

August 19, 2018 - Lev. 10:8- 11:47 - Aaron's Grief; Clean & Unclean
Torah readings: Leviticus 10:8- 11:47 - Aaron's Grief; Clean & Unclean
Psalm 78:1-16
Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:21-29 + 45:15 + 46:1-3
Isaiah 40:16-18, 21-26, 31
Isaiah 46:1-6, 8-13

Prohibition of Wine by Ministering Priests

Leviticus 10:8-11 - "And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

"nor thy sons with thee" - The Targum of Jonathan adds, "as did thy sons, who died by the burning of fire." A majority of Rabbis understood this to be the case.

In four places the death of the sons of Aaron is mentioned, and each time their sin is mentioned with it, in order to teach you that this was their only sin. (Tanchuma Ahare Mot 6:6)

The prohibition was to continue even in Ezekiel's vision of the Temple in the days of Messiah:

- **Ezekiel 44:21** - "They must not shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but must carefully trim their hair. No priest may drink wine before he enters the inner court. And they shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman, but must marry a virgin of the descendants of the house of Israel, or a widow of a priest"

And this is mentioned as a qualification for being a New Testament elder:

- **Titus 1:7** - "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;"
 (See **1 Timothy 3:8** - regarding deacons)

This also relates to Paul's admonition "be instant in season, out of season" (**2 Timothy 4:2**).

Jews, of course, drank wine - simply in place of water, at festivals and with drink offerings in the Temple. Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana.

Under the gospel, we are to obey the law of liberty and love, but anything that hinders our recognition of the "difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" is suspect.

- **Ephesians 5:18** - "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

The lists of clean and unclean animals that follow in this section illustrate what is at stake and why sober judgment is required.

Wine in moderation reflects God's blessing:

- **Judges 9:13** - "And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?"

- **Psalms 104:14-15** - "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."

- **Isaiah 25:6-8** - "And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."

But drunkenness is a picture of those experiencing the "cup" that brings God's wrath. In this picture, drunkenness and self-seeking rebellion are equated and have the same effects of erring in vision and judgment:

- **Isaiah 5:11** - "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!"

- **Isaiah 28:7-8** - "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean."

- **Psalms 75:8** - "For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them."

Drunkenness led to Noah's shame (**Genesis 9:21**) The Zohar explains that the wine that was drunk by Nadab and Abihu was "the wine which Noah drank."

Those in authority are warned:

- **Proverbs 31:4-5** - "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to crave strong drink, lest they drink and forget what is decreed, and deprive all the oppressed of justice."

But although an excess of wine was the downfall of the "drunkards of Ephraim," wine

can, through repentance, be turned into a picture of blessing:

- **Zechariah 10:7** - "And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD."

A Conflict Between Moses and Aaron - Leviticus 10:12-20

This whole incident is confusing, even after reading the rabbinical explanation.

Leviticus 10:16 - "And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying, Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?"

Leviticus 10:19 - "And Aaron said unto Moses, Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin offering to day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?"

In the previous chapter, Aaron is called upon to offer a calf as a sin offering, ostensibly to atone for his part in the sin of the Golden Calf (**Leviticus 9:8**).

Then he offered a goat for a sin offering for the whole congregation (**Leviticus 9:15**). Targum Jerusalem says this was to atone for the sale of Joseph, whose brothers had stained his coat with goat's blood to show to his father Jacob.

In fact, three goats were brought that day as sin offerings:

- (1) the one that God commanded Aaron to offer on the occasion of the eighth day of consecration;
- (2) the one brought by Naashon, leader of the tribe of Judah, as the first in the series of offerings brought by the tribal heads in honor of the Sanctuary's inauguration (see **Numbers 7:12**);
- (3) the goat offered every Rosh Chodesh (first of the month — that day was the first of Nissan).

The first two were not burnt, but eaten by Aaron and his sons as per Moses' instructions. The Rosh Chodesh offering, however, Aaron burned, reasoning that if he was instructed to eat the meat of the day's special offerings even though he is in mourning (contrary to the usual law), he should not deduce that the same applied to an offering that is not unique to this special occasion, but is part of the regularly scheduled offerings. In fact, it was forbidden to a mourner.

This distinction escaped Moses, who demanded of Aaron and his sons: Why did you burn this sin offering? And if you burned it because you are mourners, why did you eat

the others? To which Aaron replied: "If you heard this instruction (that the offerings should be eaten even by mourners) regarding the offerings of the moment (the special occasion of consecrating the Tabernacle), you should not apply the same to the offerings for all times (i.e. the regular New Moon offering)" (Talmud, Zevachim 101a; Rashi)

Even without defiling themselves by touching a dead body, someone was considered "in mourning" for the first day after a death in the family. The High Priest could offer, but not partake, of a sin offering during this time of mourning. A priest could do neither.

