

# Clean and Unclean - Scriptural Dietary Law, Yesterday and Today

## Introduction

Our Creator, the One Who designed the human being, showed great interest in what His people consume for food – to the extent that He gave laws regarding proper diet (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14). In these laws, He stated what is clean to eat and what is unclean and should not be eaten. That which Yahuah called clean, he called food. That which He called unclean, was not called food. Keep this in mind as we go through this study.

Is He still interested in what we eat? Does Scripture indicate that all things are now clean, and that we are to refuse nothing?

For answers, let us turn to the Scriptures . . .

## Mark 7:18-19 – All Foods Clean

Mark 7:18-19 (All scriptures quotations are from the NKJV, unless otherwise noted.)

18 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,

19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?” [KJV: “purging all meats”]

Mark 7:18-19 (NIV)

18 “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him ‘unclean’?

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

Mark 7:18-19 (RSV)

18 And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him,

19 since it enters, not his heart but his stomach, and so passes on?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

With these two verses alone lifted out of the text, especially given the culture in which we live, these verses might seem to say that there is no longer such thing as something that would be “unclean” for us to consume.

In order to properly understand a statement, it must be taken in the context in which it was given. In reading the entire passage (Mark 7:1-23), verses 18-19 can be put into context. Matthew also has an account of this in Matthew 15:1-20. Examining Matthew’s account also helps to put this issue in context.

Here are some key verses that put the passage into context:

Mark 7:3-5

3 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.

4 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.

5 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?”

Mat 15:2

Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.

**In both Matthew and Mark, the context of the discussion is eating with unwashed hands, i.e., hands not *ceremonially cleansed* according to the *tradition* of the elders.**

Reading further in the context, we find that Yahusha rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for holding their own *tradition* and laying aside the commandment of Yahuah:

Mark 7:6-9

6 He answered and said to them, 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.

7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of Yahuah, you hold the tradition of men — the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.

9 He said to them, All too well you reject the commandment of Yahuah, that you may keep your tradition.

Matthew 15:7-9

7 Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

8 These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

As the context shows, this discussion between the scribes and the Pharisees and Yahusha is a discussion about eating with unwashed hands that are not *ceremonially cleansed* according to the *tradition* of the elders, and further, about how they reject the commandments of Yahuah by their tradition.

Moving on to Mark 7:19, as quoted above from the RSV, Mark says, “(Thus he declared all foods clean.)”

As noted above, Yahusha rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for holding their own tradition and laying aside the commandment of Yahuah (Mark 7:6-9; Matthew 15:7-9). After this stern rebuke, could it be possible that Yahusha would then proceed to lay aside (or reject, or abolish) the commandments of Yahuah regarding the clean and the unclean by pronouncing everything clean that His Father had pronounced unclean? How could Yahusha answer the scribes and Pharisees on the basis that they rejected Yahuah’s Law by their tradition, and then turn around and say, “Look, I’m making a new tradition. I’m cleansing everything that my Father declared unclean. You may eat anything, even though my Father

commanded against it”?

Also in regard to declaring all “*foods*” clean, take note that unclean creatures are not classified as “food” in Scripture. To use the term “unclean food” would be an oxymoron. Consequently, it is not possible that the statement, “Thus he declared all ‘foods’ clean,” could mean that He declared unclean creatures, which are not food, as clean.

As the context shows, this discussion between the scribes and the Pharisees and Yahusha is a discussion about eating with unwashed hands that are not *ceremonially cleansed* according to the *tradition* of the elders, and further, about the injustice of laying aside the commandments of Yahuah by keeping tradition. It has nothing to do with the Creator’s clean and unclean dietary laws.

(An aside: The discussion also does not have anything to do with good sanitary habits, such as personal cleanliness and dish washing. Yahusha is not here advocating eating with filthy, dirty, germ-laden hands, or using dirty, bacteria-laden dishes, which may lead to sickness – that is not what is under consideration within the context.)

Yahusha is teaching that all foods that are created for our consumption are clean and do not defile us, though we eat them with hands which are not *ceremonially purified* according to the *tradition* of the elders, and that Yahuah’s commandments are to be kept, not laid aside, rejected, or abolished. If we do not keep Yahuah’s commandments, that is how we are truly defiled.

