

Have

Swine

Changed?

by

Elder Jacob O. Meyer



HAVE SWINE CHANGED?

A question such as is posed in the title of this article might appear to be absurd, and, yet, when one examines the practices of modern-day society it would certainly be valid. Today, huge quantities of pork are being consumed by the public. Advertising on radio, TV, and billboards lauds the praises of swine's flesh. Possibly you are eating bacon for breakfast, a ham sandwich for lunch, or pork chops for dinner, never thinking twice about the source of the meat on your plate.

One might also include some of the other popular meats of the day, such as shrimp, shellfish, rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, woodchucks, armadillos, and a whole host of other flesh foods that find their way into the stomachs of the human race. Few people consider the source of the things they eat and fewer still seem to care. Should one be concerned about his food? The government approves of the sale of pork for human consumption. Should we select those things which we eat with a view toward having robust health or should we merely follow the crowd and live as do our neigh-

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bors? This article will seek to delve into the eating habits of contemporary society relative to the meat that is eaten and answer the question posed by its title—"Have Swine Changed?"

A Scientific View

Although this is a religious publication, we shall first call upon modern scientific sources for facts about the food we eat. We wish to examine the reasons why Almighty Yahweh has legislated that we can consume certain animal flesh as food, while He has distinguished as unfit for human consumption other flesh. You may find these laws recorded in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.

Almighty Yahweh has legislated that we can use for human food such animals as cattle, sheep, and goats while prohibiting the slaughter for food of swine, rabbits, and camels among other creatures. Let us begin this article by recalling that these

passages of Scripture were written long before this age of scientific enlightenment in which we live today. The Bible was written before the age of microscopes and chemical analysis. Therefore, we must conclude that the facts the scientific world is about to expose for our examination will merely confirm the true inspiration of the Bible through the guidance of the Holy Spirit of Yahweh.

Almighty Yahweh has legislated that we can use cattle, sheep, and goats for human food consumption because they have a much lower incidence of communicable disease. They are ruminating animals, meaning that they chew their cud. A ruminant is an animal whose stomach comprises more than one compartment. The food that a ruminant ingests passes from one compartment to another and is thoroughly digested before it is transferred into the intestines where nutrients are absorbed into the bloodstream as nourishment. The impurities are eliminated much more readily in this process than they would be in a shorter process

such as is the case with the animals Almighty Yahweh has prohibited mankind to use for food.

Additionally, the ruminant animals are not known to be carnivorous (meat eating) and predatory (preying on other animals). Ruminants are vegetarian by nature and they consume food that is intrinsically less impure than do carnivorous or predatory creatures. Consequently, the beginning of the cycle that ends in meat production by a ruminating animal is one in which a much superior grade of food is manufactured into nourishment for humans. We must conclude that mankind of himself (and specifically Moses who transmitted this great law to Israel) could not have learned these facts by observation alone if Almighty Yahweh had not personally revealed this information to him.

Although ruminant animals themselves are not entirely free of parasitic diseases, they have a much lower incidence of yielding contaminated meat than do creatures of the carnivorous kind. We should emphasize here that only meat from obviously healthy animals should ever be eaten, and that meat should be thoroughly cooked before eating. Here is a quote from the book, **Introduction to the Old Testament**, by Roland K. Harrison. *"It should be observed in passing that the ruminants proper are not wholly free from parasites themselves, for the flesh of the ox is occasionally the intermediate host for the parasite Taenia saginata, and man the definitive host, acquires the infection through eating improperly cooked flesh containing the organism Dysticerous bovis. The resultant tapeworm is about twenty feet long and has approximately two thousand segments,"* (p. 606). Therefore, it is imperative that we select our meat carefully so that we can avoid contracting this parasite and, additionally, cook the flesh well before eating it. Diseased animals can usually be recognized and should

not be selected for food by the people of Yahweh.

What About Swine?

The swine bears only one physical characteristic unique to ruminants—that is the cloven hoof. Nevertheless, Almighty Yahweh legislates against the consumption of the swine's flesh for human food. ***"And the swine, because it has a split hoof, completely divided, but chews not the cud, it is unclean to you. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch; they are unclean to you,"*** Leviticus 11:7-8. See also Deuteronomy 14:8.

The cloven-footed swine has been vilified by the Jewish Rabbis who call the swine *klazar feisel*—lying feet. They stretch out their front feet when lying down as if to say, "Look! I'm a clean animal."