The eating of the sin offering was to show the people that the sin had been cleared, atoned for and covered. (This is how they would "bear the iniquity of the congregation") Aaron says that, considering God had just killed two of his sons soon after he offered a sin offering for himself and his family, and that he might be still in disfavor with God, the people would distrust any reassuring effects of he and his sons eating the sin offering.

So, Aaron explained to Moses that there was a law that forbids a mourner to eat the regularly scheduled sin offerings, like those for the New Moon.

Leviticus 10:20 - "And when Moses heard that, he was content."

"Because Moses became angry, he forgot the law that a mourner is forbidden to eat from the meat of the offerings." (Midrash Rabbah)

Rashi - "and it pleased him": [Moses] admitted [that Aaron was correct,] and was not ashamed, [for he could have covered up by] saying, "I have not heard [of this law]." Rather, Moses frankly said to Aaron, "You are right! I did hear that a mourner must not eat from sacrifices that will be offered in future generations, but I forgot!". — [Torath Kohanim 10:60; Zev. 101a]

Wait! - Moses, who is the ultimate arbiter of the Law, forgot a law? Why is this part of the story?

To show us something about respect, boldness and humility. Aaron was bold but respectful to explain this to Moses, Moses was humble in admitting his mistake.

Seven things that characterize a wise man:

- A wise man does not speak before one who is greater than him in wisdom or age.
- He does not interrupt his fellow's words.
- He does not hasten to answer.
- His questions are on the subject and his answers to the point.
- He responds to first things first and to latter things later.
- Concerning what he did not hear, he says "I did not hear."
- He concedes to the truth.

"He does not interrupt his fellow's words" — this is Aaron, who though he had an

answer to Moses' charge, waited in silence until Moses had concluded speaking.
 "He concedes to the truth" — this is Moses, who admitted that Aaron was in the right.

Separating Clean from Unclean

The term "*kosher*" comes from the Hebrew word כָּשֶׁר (kasher) meaning "fit" — as in 'fit for consumption' and refers to food that is fit to eat according to Jewish dietary law.

Unacceptable foods were "unclean for you" (**Leviticus 11:8**), not unclean for everyone in general.

We know these foods were not unclean in and of themselves, because it says in **Deuteronomy 14:21** that they could give them to a "temporary resident living within your gates and he may eat it or you may sell it to a foreigner [a Gentile]."

Forbidden Foods

Adam and Eve had one restriction of what they could eat - the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (**Genesis 2:17**)

"Why did the Holy One blessed be He permit (Adam) the fruit of all the trees of the Garden and withhold from him only one of them? The constant sight of it would cause him to remember his creator and acknowledge the yoke of his maker, thus preventing him from becoming overweening." - (Midrash Tadshe)

Noah was forbidden blood:

- **Genesis 9:3-4** - "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."

But Noah also distinguished between clean and unclean animals, even before the Law was given:

- **Genesis 8:20** - He "took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar that he had built to the Lord."

In Leviticus God is separating out some food from the others, so Israel will have a deeper understanding of His character.

Rashi - For the other nations, however, He prohibited nothing. This is comparable to a physician who went to visit a patient [who was incurable, and allowed him to eat anything he wished, whereas when he went to his patient who was to recover, the physician imposed restrictions on his diet that would ensure that the recoverable patient would live.

Other reasons

- simple health reasons
- to assert God's sovereign right to the creatures, and his disposal of them according to His will and pleasure
- to lay a restraint on their appetites, to prevent luxury, and to teach them self denial, and compliance with his will
- to keep them the more from the company and conversation of the Gentiles, by whom they otherwise might be led into idolatry
- to give them an aversion to Gentile idols, to whom the creatures forbidden them to eat were either now or would be sacred to them
- abhorrence of those vices which may be signified by the ill qualities of several of the creatures - swine in particular.

Clean and unclean creatures are also related to peoples:

See **Acts 10:9-16** and Peter's vision of the unclean beasts. "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." - Referring to the Gentile Cornelius and his family who had become believers. "God has shown me that I must not call any person common or unclean."

Jesus superseded the dietary laws by drawing attention to unclean thoughts and desires within us.

- **Matthew 15:11** - "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man."

Land animals

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

Targum of Jonathan adds here, "which have horns"

Ten clean beasts:

Listed in **Deuteronomy 14:4** - the ox, the sheep, and the goat, the hart, and the roebuck, and the fallow deer, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois.

Chewing the Cud - Rumination

A spiritual characteristic reflecting the need to meditate on scripture repeatedly, bringing it back up to break it down further, in preparation to extract more nourishment. To better divide spiritual from natural, holy from profane, and discernment of God's voice from the traditions of men and our own devices.

- **Psalms 1:1-2** - "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor

standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

Cloven hoof - Refers to walking in both this world and in eternity.