## Acts 10 – Peter’s Vision

Acts 10:10-16

10 Then he [Peter] became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance

11 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.

12 In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

13 And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”

14 But Peter said, “Not so, Master! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”

15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What Yahuah has cleansed you must not call common.”

16 This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

In verse 15, the word “common” is Strong’s # 2840, **koinoo**, from 2839; to *make* (or *consider*) *profane* (ceremonially): — call common, defile, pollute, unclean.

The NIV translation reads:

Acts 10:15 (NIV)

The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that Yahuah has made clean.”

At first glance, especially given the culture in which we live, it may seem that everything that Yahuah had once pronounced “unclean,” He has now “cleansed.”

The depiction of animals given to Peter, which included, “all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air” (verse 12), would certainly include the unclean.

Again, let us note the importance of taking a statement *in context* in order to properly understand it. Therefore, let us go back to the beginning of this chapter and follow this story through.

As we read this chapter, we learn about a certain man named Cornelius (verse 1), who feared Yahuah (verse 2), *and* who was of *another* nation (not a Jew, verses 1, 28). Cornelius had a vision (verse 3), and he was told to send for Peter (verse 5).

Cornelius sent 3 men (verses 7-8). They were on their way when Peter went up on the housetop to pray (verse 9). Peter became very hungry and wanted to eat (verse 10); but while the meal was being prepared, he saw a vision (verses 10-16, quoted above). The fact that the vision (or some portion thereof) was done 3 times probably corresponds to the 3 men that were sent by Cornelius.

Peter “wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant” (verse 17).

It was revealed to Peter that there were 3 men seeking him, and that he was to go with the 3 men (verses 19-20).

After arriving, Peter declared unto Cornelius and his company the meaning of the vision that he (Peter) had been given...

Acts 10:28-29

28 Then he [Peter] said to them [Cornelius and company], “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But Yahuah has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?”

Cornelius explains why he sent for Peter (verses 30-33), and tells Peter that he and his company are all present before Yahuah, to hear all the things commanded to Peter by Yahuah. Peter then further explains the understanding he has gained about Yahuah’s acceptance of those from other nations...

Acts 10:34-35

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: In truth I perceive that Yahuah shows no partiality.

35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

As Peter was speaking further to them (verses 36-44), the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon these Gentiles (verses 44-46). Peter acknowledged that they had received the Holy Spirit (verse 47) and command that they be baptized (verse 48).

To reiterate, Peter’s vision was given to show him that he should not call any *man* common or unclean.

Peter had personally been with the Master Yahusha, under His teaching, and was His disciple and an apostle. Yet, at the time of Acts 10, Peter refuses to eat the unclean and states that he has never eaten

anything common or unclean.

Notice that Peter “wondered [KJV: “doubted”] within himself what this vision which he had seen meant” (verse 17). To wonder about the meaning of this vision would be a natural response for someone who did not believe in eating the unclean. Conversely, if Peter had been of the persuasion that eating these things were fine, his natural response would have been, “OK, I will rise to kill and eat. I’m hungry!”

The purpose of Peter’s vision was to prepare Peter to go and give a message to Gentiles. The impact of this message to Peter, that he was not to regard any *man* as common or unclean, depended upon the fact that he *still*, even after Yahusha’s death, burial and resurrection, observed the clean and unclean dietary laws of Scripture. For if the clean and unclean dietary laws were something that Peter had already discarded, he would have had no qualms about going ahead and rising to kill and eat. Thus, the crucial meaning and purpose of this vision would have been to no avail.

Peter’s vision was given to show him that he should not call any *man* common or unclean. **Thus, what Yahuah has cleansed (i.e., the men, not the animals), Peter was not to call common or unclean.**

## **Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 – To Eat Meat or Not**

Romans 14:1-2

1 Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things.

2 For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

Here we find verses which may seem to indicate, especially given the influence of our culture, that those who are *strong* in the faith believe they can eat all things, the unclean included, and it is those who are *weak* in the faith that hold to the commandments of the clean and unclean.

Does the context of these verses suggest that there are some brethren, the *strong ones*, who believe that they may eat pork and other unclean things, and other brethren, the *weak ones*, who do not?