Consequently, we must believe by the recorded prohibition that Almighty Yahweh had a good reason for issuing this directive to His people Israel. He desired that Israel should be a model for the rest of the people of the world and wished them to maintain good health. The swine is the host for quite a number of severe diseases, among them the dreaded trichinosis. According to medical journals, trichinosis is familiar to every physician but its diagnosis is often missed, the reason being that symptoms frequently resemble a multitude of other diseases. *"Trichinosis is a febrile (of or characterized by fever) disease with gastrointestinal symptoms (of the stomach and intestines), followed by periorbital edema (swelling about the body), myalgia (pain in the muscles, muscular rheumatism), petechial hemorrhages (a small purplish spot occurring on the skin or in certain membranes, caused by hemorrhaging), and eosinophilia (flushed red color),"* from **Journal of American Medical Association**, May 6, 1974. This same article also states that in 1947 the Stoll Report revealed

that 20 million people in the United States were infected with *trichinella spiralis* (the technical name for the parasite causing trichinosis in man), three times as many as the rest of the world.

An article on Trichinosis, published in **Pennsylvania Farmer magazine**, September, 1974, confirmed that the disease has caused untold thousands of deaths throughout history. This article urged farmers to do all in their power to eradicate the dread disease. The article went on to say that as the incidence of hog cholera decreased, trichinosis also decreased proportionately, although there was no inference that the two diseases are related. Rather, it was shown that when hogs were fed uncooked garbage both diseases increased remarkably. Garbage-fed hogs had a ratio in both diseases of 10 times as great as hogs fed on other feed. (Here is a good example of the computer-age proverb, "garbage in, garbage out!") By eating garbage-fed hogs you are only eating garbage indirectly.

Trichinosis is caused by a parasite that invades the host animals (in this instance, the hog). It is a small spiral-shaped worm living in the muscle tissues and forms into cysts. When meat is inadequately cooked, the parasites are released by the gastric juices in the stomach of man and they invade the muscular system. Remember, the heart is the most prominent muscle in the body and it is also the most necessary for survival. If these disease organisms were to invade the heart and immobilize it through breaking down the tissues, a heart attack could occur. Today, we are plagued by an epidemic of heart disease and one wonders if some of it is caused by eating infected pork. It is a proven fact that, IN ADDITION TO THE TRICHINELLA PARASITE, hog bladder worms will invade the HEART TISSUE.

These little spiral-shaped parasites do a great deal of damage

within the body. They can move into the muscles of the arms and legs and simulate the symptoms of rheumatism or other muscle pains. Among the most prominent host animals, next to the swine, is the polar bear. Eskimos have learned to avoid eating the liver of the polar bear because they view it as being poisonous. "It caused hypervitaminosis A, characterized by headache, blurred vision, diplopia, nausea and vomiting, and even death." **JAMA**, May 6, 1974. The story is told of three Swedish polar explorers who were forced down in the Arctic regions. They died mysteriously within sight of safety. The puzzle was solved when preserved bear meat was discovered upon the bodies of the explorers. A test revealed that it was heavily infested with *Trichinella spiralis*. The explorers had survived the inhospitable Arctic climate only to die of overwhelming trichinosis.

It has been said that virtually every warm-blooded animal species has been found to be infected with trichinosis. The most common carrier of the parasitic organism, however, is the hog. Most often implicated in outbreaks of trichinosis are sausages. These tasty little morsels are usually undercooked and, should they be contaminated by *Trichinella spiralis*, they will infect the person eating them. Another prime suspect is the ham sandwich. If a large ham is prepared (as often is the case), the meat could be undercooked and becomes lethal to the one ingesting it. The story is told of Dr. Kellogg who spoke to various civic and religious groups on the subject of health. While he was speaking, a colleague would be cooking ham and the odor permeated every corner of the room with its mouth-watering aroma. After Dr. Kellogg had finished speaking, some of the meat was examined under a microscope by members of the audience who were appalled to discover writhing, living organisms in the meat. Dr. Kellogg then explained

that this was the trichinella parasite. Subsequently, few people in attendance accepted the offer of a ham sandwich!

Are All Hogs Infected?

Nevertheless, is it not true that all hogs are not infected by this dangerous organism? Is it not true that if hogs are fed strictly on a grain diet they will have no *Trichinella spiralis* organisms within their flesh? Such a supposition is false. By feeding cooked garbage or grain there are still 111,000 trichinella-infected hogs marketed annually.

How many servings can be obtained from each of these animals slaughtered? Research has shown that a possible 360 people can become infected from eating the flesh of each animal (360 average servings possible per animal), that makes 40 million servings for the number of infected hogs marketed each year! You are standing a good chance of eating some of this infected meat each time you eat pork. Estimates show that a possible 149,000 to 298,000 cases of trichinella infection occur annually in the United States. Does this reveal that pork is "pure" as the advertising slogans declare? The meat does not visually betray its virulence. There is really no guarantee that it has been cooked adequately when it is brought to the table so that **ALL** of the parasitic organisms have been killed in the flesh.

