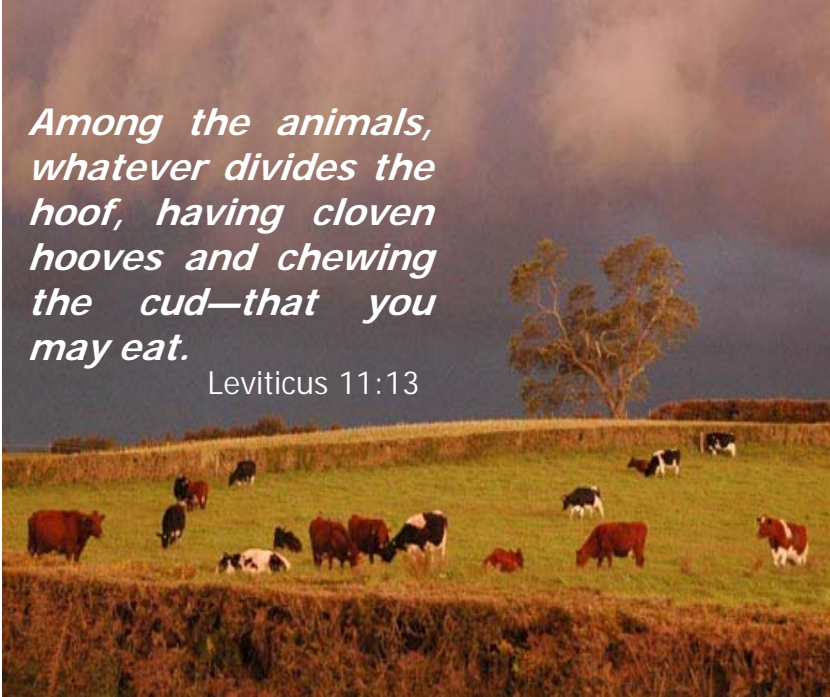




Sowing the Word

*Among the animals,
whatever divides the
hoof, having cloven
hooves and chewing
the cud—that you
may eat.*

Leviticus 11:13



Leviticus 11-12 December 3rd-9th, 2009

So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of
God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to
understand the reading.

(Nehemiah 8:8)

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Helpful Study Resource:

Explore the Book by J. Sidlow Baxter

Commentary:

The commentary used with permission throughout
this booklet is:

With the Word Bible Commentary

by Warren W. Wiersbe.

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Chapter 11 Highlights and Helps

by Pastor Jim

We don't know when God's people first received the law about clean and unclean foods, but it was known in Noah's day (Gen. 7:1–10). Perhaps this was a part of the teaching God gave Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There were at least two reasons for this dietary law: (1) the health of God's people, and (2) the distinction of Israel as a separated people. In a day when there was neither refrigeration nor adequate means for cooking, many of these forbidden foods were potentially dangerous to the health of the people. See Ex. 15:26 and Deut. 7:15. However, the main reason was that the Jews might be reminded daily, at each meal, that they were a separated people who were not to live like the Gentile nations around them.

Warren Wiesbe adds this insight for us:

These dietary laws were given only to the Jews and were abolished with the fulfillment of the Mosaic Law in Jesus Christ (Col. 2:11–17). Jesus made it clear that these laws were temporary and did not determine the condition of the heart (Mark 7:1–23). The early church found itself divided over these laws (Rom. 14:1–15:7). Peter apparently kept a "kosher house" even after Calvary and Pentecost (Acts 10:9–16), but he soon learned that God had made some drastic changes. ("Kosher" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "right, fit." People in a kosher Jewish home ate only those foods that God said were right and fit.) In the church today, diets are not a means of salvation or holiness (Col. 2:20–23; 1 Tim. 4:1–5); and Christians must not judge one another in these matters. While some foods may not be physically good for some people, what a Christian eats or drinks must not be made a test of spirituality.

For us, we can learn major lesson in this—in Spiritual principles. Just as some of the foods the Israelites ate were deemed clean, and some unclean—likewise, some of the movies and music and books you feed your soul are clean - and some are unclean.

The ol' computer adage is true, garbage in garbage out. Take in trash, and you'll end up trash. The health food advocate says, "You are what you eat!". But the truth also applies to us spiritually.

Moses taught the Hebrews if they ate an unclean food or touched an unclean object it made them unclean - and thus, unfit for the worship or

service of God.

The same truth applies to us. Consume unclean material – or dwell on unclean stimuli – and you become unclean or unfit for the worship or service of God. Don't be like the guy who complained there was too much sex and violence in his DVD player. You can take control over what you take in!

If you want to be useful and effective for God... set yourself apart. Reserve your mind and soul for His input and influence.

Leviticus 11:44 is the key, "sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy."

Prescriptions for uncleanness are covered in this section. God used the tangible issues of life which He labeled clean/unclean to repeatedly impress upon Israel the difference between what was holy and unholy. "Clean" means acceptable to God; "unclean" means unacceptable to God. Leviticus 11–15 details the code of cleanness

—MacArthur, J. J. (1997). *The MacArthur Study Bible* (electronic ed.). Nashville: Word Pub.