A key to the proper understanding of this passage is to know the context in which it was written.

As we have read, in verse 2, it states that some brethren were vegetarians.

Again, they were *vegetarians* – they ate only vegetables. The clean and unclean Scriptural dietary laws were not what were under consideration here. How can we be assured of this? By the fact that Scriptural Dietary Law does not command vegetarianism; the eating of meat is *included*, but only the meat coming from animals classified as clean (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14).

Well then, why were these brethren abstaining from meat, and why was *weakness* associated with this?

In reading Romans, we are reading a letter from Paul to the believer’s in Rome. Paul also wrote to the Corinthians about this *weakness* issue in 1 Corinthians 8. Examining Paul’s statements to the Corinthians gives more insight into Paul’s thoughts on this matter, and thus is also helpful in putting this issue in context.

Notice 1 Corinthians 8:7...

However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being **weak**, is defiled.

Obviously, we are picking up in the middle of a thought, but notice that Paul mentions the weakness issue here, and right away, within this verse, we get an insight into what this weakness was associated with – eating something offered to an idol.

Moving to the beginning of the chapter, we get verification that the context has to do with things offered to idols:

1 Corinthians 8:1

Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

Back to verse 7, Paul mentions that there is not in everyone that knowledge. What knowledge? The knowledge that verses 4-6 speak of...

1 Corinthians 8:4-6

4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other Mighty One but one.

5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),

6 yet for us there is one Mighty One, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Master Yahusha Messiah, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

“However, there is not in everyone that knowledge;” as verse 7 then states, “for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being **weak**, is defiled.”

The source of their weakness is their lack of knowledge. When they then eat it *as a thing offered to an idol*, this is tantamount to idol worship, and thus is defiling to them. This, in turn, would potentially *destroy* the person, because the result could be that it would cause him to depart from the faith (1 Corinthians 8:11; Romans 14:15, 23):

1 Corinthians 8:11

And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother **perish**, for whom Messiah died?

Romans 14:15

Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not **destroy** with your food the one for whom Messiah died.

Romans 14:23

But he who doubts is **condemned** if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

For those who were weak, a solution to this issue could be found by completely side-stepping the eating of meat. Thus, as we saw in Romans 14:2, “he who is weak eats only vegetables.”

Continuing in 1 Corinthians 8...

1 Corinthians 8:8

But food does not commend us to Yahuah; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

To paraphrase: We can eat meat, or we can be vegetarians – that in itself doesn't make us better or worse.

1 Corinthians 8:9

But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

Romans 14:13

Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.

Continuing in 1 Corinthians 8...

1 Corinthians 8:10

For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

To paraphrase: If you with knowledge are sitting in an idol's temple and eating, but not with the intention of worshipping that idol, ironic as it may be, you could unintentionally encourage a weak brother to participate in idol worship.

1 Corinthians 8:11

And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Messiah died?

Romans 14:15

Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Messiah died.

1 Corinthians 8:12-13

12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Messiah.

13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Romans 14:20-21

20 Do not destroy the work of Yahuah for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.

21 It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

As stated, "Do not destroy the work of Yahuah for the sake of food," which, by the way, includes clean meats, and also includes vegetables. "All things," clean meat as well as vegetables, "indeed are

pure.” Even so, “it is evil for the man who eats with offense.”

In verse 21, notice that not only is the eating of meat mentioned, but also the drinking of wine is mentioned. My guess is because this also could have to do with idol worship (Deuteronomy 32:36-38):

Deuteronomy 32:36-38

36 For Yahuah will judge His people And have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their power is gone, And there is no one remaining, bond or free.

37 He will say: Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge?

38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise and help you, And be your refuge.

Notice that the eating of flesh and the drinking of wine are both mentioned in connection with idolatry.

In going back to hit some high points of Romans 14 not yet covered, it would serve well to note that Paul also mentions that some were observing special days and some weren't:

Romans 14:5-6

5 One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

6 He who observes the day, observes it to the Master; and he who does not observe the day, to the Master he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Master, for he gives Yahuah thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Master he does not eat, and gives Yahuah thanks.