It is almost comparable to playing Russian roulette at the dinner table to eat a bite of pork. The story has been told how Virchow, a liberal leader in the Prussian legislature, antagonized the premier, Otto von Bismark, who challenged him to a duel. Virchow demanded the right to select weapons since he was the party challenged. The selection was to be two sausages, one to be eaten in its entirety by each antagonist. One sausage would contain trichinae and the other not. Virchow

gallantly offered Bismark the choice of sausages he wished to eat, but he declined and the duel was cancelled. Apparently Bismark dreaded the possibility of contracting trichinosis more than death by sword or bullet. But few people stop to think of the danger when they eat that pork chop. They seldom consider that they could be committing suicide!

During the 1930s, tests made on pork revealed that about 10 percent of the marketed hogs were infected with *Trichinella spiralis*. During the 1940s, approximately 12 percent of the hogs examined were infected. Today, even with the supposed stringent measures in effect to ensure that contaminated meat does not reach the market, tests show indicate 2.2 percent of the hogs marketed continue to be contaminated with the parasite. Various methods of eradicating the parasite have been proposed. Some suggest meat inspection of every animal slaughtered, gamma irradiation (cobalt 60 or waste nuclear fission material), which is not supposed to be a hazard to the consumer, prohibiting the feeding of all garbage, or by extended storage of frozen pork at very low temperatures. Wouldn't it be better to follow the Law of Yahweh and avoid all possibility of contamination? It isn't so difficult to stop putting poison in your mouth at the dinner table if you really wish to eradicate the disease.

Hogs Carry Other Diseases

Pork is a dangerous meat and we must recognize it as such. It is easily contaminated if storage conditions are not ideal. Here is another quote from the book **Introduction to the Old Testament** by Harrison. "Botulism and other food poisoning result from infection due to contaminated pork products, and in severe cases respiratory failure is a complication. At other times the ingestion of pork products issues an

allergic condition accompanied by malaise, some fever, and a rash. A more common infection is that of the Taenia solium (bladder worms mentioned previously), where the pig is the intermediate host and man the definitive host. The developed worm is about ten feet long with approximately one thousand segments, and is derived from the Cysticecus cellulose parasite sometimes present in raw or improperly cooked pork. A rare degeneration of this condition is seen in somatic taeniasis, when nodules form in the muscles and the brain to produce symptoms like epilepsy, or else become palpable subcutaneously. Yet another disease that can be contracted from ingesting improperly cooked pork has come to the notice of medical research in recent years. It is called "toxoplasmosis," and in its symptomatic form resembles pneumonia. While the method of transmission still is imperfectly understood, it is widespread among animals, particularly pigs and rodents. The toxoplasma organism in pork is unaffected by the periods of pork storage prescribed by occidental food laws, and seems to be able to survive the usual cooking temperatures. It occurs in a cyst-like mass called a "pseudo-cyst," the structure of which is resistant to freezing or the action of gastric juices, but it tends to be broken down when subjected to prolonged cooking at high temperatures. Evidently, undercooked pork is dangerous and overcooked pork is just as dangerous. Many people today develop pneumonia and the cause is usually attributed to a virus or cold. Here again a misdiagnosis could be possible and the real cause of the disease could be that tasty pork chop eaten recently for dinner, or the sausage eaten for breakfast."

Consequently, we learn that the hog harbors many diseases and one should be extremely careful not to eat or touch any pork. "It is not wrong to eat pork today," said a liberal Jewish rabbi appearing on a

New York radio talk show. "We now have excellent refrigeration whereas, in Bible times, there was none, hence they had to guard against easily contaminated meat." Apparently the speaker did not realize that it is not only taking a chance to eat rancid pork and thereby suffer from food poisoning, but that the various parasitic organisms within the flesh itself can cause disease and even death. Pork must be eaten soon after the animal has been slaughtered or rancidity in the meat may occur. Pork is very different from the flesh of cattle, sheep, or goats, which can be kept for a number of days if handled properly.

Rodent Flesh is Dangerous Also

Have you ever heard of *tularemia*? This is a disease of rodents that occasionally is transmitted to man. Often a contaminated rabbit will be eaten and the fever will attack with little warning. Occasionally, rabbit hunting season is delayed here in the East because of an unseasonably warm spell in the fall. Authorities do not wish to take the chance of exposing hunters to a possible tularemia epidemic.

Another disease that occasionally flares up is bubonic plague. Various rodents, squirrels, woodchucks, beside rats and the like have been found to be contaminated with the dread flea that carries the lethal black death, bubonic plague. If one merely handles a contaminated dead animal carcass, he will be bitten by the fleas and will become deathly ill. Dead carcasses of rodents should only be handled with extreme care, with a shovel or other tool that can be washed before it is stored away.

Almighty Yahweh has shown us the way to life. In His infinite wisdom and mercy He has made known the end results of disobedience to His Law. He has given mankind these directives for life in

His Word. Why should we insolently disobey Him? Please read Leviticus 11:27-43. We can avoid danger and an untimely death by obedience, just as a child learns that to touch a hot stove is dangerous. Yahweh, our Heavenly Father, has given us a paternal warning and we must heed His directive if we wish to have a long happy life. The Law of Yahweh stands scientifically proven! Why should we disobey it?

