

# Parting the Hoof and Chewing the Cud

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## Leviticus 11

- I. We must not become confused about this matter of dietary law from the Old Testament.
  - A. We must remember that the New Testament has removed these restrictions in the meat that we eat.

1 Timothy 4:4-5 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.

- 1. BUT, this does not mean there we should ignore this matter entirely.

1 Corinthians 10:23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

- 2. The issue is not with the meats themselves, but the effect it has on others to see us eating them.

Romans 14:14 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.

- 3. When our meat is an offense to someone else then it is wrong for us to eat it, or argue for it, in his presence.

Romans 14:15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

- 4. Again, the kingdom of God is not manifested in meat and drink, but in how we treat one another – with charity.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

- 5. Whatever the arguments and issues, meat is not something to destroy the work of God over.

Romans 14:20-21 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

- B. When Noah got off the ark God gave ALL moving creatures to man for meat.

Genesis 9:3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

- C. The restrictions in meats were only for Israel as God set them apart to be his people.
- D. The meaning and purpose of this part of the law was to make a difference between clean and unclean.

Leviticus 11:46-47 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: 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.

- II. So the purpose of these laws was to keep the Jews as a distinct people – different and set apart from all other nations – by God.

- A. Not so much by the outward appearance and manifestation of their peculiar eating habits and preferences – this is not how God’s people are identified.
- B. What sets God’s people apart from all the rest is the great object of their life.
  - 1. Worldly people seek wealth, fame, comfort, and pleasure.
  - 2. The primary aim of the true child of God is to live their life to please Him.
  - 3. The spirit of a child of God sets him apart from the worldly people – he has that awareness of God in everything he does while they worldly forgets God and ignores his existence.
  - 4. The true child of God is known by the rules which guide his life.
    - a) If a thing is right, he will stand by it even if he lose by it.
    - b) If a thing is wrong, he will scorn it, even if he knows it would benefit him.
  - 5. A child of God is known by his conversation, which is clean, and ministers grace to the hearers – not full of jest and foolishness, or profane.
- C. This law of the clean and unclean animals was intended by God to keep his people always conscious that they were in a world full of sin and to exercise judgment (discernment) between clean and unclean.
- D. It was also intended to be a rule of discrimination by which we may judge WHO are clean and who are unclean – that is, who are saints and who are not.
- E. There are two tests, but they must both be united – to be clean the beast had to both chew the cud AND part the hoof.

III. The beast that was clean was to chew the cud:

- A. Here is the inner life; every true-hearted man must know how to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the sacred Word.
- B. The man who does not feed upon gospel truth, and so feed upon it, too, that he knows the sweetness and relish of it, and seeks out its marrow and fatness, that man is no heir of heaven.
- C. You must know a Christian by his inwards, by that which supports his life and sustains his frame.

IV. But then the clean creatures were also known by their walk – they parted the hoof.

- A. If the animal did not have a parted hoof the Jew at once knew it was unclean.
- B. But if the hoof was thoroughly divided, then it was clean – IF it also chewed the cud.
- C. So there must be in the true child of God a peculiar walk.
- D. You cannot tell a man by either of these tests alone; you must have them both.
- E. But while you use them upon others, apply them to yourselves.
  - 1. Do you chew the cud by meditation?
  - 2. Does your walk differ from the careless worldly people who ignore God and live their lives as if He does not exist?

V. Just because we do have to discern between clean and unclean animals as a matter of obedience to God, does not mean that we do not have to discern between clean and unclean when it comes to those around us and ourselves.

- A. These Levitical laws were the foundation for the true holiness of God’s people in this last age.
- B. They taught the people of God how to think and how to discern between the good and the evil.
- C. It got them used to exercising their minds and hearts concerning things that are bad and things that are good.
- D. It got them used to being set apart from the world around them and being different from the ungodly world.