These days were special to those who esteemed them that way (and were possibly set aside for fasting – Luke 18:9-12), but to others who did not esteem them that way, they were no different than other ordinary days of the week. Paul's instruction about this: “Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.” In other words, let each do as he wants. Notice, *it was man*, not Yahuah, doing or not doing the esteeming here. *In contrast, it was Yahuah Who esteemed the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week, the Sabbath*, when He “blessed,” “sanctified,” and “hallowed” it (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11). And so, this issue in Romans 14 of esteeming one day above another does not have to do with, and so does not do away with observing, the Sabbath day.

Other verses, which may at first glance be confusing, take on new meaning when viewed in light of the context that we have already examined...

Romans 14:14

I know and am convinced by the Master Yahusha that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

Although clean meat is not unclean in and of itself, it could become considered as defiled, and thus unclean in a sense, because of being offered in sacrifice to an idol. Paul reiterates this thought in verse 20, where he states, “All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.”

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of Yahuah is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Whether we partake of meat or only of vegetables, and whether we drink a particular drink or abstain, this does not make us the better or the worse in relation to the kingdom of Yahuah. This harmonizes well with 1 Corinthians 8:8, which we have already examined, but which is quoted again here for convenience, “But food does not commend us to Yahuah; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.”

So, we conclude that Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 is not speaking of a distinction between the clean and unclean as described in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14; but rather, the distinction between meat offered unto idols and meat not offered unto idols.

### **1 Corinthians 10:25, 27 – Ask No Questions**

1 Corinthians 10:25, 27

25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;

27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake.

Given our cultural climate today, these verses might readily be interpreted as follows:

- verse 25 - When you go to the grocery store, don't worry about reading labels, asking questions, etc., to determine if what you are about to buy and eat is unclean. We are not to question whatever is sold there. Just go ahead and eat it, asking no question for conscience' sake.
- verse 27 - When you are a guest at somebody's house, eat whatever they serve you without asking any questions about it.

This would be convenient. However, again we must return to the context to properly understand what is being conveyed.

Notice verse 19...

What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?

Also verse 28...

But if anyone says to you, “This was offered to idols,” do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for “the earth is Yahuah's, and all its fullness.”

As the context shows, these verses are not speaking of eating the unclean. That is not even in the question. Paul is again here dealing with the issue of meat that has been offered in sacrifice to idols. And we are told not to go into questioning about whether the meat was offered to an idol when we are eating meat bought from the market or meat that is served when we are the guest of an unbeliever.

### **Colossians 2:16-17 – Let No One Judge You in Food or Drink**

Colossians 2:16-17

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Messiah.

Under the influence of today's culture, the reading of this passage may indicate that, since we are to let no one judge us in matters of food or drink, we can eat anything we wish, regardless of the food laws mentioned in Scripture.

Let's examine the context of Colossians 2 to determine if that is what is being said.

Going back to verses 6-7, Paul encourages the Colossians to walk in Messiah Yahusha, rooted and built up in Him.

In verse 8, something very interesting is stated:

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Messiah.

Obviously, this type of person is in contrast to Messiah Yahusha and is somebody who would try to cheat us out of our salvation, and we should beware of him. But we are complete in Messiah (verse 10).

Verses 11-15 mention some very special benefits we have in the Messiah. Among those benefits, we find that He paid the debt which stood against us (my paraphrase of verse 14), which was because of our sins. This did not do away with righteous legislation that defines sin.

This brings us down to verse 16 [my comments in brackets]:

So... [after having considered all these benefits, which are ours through the Messiah and because we are complete in Him]

Let no one judge you... [No one who? Our fellow, law-abiding brethren in Messiah are certainly not going to be judging us for our completeness in the Messiah. Rather, no one such as the one mentioned in verse 8 above, who would cheat us!]

In food or in drink... [When we see the ascetic (extreme self-denial) nature of the false doctrine that was apparently invading the Colossian Assembly (which, as we shall see, comes out more in the remainder of the chapter), we can see how that the Colossians could have been judged (condemned) in their eating and drinking... for example, especially at a sumptuous festival meal.]

Or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths... [All of these things are part of the believer's life, and we should let no one come along and cheat us out of them.]

On to verse 17:

Which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Messiah.