Shellfish

Several years ago a ban was placed on Chesapeake oysters for a short period of time because they were contaminated with hepatitis virus. Oysters are not the only shellfish that can cause disease and death if they are eaten. Clams, shrimp, and lobsters all have the potential for causing hepatitis and other diseases. Shellfish live in the lower parts of river channels that drain areas in which are located large cities. They thrive on garbage, sewer sludge, and other refuse discharging from cities. A recent news article revealed that scientists are now experimenting with the possibility of feeding sewer sludge directly to shellfish as one remedy for the world's declining food reserves. Can you imagine that? They are really only doing what nature has done for centuries. Yahweh has created these creatures to absorb refuse that is washed into the sea. Man has, thereupon, taken these scavengers and used them for food. Now they are being raised in a controlled environment and the product of sewer sludge is being merchandised! Shellfish (crustaceans) were never intended as food for the human body.

In addition, do you know that when you eat shellfish you are also eating their feces? Just in case you are not familiar with the word it means excrement (dung). If the creature you are eating has not eliminated just before it was cooked, you will be eating its feces and vis-

cera. Would you eat the entire animal if it were a cow, hog, or some other fish? Yet humans eat the entire creature when eating shellfish and they never blink an eye! Apparently, palatability hinges merely on the conditioning of the mind. Chinese are said to eat whole baby mice (specially prepared, of course) and imagine that they are a delicacy. Would you do the same? Nevertheless, every time you eat an oyster or clam you are doing virtually the same thing, only the creature has been changed because of the locality.

Back to Swine

Swine are very unclean animals. They wallow in the mire of swamps. A hog needs water on a warm day in order to keep cool, since it has no sweat pores as do other creatures. This is why he seeks a swampy area with water to lie down in during the hot days in summer.

A hog will eat flesh if given the opportunity to do so. He will even seek flesh food occasionally. At the turn of the century it was the custom of Midwestern hog farmers to buy old worn-out plug horses for a few dollars to feed to their hogs. The old horse was led into the hog pen, killed, and the skin removed. Then the hogs feasted on the carcass. The hogs afterward became human food. A hog will think nothing of eating its own young at birth and baby piglets must often be protected from their mother. A hog will not suffer harm from the bite of a snake because of its thick padding of fat. Even though hogs have been production cultured for generations, if they are released in a primitive area they will revert to their wild state and will resume the characteristics of the wild boar from which they are descended. When some of the avid sportsmen wished to reintroduce the wild boar into wilderness sections of our country, they merely released some of our domesticated pigs and, within a few

generations, the regression of the species was complete.

Facts such as these should make an indelible impression upon the intelligent mind. However, how few people really comprehend that when Almighty Yahweh legislated against the eating of certain foods He was not imposing a yoke of bondage, but He was giving mankind good, knowledgeable advice so that the human family would not have to suffer from some incurable disease contracted from eating contaminated food. The hog was created as a garbage disposal. One would not think of eating that which has been processed in a mechanical garbage disposal, so why should we eat that which has been processed in one that is living?

Additionally, let us consider the flesh of swine more closely. Pork is simply loaded with saturated fat and it is difficult to choose a cut that is relatively free of it. As you know, science has proven that animal fat eaten by humans will cause cholesterol deposits in the blood vessels, eventually greatly reducing the flow of blood throughout the body. There is little that can be done to cure such a condition once it has developed; as a consequence, physicians warn against eating animal fat in too great amounts. One of the first restrictions that a doctor places on the diet of an individual who is ill will be the prohibition of eating pork. A patient will meekly heed the advice of a physician, but does he humbly heed the Law of Yahweh that would have caused him to avoid the disease in the first place? If a physician diagnoses a disease and prescribes a cure, one is thought to be sensible to heed it. If one heeds Yahweh's proscription against eating pork, his acquaintances call him a religious fanatic! How strangely does the mind of mortal man function! Almighty Yahweh has shown us preventive measures we can practice to stay healthy so we will not need the services of a physician.

Why do not more people who eat pork become ill? The body has a unique way of eliminating poisons through the organs before they can harm the body too greatly. This is why cigarette smoking does not immediately kill those who indulge. If the nicotine contained in just one cigarette were injected into the bloodstream, it would kill the person immediately. A body in good condition can eliminate a great deal of poison over a long period of time but, eventually, the body mechanism will be weakened if continued poison is ingested. Organs and cells will break down and malfunction through continued misuse. When a malfunction occurs it is usually suddenly, with little time to make an adjustment to avoid the inevitable demise. Why not eat right and stay healthy? You don't have to die before your allotted time!

