

GOD'S DIETARY LAWS

Why and when did God establish dietary laws/ordinances?

When were they first defined? We don't really know. The first reference to clean beasts are given to us in Genesis when Noah was gathering for the ark.

Gen. 7:2: *"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."*

I am going to assume it was with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Why? Well, we will have to ask ourselves: who instructed Adam and why he was instructed? On whom, we can conclude it was Christ Himself that dealt with all the old patriarchs (see 1Cor. 10:4 and John 8:58). On why, we might guess the Lord wanted what was good for His people, health wise.

OK, let's list them: First up land beasts (animals):

Lev. 11:1-8: *"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 [rock rabbit], 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 carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you."*

Next the swimming beasts:

Lev. 11:9,10: *"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."

Now the flying beasts:

Instead of listing the clean birds God just gave us the exceptions, because it is the smaller list:

Lev. 11:13-19: "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 ospraying, 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, and the pelican, and the gier eagle, And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat."

Finally, we have the creepers:

Lev. 11:20-23: "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 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."

Next, we have the fat ordinances:

Lev. 3:9-11: "And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away. And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD."

Here, we have the blood ordinances:

Lev. 17:10,11: "And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him

off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Finally, the contamination ordinance:

Lev. 17:15: *"And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean."*

Now we need to ask ourselves, why Jesus first called these things unclean. We don't really need to know, but we can speculate. We can assume that it is for our health. Today, we know of certain worms found in rabbit and swine that stay forever with you. We know shellfish retain any water contaminates in their meat. We know fat is bad for us. We know blood contains living organisms as contaminates. We know about bacteria present in an animal torn by a predator. We know about disease in an animal that dies of itself. Speculation is fine, but maybe we just should have trusted God in the first place.