According to Paul's statement here, the things mentioned in verse 16 evidently have a foreshadowing value to them, probably foreshadowing future events that have to do with the kingdom – this is a good thing! Also notice that the substance is of Messiah – this is a good thing! We should let no one cheat us out. No one ... such as the one mentioned in verse 8 above, and such as the one mentioned in verses 18-19 below...

verse 18-19

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,  
19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from Yahuah.

By examining the context, it can be seen that the eating of the unclean is not what is being endorsed here. But we should be on the lookout, and be careful to let no one judge us for the completeness we have in our law-abiding life in Messiah.

### **Colossians 2:20-22 – Why Subject to Do Not Touch, Taste, or Handle**

Colossians 2:20-22

20 Therefore, if you died with Messiah from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations —  
21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,”  
22 which all concern things which perish with the using ...

Within our culture today, these are verses that may be readily cited to the believer in Yahuah’s Word who upholds Scriptural Dietary Law – “Why, Mr. Clean-Food-Advocate, do you subject yourself to such a regulation as do not taste?”

In reply to this, however, a key part of verse 22 should be brought into context. Above, where verses 20-22 are quoted, this key part was deliberately omitted, as indicated by the ellipsis (...). This was done as an example to show how easily Scripture can be taken out of context. This key part sets the context and tells what regulations are being spoken of – regulations “according to the commandments and doctrines of men.”

Again, we have a passage that has no reference to Yahuah’s clean and unclean dietary laws, but has to do with commandments and doctrines of men.

“Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle” refers to some forms of asceticism, which is extreme self-denial and unscriptural. In verse 23, Paul notes:

Colossians 2:23

These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

### **1 Timothy 4:4 – Nothing to be Refused if Received with Thanks**

1 Timothy 4:4

For every creature of Yahuah is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving.

A quick read of this single verse might suggest that every creature on the face of the earth is good for food, and that we are to refuse nothing, as long as we pray over it and receive it with thanksgiving.

Yet again, we must consult the context in order to understand what is being stated.

Notice verse 5...

1 Timothy 4:5

For it [the food] is sanctified by the word of Yahuah and prayer.

If the food that we are eating is sanctified *not only* by prayer, but also by the word of Yahuah, then we see that somewhere within the scope of the Almighty's Word, He has sanctified (i.e. made a difference and set apart) every creature that is not to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving. Where may we find this in our Creator's Word? Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. By reading these chapters, one can find the "foods which Yahuah created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth" (1 Timothy 4:3). Unclean animals were never called food.

If we properly teach this, there is a blessing in store...

1 Timothy 4:6

If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Yahusha Messiah, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

## Clean and Unclean – Yesterday and Today

### In Noah's Day

#### Genesis 7:1-6

1 Then Yahuah 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.

2 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;

3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.

4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made."

5 And Noah did according to all that Yahuah commanded him.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

Notice that there was a difference between the clean and the unclean before ever there was a Levitical Priesthood – the point being that the clean and unclean dietary laws are *universal*, and not just connected to the Levitical Priesthood.

### In Job's Day

#### Job 14:4

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!

### In Isaiah's Day

#### Isaiah 65:1-5

1 I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' To a nation that was not called by My name.

2 I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good, According to their own thoughts;

3 A people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; Who sacrifice in gardens, And burn incense on altars of brick;

4 Who sit among the graves, And spend the night in the tombs; **Who eat swine's flesh, And the broth of abominable things is in their vessels;**

5 Who say, 'Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you!' These are smoke in My nostrils, A fire that burns all the day.

### **Isaiah 66:15-17**

15 For behold, Yahuah will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For by fire and by His sword Yahuah will judge all flesh; And the slain of Yahuah shall be many.

17 "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 Yahuah.

The above verses are about the return of Yahusha where He comes to rule and reign for a thousand years. It is an end time message for you and me.

### **In Ezekiel's Day**

#### **Ezekiel 4:14**

So I [Ezekiel] said, "Ah, Master Yahuah! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth."

### **In Yahusha's Day**

#### **Matthew 13:47-48**

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of **every kind,**

48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but **threw the bad away.**

Here, our Savior bears witness to the food laws of His Father by stating that the good (which is clean to eat, e.g. fish with both fins and scales, as in Leviticus 11:9) were kept, but the bad (the unclean, e.g. fish without fins and scales, as in Leviticus 11:12) were thrown out.