Eating Pork and Cancer

One of the members of the Assemblies of Yahweh passed along to us some correspondence he had with the Turkish Minister of Health and Social Assistance in 1945 relative to the incidence of cancer in that country. Since the country is predominantly Moslem and they do not eat pork, it would serve as an excellent control group to compare statistics with the United States where cancer is now at epidemic proportions and pork is generally consumed. It was found that, in the people of Turkey, cancer was diagnosed in only 0.27 percent of hospital cases from the years 1935-1944. This is remarkable, since during that time, one out of every eight people in our country died of cancer. Today, the figure is astronomical and some physicians have stated that they expect statistics to approach a 50 percent possibility of each person contracting cancer within a few years from now. Is there a link between eating scripturally unclean animals and cancer? More scientific studies should be

done along this line to gather conclusive proof, but the evidence so far would certainly support such a conclusion.

What Does the Bible Say?

It is quite clear from Yahweh's Word that He declares the flesh of swine, rodents, and shellfish to be unfit for human consumption. Yahweh's directive is clear in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. By wisdom and understanding Yahweh created this planet and the intricate life systems with which it is endowed. There was a purpose for each creature that was placed here on this earth by the Creator. The purpose for creating a certain class of animals was not to be food for humans, but to be scavengers and to keep the environment clean.

Let us remember that Almighty Yahweh gave directions for a sacrificial system to be established as a means of approaching Him until the Messiah could die for our sins. By reading that sacrificial legislation in the books of Leviticus and Numbers you will find that only ritually clean animals could be used for sacrifices. The word used for *clean* in the Hebrew is *tahor*. We read in Leviticus 20:25, ***"You shall therefore make a distinction between the clean beast and the unclean, and between the unclean fowl and the clean: and you shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by bird, or by any thing with which the ground teems, which I have separated from you as unclean."***

Certainly this instruction is plainly spoken so that even a child can understand. Almighty Yahweh knew that eating flesh obtained from animals unfit for human consumption would be detrimental to our health; therefore, He gave us these righteous instructions. This prohibition was not a yoke of bondage but it was given to us for our good.

We must never forget that science has now supported what the Bible teaches, but when these commandments were given, scientific analysis, as we know it today, was not yet available. If we love our Heavenly Father and if we wish to obey Him, we will immediately follow His instructions just as would an obedient child who has received a warning from his parent not to touch a hot stove or play in the street.

In this context it is interesting to note that the English word *pig* was probably derived from the Hebrew word *piggul*. This term means *to stink or be unclean ceremonially* (#6292 in **Strong's Concordance Hebrew Lexicon**).

A Prophecy For Our Time

The prophet Isaiah has given us several very enlightening Scriptures that deal with the subject of eating unclean meats. When we examine these Scriptures that deal with unclean meats we can readily note that they are for the last days in which we are now living. The first text is found in Isaiah 65:2-7. ***"I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, that walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens, and burning incense upon bricks; that sit among the graves, and lodge in the secret places; that eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; that say, Stand by yourself, come not near to me, for I am holier than you. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burns all the day. Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, yes, I will recompense into their bosom, your own iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together; says Yahweh, that have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon***

the hills: therefore will I first measure their work into their bosom."

How perfectly enlightening! In the last days Almighty Yahweh will judge those people who are rebelliously continuing to do as they please. Even though Yahweh spreads forth His hands to beckon His people, they still persist in disobedience. These people claim to be righteous and holy, holier than their surrounding neighbors, even though they willfully do that which Yahweh has instructed His people not to do. They are eating swine's flesh and cooking for food other abominable creatures such as He warned against in Leviticus 20:25, the verse we have previously read.

Have you noticed that characteristic about many nominal Christians? They point a finger of accusation at those who seek to keep the Law of Yahweh because Yahweh's people keep His commandments out of love for the Heavenly Father. Many of the people who claim to be religious willfully disobey the commandments of the Heavenly Father. Never forget that our Heavenly Father is displeased with such insolent conduct and will reward each person according to his works, Revelation 20:12-13.

Let us notice what we find in Isaiah 66:17-18. ***"They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves to go to the gardens, behind one in the middle, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, they shall come to an end together, says Yahweh. For I know their works and their thoughts: the time comes...."*** Do not mistake the fact that Almighty Yahweh has appointed a day when He will judge the world. That is the time when some people will receive their just reward for lawbreaking. Notice what Solomon, the Kohelleth, said in Ecclesiastes 8:11-13, and it is exactly the attitude of the lawbreaker. ***"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the***

sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and prolongs his days, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear Elohim, that fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he fears not before Elohim.

