of these ordinances, that the grand scope and design of all was that they *might be a holy people*, and that they might resemble him who is a holy God.”