An animal that is cloven footed has the hoof parted in two, and encased in a hard bone-like substance. This animal walks in mud as well as on stones, can go anywhere, and there is hardly a case of sickness in the hoof. The cloven hoof signifies a spiritual walk that is "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (**Ephesians 6:15**). The two toes signify the walk that is balanced by the Spirit and the Word.

Also, it could refer to walking in obedience to the commandment toward God and toward man. We are sent into the world but are not of it (**John 17:14–19**), our citizenship is in heaven (**Philippians 3:20**) and we are seated with Him in the heavenlies (**Ephesians 2:6**).

Cloven hoof = Agile, steady, swift and nimble.

- **Psalm 18:33** - "He makes my feet like hinds' feet, and sets me on my high places."

Jesus is pictured as a cloven-hoofed hart, a clean animal:

- **Song of Solomon 2:8-9** - "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice."

Explanations from the Early Church

- **Barnabas 10:11** (written between 70–132 AD)

"Again Moses saith; Ye shall everything that divideth the hoof and cheweth the cud. What meaneth he? He that receiveth the food knoweth Him that giveth him the food, and being refreshed appeareth to rejoice in him. Well said he, having regard to the commandment. What then meaneth he? Cleave unto those that fear the Lord, with those who meditate in their heart on the distinction of the word which they have received, with those who tell of the ordinances of the Lord and keep them, with those who know that meditation is a work of gladness and who chew the cud of the word of the Lord. But why that which divideth the hoof? Because the righteous man both walketh in this world, and at the same time looketh for the holy world to come. Ye see how wise a lawgiver Moses was."

Swine - "Just as the swine when reclining puts forth its hooves as if to say, 'See that I am kosher,' so too does the empire of Rome boast as it commits violence and robbery under the guise of establishing a judicial tribunal. This may be compared to a governor who put to death the thieves, adulterers and sorcerers. He leaned over to a counselor and said: 'I myself did these three things in one night.'" (Midrash Rabbah)

Because pigs eat garbage and even dung, the Sages said, "The mouth of a swine is as filthy as dung itself." Modern medicine shows that undercooked pork can transmit the Trichinosis parasite.

Fish

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."

Both scales and fins - The fish with scales is shielded from the water by the scales and is not a part of the water. This is a dry fish in a wet environment. Even the eyes of this fish are shielded with a kind of "contact" lens from the water. The scales also have a rough surface which causes a certain amount of friction when the fish darts along, supplying heat to its body. So the fish draws heat from the cold water. The spiritual significance of this is that the fish represents the Christian in the world. The water is a type of the world, and the fish is a type of the Christian. He is in the world, but not of the world. He beats the water with his fins to propel himself - overcoming the world - unlike the unclean fish - eels, lampreys - which goes with the flow of the water.

"The student of Torah is comparable to a fish in water, as in Rabbi Akiva's famous parable. His "fins" are the means by which he moves forward through the water—the intellect and study skills with which he advances in wisdom and increases the Torah and makes it great with his own contributions to Torah learning. His "scales" are his protective armor against predators and adverse elements — his fear of heaven, which shields his learning from error and distortion." - *The Lubavitcher Rabbi*

The "sign of the fish" - signifying "Jesus Christ Son of God" in Greek, became a secret sign for persecuted Christians in Roman times.

Birds

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 ..."

The 20 non-kosher species of bird are: "eagle, ossifrage, osprey, kite, vulture family, the entire raven family, ostrich, owl, gull, hawk family, falcon, cormorant, ibis, swan, pelican, magpie, stork, heron family, hoopoe and bat."

Predators and scavenger/carrion birds are an abomination. They represent those who feed on even their own kind, and "buy and sell the souls of men" (**Revelation 18:13**). They are trying to sustain life by feeding on death.

"We are commanded not to eat those animals possessive of a cruel nature, so that we should not absorb these qualities into ourselves." - (**Nachmanides**)

Among the natural birds, there is a kind of segregation on the basis of the food they eat. Doves eat grains and berries and crows eat carrion. They could not fellowship because the food of the one would be offensive to the other.

Night predators like the owl, who are able to operate with great vision in things pertaining to the carnal and in an evil spirit, but not able to see the smallest things in the light.

Owls and other unclean birds were said to inhabit the waste places left after God's judgment, places which are also associated with evil spirits:

- **Isaiah 34:14** - "...the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

"satyr," may refer to a demon-possessed goat like the swine of Gadara (Matthew 8:30-32).

"screech owl" = "Lilith", name of a female goddess known as a night demon who haunts the desolate places of Edom.

Predators are likened to evil human oppressors:

- **Micah 3:3** - "You also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron."

Insects

Leviticus 11:20 - "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;"

Not "fowls" - but "every creeping thing that flies"

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."