How perfectly true! Fire does not fall from heaven and consume the sinner when he sins and, therefore, he assumes that Yahweh is not watching, or that He approves of rebellious conduct. A person may eat a hundred meals of unclean meat and never be harmed because he has a body that is healthy enough to eliminate the poisons that he ingests. He does not seem to realize that one day his organs will become so overworked or diseased that they can no longer function properly and then he will suddenly become mortally ill. His everlasting spiritual life is jeopardized because he has disobeyed Almighty Yahweh and, unless he repents, he will be consigned to the lake of fire because of his rebellious attitude against a righteous Creator.

Notice also that Yahweh includes any type of abominable creature in the list of foods that are eaten by rebellious people who will be consumed in the lake of fire. This refers back again to Leviticus 11:11-12, 20-30, and 20:25. Those who eat rodents will also suffer the same terminal punishment in the lake of fire. The mouse stands for the entire rodent family. The Hebrew term here is *'akbar*, and means *to gnaw*. This includes animals such as rabbits, squirrels, woodchucks, and muskrats. Eating these animals is still fairly common in our time during hunting season.

A New Testament Warning Made Clear

Does the New Testament also command us to eat only clean meat?

Many people assume that when Yahshua the Messiah died upon the tree of Calvary all animals were cleansed for food. Some people imagine that He personally cleansed them by what He said when He walked on this earth. If this were the case, Paul must have misunderstood the message. Notice what Paul wrote some years after the Messiah's time in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18. ***"And what agreement has a temple of Yahweh with idols? For we are a temple of the living Elohim; even as Yahweh said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. Therefore Come out from among them, and be separate, says Yahweh, And TOUCH NO UNCLEAN THING; And I will receive you, And will be to you a Father; And you shall be to me sons and daughters, says Yahweh Almighty."***

"Come out from among them and be separate and touch not the unclean thing," is the warning from Yahweh. This is a composite quotation from Leviticus 26:12, 2 Samuel 7:14, and Isaiah 52:11. Notice carefully the last Scripture mentioned, Isaiah 52:11. ***"Depart, depart, go you out from there, TOUCH NO UNCLEAN THING; go out of the middle of her; CLEANSE yourselves, you that bear the vessels of Yahweh."*** Notice in the above Scriptures quoted, the word "thing" is in italics. This means that it does not appear in the original text, but that it should merely be translated simply as *unclean*.

Consequently, it is crystal clear that Paul understood that the Holy Spirit would not abide in a human Temple that made itself abominable with unclean food. The Holy Spirit of Yahweh will not live in a place that is not prepared to receive it. Paul refers directly to unclean meats in this passage of Scripture. If someone brings contamination into the Temple of Yahweh (his

body), the Holy Spirit will depart and will not return until that Temple has been cleansed. Eating unclean meat is NOT MERELY A PHYSICAL SIN, but IT IS A SPIRITUAL SIN AS WELL, A SIN THAT WILL CAUSE YOU TO LOSE YOUR EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE KINGDOM OF YAHWEH. For those who persist in disobeying, it means they will be thrown into the lake of fire to be destroyed forever because they have grieved the Holy Spirit of Yahweh.

Paul was a Pharisee who had been educated in the Law of Yahweh. He knew what the Word of Yahweh meant when it prohibited eating flesh from unclean animals. He knew what the word "unclean" meant when he used it in this context. Only about two hundred years had elapsed between the time when Antiochus Epiphanes had desecrated the Temple of Jerusalem by offering a swine on the altar on December 25, and the incident where a mother and her eight sons died because they would not eat pork. After the Judean army regained possession of the Temple, it had to be cleansed. A new altar was erected. Yahweh stated in Isaiah 66:3 that the day would come when any sin offering would be as repulsive to Him as offering swine's blood. In Judaism the swine has always been called an abomination and their blood unfit to atone for human sin. Would Yahweh change? Have swine changed? The answers to these questions should, by this time, be obvious to the sincere reader.

What Did Yahshua Mean?

In an attempt to prove that Yahshua the Messiah sanctioned the eating of pork, one is sometimes directed to Mark 7:18-19, ***"And he says to them, Are you so without understanding also? Perceive you not, that whatever from outside goes into the man, it cannot defile him; because it***

goes not into his heart, but into his belly, and goes out into the draught, carrying off all that is eaten?"

Further ammunition is given by the note in the **Companion Bible** which reads, "(this He said) making all meats clean." Did He really say this to His disciples and declare all meats fit for human consumption?

We will begin to unravel the mystery by obtaining a definition of the Greek word translated *purifying*. We can only understand the meaning of this word by taking into account the entire passage in which it occurs. Mark 7:2-3 sets the stage for this entire discussion that Yahshua had with the Pharisees and scribes. **"And had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread with DEFILED, that is, UNWASHEN, HANDS. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.)"**

How perfectly crystal clear this passage becomes when we adhere closely to the context! The subject was not the eating of unclean meats, which no one in Judaism did anyway, but it was the washing of hands before eating meals. This frequent hand washing was not the usual cleanup that is done before meals, but it referred to a ritual ceremonial washing. Yahshua defended His disciples by saying that if one eats with (ceremonially) unwashed hands any dirt that could adhere to the food would be eliminated in the natural digestive process. **He was not declaring all meats to be clean!** Such is a totally erroneous interpretation. Yahshua came to declare His Father's commandments to be even more binding to the people of the world, Isaiah 42:21 and Matthew 5:17-20.