Chapter 12 Highlights and Helps

by Pastor Jim

There is no suggestion here that either conception or birth is an act of sin. After all, God created sex and told us to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). Further Hebrews 13 says this:

Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

God makes it very clear—that the marriage bed, that sex in marriage is undefiled, there is nothing unholy about it. What makes sex unholy is fornication and adultery. This is an important thing to drum in our minds. In the wicked world we live in, sex is so perverted and displayed in constant fornication and adultery—because of this Christians can sometimes go too far in the condemnation and begin to feel that sex itself is bad. Not so—in marriage—it is pure.

Notice the grace found in this chapter. Even the poorest couple could bring an acceptable sacrifice, and God would receive it (v. 8). This is the sacrifice that Joseph and Mary brought when they dedicated Jesus (Luke 2:22–24). Truly, He became poor that we might be rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

With the Word Bible Commentary

Leviticus 11

Defilement. Chapters 11–15 focus on the concept of “clean” and “unclean” in the areas of food (11), birth (12), disease (13–14), and normal bodily functions (15). Although the laws certainly served a practical hygienic purpose, there was also a spiritual principle involved. As God’s people, Israel had to be separated from everything that God called unclean. Other nations might be able to do those things, but the Jews could not (vv. 44–45). Defilement spreads, and one person’s carelessness could affect many people.

Discernment. If they wanted to be pleasing to God, the people had to exercise discernment (vv. 46–47); the priests were supposed to teach them God’s will (Ezek. 44:23). The dietary laws were temporary (Mark 7:14–23; Acts 10:9–18; 1 Tim. 4:1–5), but the principle is permanent: believers must have discernment and avoid what is unclean (2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 1:9–11; Heb. 5:14).

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). With the word Bible commentary (Le 11:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

With the Word Bible Commentary

Leviticus 12

Birth. There is no suggestion here that either conception or birth is an act of sin. After all, God created sex and told us to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). God reminds us that we are conceived sinners (Pss. 51:5; 58:3) and therefore need His grace.

Compassion. Is a female child twice as unclean as a male child? Of course not, for there were no degrees of uncleanness. God was giving the mother extra time to care for a daughter in a masculine society that preferred sons. He was also giving her time to recuperate before the next pregnancy. A husband to whom she bore a daughter might be anxious to try again for son.

Grace. Even the poorest could bring an acceptable sacrifice, and God would receive it (v. 8). This is the sacrifice that Joseph and Mary brought when they dedicated Jesus (Luke 2:22–24). Truly, He became poor that we might be rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). *With the word Bible commentary* (Le 12:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“Whatsoever parteth the hoof and cheweth the cud. (r.v)”

Leviticus 11:3

Written by: F B Meyer

Taken from: Our Daily Homily

The animals, in which these two characteristics met, were reckoned clean, and therefore fit for food. It is certain that the minute particularity of these words has some further reference than to the diet of Israel, important though that was, or to accentuate with every meal the necessity of their being a separate people. We, at least, may gather this lesson, that in our daily experience we must combine meditation and separation.

Meditation. — The cattle do not simply browse on the pastures, but they lie down to chew the cud. It is not enough to peruse our allotted Scripture portion; we must ruminate upon it, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and scripture with scripture. The Holy Ghost will take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, and He will bring all things to our remembrance.

Separation. — “Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God.” “The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” We have not meditated to good purpose unless we have felt its keen edge. Detachment from the world must follow on true attachment to Christ. Love to Naomi will draw Ruth from Moab across the Jordan.

The two must be combined. — The swine divideth the hoof, but cheweth not the cud, and was therefore unclean. A man may profess to love his Bible, but the supreme test is his daily separation from evil. On the other hand, our daily life ought to emanate, not from without, which is Pharisaism, but from within, where we chew the cud of holy meditation.

"Two young pigeons."

Leviticus 12:8

Written by: F B Meyer

Taken from: Our Daily Homily

These were the offerings of the poor, of those whose means did not suffice to buy a lamb. All these offerings pointed to the one great Sacrifice which was to be offered on Calvary.

The blood of Christ is within the reach of the poorest and feeblest. — None can say that it is beyond them, that they cannot afford to procure it, that they are too poor. To the poor the Gospel is preached. The Divine call is to those who have no money. Salvation is to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly. "It is nigh thee."

The faith that apprehends but a part of the Savior's work saves. — The pigeon may stand for the meager apprehension of Christ that is the portion of the faltering and timid; but it saves equally with that fuller conception of his saving work, which might be compared to the bullock of the priest. The question is not as to the quantity but the object of faith. Is it fixed on Jesus? All faith directed to Him cannot but be genuine. It may but touch his garment's hem, yet it saves.

The beneficence of God's law. — What tender touches there are through this strong ancient code! There is such a one here, framed partly in anticipation of the mother of our Lord, who gladly availed herself of its provision. What a glimpse into our Masters humiliation! He owned the cattle on a thousand hills, yet He so emptied Himself that his parents were compelled to bring the poorest offering the law allowed. He stooped that we might rise; emptied Himself that we might be full; became poor that we might be made rich; was made human that we might be made Divine.