### **What The Apostles Decreed When Gentiles Came Into The Faith (Acts 15:5-24)**

#### **Act 15:19-24 KJV**

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to Yahuah:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men

among the brethren:

23 And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

In Verses 19-21 is instruction for new Gentile believers coming into the faith. The Apostle knew that they were not to overwhelm these new believers and they also knew that the Book of Moses, the first five books of the Bible, was read in the Synagogue every Sabbath day. So each Sabbath, these new Gentile believers would be instructed in the law.

Verse 24 dealing with circumcision and keeping the law was not saying that these were done away with as so many believe, but that circumcision and keeping the law did not justify them, but faith in Yahusha the Messiah did (Galatians 2:16).

Galatians 2:16 KJV

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Yahusha the Messiah, even we have believed in Yahusha the Messiah, that we might be justified by the faith of Messiah, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

There are some who say that because of Acts 15, that there are two separate rules, one for the Jews who believe and one for Gentile believers. However Yahuah says that there is one set of rules for both the Jews and Gentiles who believe (Exodus 12:49, Leviticus 24:22, Numbers 15: 16, 29)

Exodus 12:49 KJV

One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

Leviticus 24:22 KJV

Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* Yahuah your Elohim.

Numbers 15:16, 29 KJV

16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, *both for* him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

**What John wrote in the book of Revelation (after the death, burial, and resurrection of Yahusha)**

...

**Revelation 18:2**

And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

The evidence shows that there is still such a thing as an unclean bird in the book of Revelation, the last book in the Bible.

**Thus Today ...** in light of this evidence, Scriptural Dietary Law is the same as it was yesterday, and has not been done away with.

### **For Extra Credit...**

Now known, are many reasons the unclean should not be eaten by human beings. As the consumer advocate magazine, *Consumer Reports*, said about bacon in its October, 1989 issue, "Certainly it's not good for you" ("Bacon: The Food You Hate to Love," *Consumer Reports*, Mt Vernon, NY: Consumers Union of US, Inc, Vol 54, 10/89, pg. 647).

Although there are many reasons why the unclean should not be eaten, and although there may be supposed workarounds (such as making sure the meat is thoroughly heated), the only reason we need is that our Creator commanded it. What He desires is our obedience.

An old adage says, "You are what you eat." And this holds true in regard to the eating of the unclean. For if we eat the unclean, which are an abomination, the Scripture tells us that we make ourselves abominable, "You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them" (Leviticus 11:43).

### **Addendum – Giving or Selling the Unclean to Unbelievers**

Deuteronomy 14:21

You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien who is within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you are a holy people to Yahuah your Mighty One. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Sadly, this verse has been mistaken by some to mean that you can give or sell the unclean, such as a ham, to unbelievers. However, notice that the context has to do with that which "dies of itself." It is addressing the situation of a *clean* animal dying of itself. Unclean animals have already been forbidden to begin with, regardless of whether you take them alive and slaughter them or find them dead.

Leviticus 11:39-40 makes it more explicit that this law addresses the situation of a clean animal which dies of itself...

39 And if any **animal which you may eat** dies, he who touches its carcass shall be unclean until evening.  
40 He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

In addition, in Leviticus 17:15-16, we can see that there is an explicit washing requirement for not only the native Israelite, but even for the stranger who eats that which dies of itself...

15 "And every person who eats what died naturally or what was torn by beasts, whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.

16 But if he does not wash them or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt."

As seen in Leviticus 11:39-40, quoted above, the eating of a clean animal that dies of itself results in the person coming into a state of uncleanness, and the stipulation is that, “He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.” No such stipulation was given for the eating of animals that were already forbidden to begin with.

With regard to the eating of a clean animal that dies of itself, Yahuah laid out special conditions that apply to that situation. But, again, it has to do with a *clean* animal, not the things designated as unclean, abominable, and forbidden to eat to begin with.

Giving or selling the abomination to the unbeliever is not something that is endorsed in Scripture. And to do so would be an encouragement for the unbeliever to go in a direction that is opposite of where we should be bringing them.