Yahshua was pointing out the fact that the religious leaders of His day made a special issue about keeping physical cleansing traditions when their hearts were evil and wicked. Yahshua said, **"Woe to**

you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but inside they are full from extortion and excess. You blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter; that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity," Matthew 23:25-28.

The issue was not whether an unclean animal could be eaten. It would have been unthinkable for Yahshua the Messiah to propose something like that to His listeners. Yahshua was pointing to the heart of the Pharisees, while outwardly they insisted on a ritual, traditional cleansing which made them appear to be righteous to men. Ritual cleansing is only helpful as long as it changes the heart, meaning the baptism of a believer that is an outward sign of an inward cleansing.

In Mark 7:19 the **King James Version** uses the word *purging*, to translate the Greek word *katharizo*. A dictionary will confirm that the word *purging* means: 1) *to cleanse of impurities*, 2) *to cleanse of sin, guilt, etc.*, 3) *to remove by cleansing*. Medically it means *to empty the bowels or to cause a person to empty the bowels*. In the context of Yahshua's address to the Pharisees and His own disciples, it means that the bowels will eliminate any dirt that might unintentionally be eaten. One would never deliberately eat poison, which is exactly what we have proven the flesh of swine to be. The **Syriac Version** translates this last phrase, *carrying off all that is eaten*.

This explanation is exactly in harmony with what Yahshua was

trying to teach the people who heard Him. If you wish to examine a parallel Scripture to Mark 7, turn to Matthew 15:1-20. Obviously, you cannot change a man's heart by washing the outside of his body. The mere eating of clean meats will never change the heart and mind of men, only repentance and conversion will accomplish such an intrinsic change of character.

Many times religious people will place a great deal of emphasis on outward appearance, large commodious buildings for worship, inspiring instrumental and vocal music in the services, the polished preaching of a noted minister, and they will neglect to look at the hearts of the people—which really counts in the final analysis.

We must be careful to fulfill both aspects of the requirements of Yahweh, first a pure heart humbly obedient to His Will, then the desire to please Him in doing all we can to obey will automatically follow. Consequently, it is obvious that this passage of Scripture, Mark 7:19, does not support the eating of swine's flesh as it has customarily been thought to do in nominal christianity. Conversely, the context shows that a repentant believer will not wish to do anything that will be against the wishes of the Heavenly Father, such as eating unclean meat.

Acts Chapter 10

Acts chapter 10 is usually called upon to prove that the policy of the Assembly in the New Testament era was changed and the eating of unclean meat was no longer prohibited. Again, a close examination of the passage will show that Yahweh has not changed. Almighty Yahweh had accepted the repentant prayer of Cornelius. He had a vision in which he was told to send servants to the home of Simon the tanner in Joppa to invite Peter to his home. There was a

problem, however. Religious Jews (especially of the strict Pharisee party) are forbidden to fraternize with people of the nations, Gentiles. Therefore, Yahweh had to prepare Peter for the invitation of Cornelius and He did so with another vision. A sheet containing all kinds of unclean animals and creatures was lowered into the room where Peter was resting and, since the Apostle was hungry at that moment, it made a great impression on him. A voice cried out, ***“And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Master; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean,”*** Acts 10:13-14. This was done three times and the sheet was taken up again. Peter was very much puzzled concerning what this could mean, but at that moment there came a knock on the door and the servants of Cornelius extended the invitation for Peter to accompany them to the home of their master. This Peter did immediately, since he knew that it was the Will of Yahweh from the instruction of the vision.

When Peter made his report to the Apostolic Assembly in Jerusalem he gave a complete account of the incident. You will find it recorded in Acts 11. Notice carefully, Peter did not explain that when the sheet was lowered down he rose up and killed an unclean animal for food. This would have been against all of his education in True Worship. He informed the assembly that it was the Holy Spirit directing him to accept the Gentile Cornelius into the Body of the Messiah. We find Peter's own statement in Acts 10:28 showing that the Apostle knew the message transmitted by the vision was not to kill unclean animals for food. ***“And he said to them, You yourselves know how it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come to one of another nation; and yet to me has Yahweh showed that***

I should not call any man common or unclean.”

Peter did not go and begin to kill hogs for food, but he did baptize Cornelius and his family. Can you find any record that Peter killed any of those unclean animals for food? Of course not! He continued to obey the Law of Yahweh just as did the Apostolic Assembly in Jerusalem who were called Nazarenes and who carried the True Worship from Jerusalem before the destruction of the city in 70 C.E. Acts chapter 10 fails in the final analysis to support the eating of scripturally unclean meats.