By "leaping," they signify a desire to ascend to Heaven and not be tied to the confines of this earth.

These flying things show that there are those who are not able to stay aloft in God or in things of the Spirit, they keep coming back to the ground - but we should not reject them, because these will be able to survive spiritually when they are absorbed into the body of Christ.

[See <http://thepatternonline.org/the-table-of-shewbread/clean-and-unclean-animals>]

Dealing with uncleanness

Leviticus 11:24 - "And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcass of them shall be unclean until the even. And whosoever beareth ought of the carcass of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even."

"whoever touches" = to touch in preparation to eat. Time cleanses (until sundown).
 "bear" - to "bear" requires greater cleansing - washing of the garments plus waiting until sundown.

Similarly, saints that have contracted pollution by any manner of sin, are to wash their garments and make them white in the blood of the Lamb (**Revelation 7:14**) The Bride is cleansed "by the washing with water through the word." (**Ephesians 5:26**)

Transfer of uncleanness - Leviticus 11:31-42

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

Targum of Jonathan: (Meaning) if it died of itself through any distemper, or was torn by the wild beasts

Rashi - [It means that Israelites may not touch animal carcasses] on the Festivals [since at those times they deal with holy sacrifices and enter the Temple]. This is what [the Sages] said: A person is obligated to cleanse himself on Festivals. - [R.H. 16b, Torath Kohanim 11:74]

Not to willfully defile yourself -

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."

- **Isaiah 52:11** - "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD."

Targum: "Be Separate!"

- **2 Corinthians 6:14-18** - All about making a distinction between idolatry and true worship, separation from the world system.

- 6:14 - unequally yoked - a clean animal (ox) with an unclean.

- 6:17 - then the quote from **Isaiah 62:11**

"in the world, not of the world" (**John 17:16**)

Clean and Unclean in the New Testament

Matthew 5:17-20 - "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

John 5:39 - "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

The rituals for cleansing were another "type" - like sacrifices and the offerings - of the real cleansing from sin and uncleanness accomplished by Christ.

"Uncleanness" was not a sin or a trespass, however. Purely natural processes outside one's control could make you unclean, so everyone was unclean at least part of the time. Everyone was constantly going through the process of cleansing. This focused the mind on God's demand for holiness.

[We'll look more closely into uncleanness in future readings - regarding touching a dead body, the cleansing of lepers, the ashes of the Red Heifer waters / of purification, etc.]

Did Jesus do away with the Jewish dietary laws?

Mark 7:18-19 - "And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?"

"purging" = *katharizō* - The NET and most other modern translations have "This means all foods are clean."

There is controversy over whether the text is saying that the digestive process "purges" all foods, or that Jesus declared all foods are clean. The question lies in Greek grammar and the text of differing Greek manuscripts, and the background of what Jesus was addressing - hand washing before eating bread.

Note that violation of the kosher laws was never part of the Pharisees' accusations against Jesus, although they were looking for anything to discredit Him.

Would Jesus have discounted all the kosher laws?

Yes - if - like all the rest of the Torah - He fulfilled and completed that holiness provisions through his ministry, death and resurrection. But He didn't complete His mission until his resurrection and ascension - and even after His private explanation to the disciples,

they didn't grasp it until afterwards.

Later, Paul uses the same word used in **Mark 7:19** for "purged" (*katharos*) - in relation to foods offered to idols:

Romans 14:20 - "All things indeed are pure (*katharos*); but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence."

Titus 1:15 - "Unto the pure all things are pure (*katharon*): but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

The disciples only recognized Jesus' fulfillment of the Law after the resurrection. Peter needed a vision to convince him that Gentiles could be part of the kingdom of God (**Acts 10**). And while the Temple remained, Christian Jews in Jerusalem who still frequented the Temple services would have wanted to remain Levitically clean to enter there, which involved keeping kosher. (See Paul's ceremony for completing a Nazarite vow with peace offerings at the Temple - **Acts 21:22-24**)

An interval until the Temple was destroyed

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. ...Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." - **Luke 21:20, 32**

Priests and offerers of sacrifice in the Temple had to be ritually clean. I tend to believe that when the Temple was destroyed, the outward ceremonial reason for "clean and unclean" - the holiness demanded when entering into God's presence in the Temple precincts, including the dietary laws - was gone, fulfilled in Christ's righteousness. It's inner meaning - the necessity of having a pure "heart" - remains for us to understand and apply today, living in the New Jerusalem.

The spiritual reality now replaces the earthly type

Hebrews 9:9-10 - "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

I Timothy 4:1-5 - "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 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."

An alternative explanation:

<http://www.sabbathreformation.com/article-jesus-declared-all-foods-clean-there-s-more-on-mark-7-1-23-63892046.html>

An in-depth discussion of the textual problems with Mark 7:18-19 can be found here:
<https://buff.ly/2vVqdXt>