What About 1 Timothy 4?

Those who wish to find justification in the Bible to eat unclean meat often turn to 1 Timothy 4. Let us quote the first five verses of this chapter so that we can acquire the contextual thought. ***“But the Spirit says expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which Yahweh created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. For every creature approved of Yahweh is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified through the word of Yahweh and prayer.”***

Notice carefully what Paul is saying. In the latter times some shall depart from the Faith (of the Messiah and what He taught), and shall give heed to seducing spirits and the doctrines of demons (or the devil). What is the devil's doctrine? Is it not rebellion against the Law of Yahweh and His way of life? You can find the answer in Matthew 4 and Luke 4 and also in Genesis chapter 3. Seducing spirits at work

in the last days are the same satanic spirits that would lead people away from obedience to the Word of Yahweh. Paul had to contend with such people in his day. ***“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of the Messiah. And no marvel; for even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works,”*** 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

Those seducing spirits are seeking to influence you to follow the crowd and heed Satan's doctrine of rebellion against the Word of the Most High Heavenly Father Yahweh. If you do, you will suffer the same destiny that is to befall Satan, Revelation 20:10. Beware that you do not allow yourself to follow error, 2 Corinthians 11:2-3. ***“For I am jealous over you with a righteous jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you a pure virgin to the Messiah. But I fear; lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward the Messiah.”***

Those seducing spirits seeking to divert you away from the worship of Yahweh will be speaking lies. They are hypocrites and their consciences will be so hardened and calloused that they will not allow the Word of Yahweh to correct them. People under the influence of these seducing spirits will be forbidding to marry (are the Assemblies of Yahweh forbidding to marry? Of course not! It is those who ordain a celibate priesthood who do so!), and commanding to abstain from meats which Yahweh has created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the Truth. Yahshua never forbade marrying or eating meat. Have the Assemblies of Yahweh forbidden the

eating of meat that Yahweh has sanctioned in His Law as being holy for food? The answer is a resounding negative! We teach that those creatures that Yahweh has made to be used for the food of the human race and has given us directives to eat them in His Word, can be eaten. We also teach that those creatures Yahweh has prohibited for human consumption cannot be eaten. We teach obedience to the commandments of Yahweh. We believe and know the Truth, the Bible and the Word, and we obey, John 17:17. We do not prohibit the eating of clean meats on certain days of the week or certain times of the year, just as Yahshua declared the seducing spirits would be doing.

For every creature approved of Yahweh is good, and nothing is to be rejected. You might have a good case for eating unclean meats if you stop in the middle of the verse, but you can see for yourself that it continues with a subordinating conjunction, **if**. The word **if** means "ON THE CONDITION THAT, IN CASE THAT." Let us now read the verse and insert the definition for the word "IF." ***For every creature approved of Yahweh is good, and nothing is to be rejected (on the condition that) it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified through the word of Yahweh and prayer.*** There are preconditions that have been placed in the Word.

Do you know the meaning of the word *sanctified*? The **Concise Edition of Webster's New World Dictionary** defines it: *to make holy, a) to make free from sin; purify, b) to set apart as holy; consecrate, c) to give sanction to; make sacred, or inviolable.* Therefore, we can readily determine that the word means *to set apart or consecrate for a sacred purpose.* How plain and clear! The Word of Yahweh, His commandments, never approved the flesh of certain creatures to be used as food for man. In fact, these unclean creatures are specifically prohibited so that there could be no misunder-

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standing on the part of those who read the Law.

Consequently, it is not simply prayer that sets apart the food we eat, but what the Word of Yahweh approves is also a condition imposed upon what we eat. Some people are under the erroneous opinion that if one prays over his food it is sanctified. This is not the case! How can we set apart for food that which Yahweh has never allowed us to eat? We might take the example of a young child who is warned not to play in poison ivy. Yahweh knew what was good for food for man and He told us in His Word. Yahweh warned us that swine, rodents, and shellfish are not to be used for food, since they are not consecrated for that purpose in His Word.

Notice also 1 Timothy 4:6. ***"If you put the brethren in mind of these things, you shall be a good minister of the Messiah Yahshua, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which you have followed."*** And beloved reader, it is my intention

to be a good minister of Yahshua Messiah, to declare unto you the whole counsel of Yahweh so that you will not have to die because I withheld truth from you. I must cry aloud and spare not as a warning from the Most High Heavenly Father Yahweh to direct you into His Way of life. It is my whole intention to declare unto you good doctrine (teaching) so that you will grow in grace and in the knowledge of Yahshua the Messiah.

The Genesis Diet

Occasionally we hear of people advocating a return to the diet set forth in Genesis. When Yahweh placed man on this earth he was given directives concerning what to eat. ***"And Elohim said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food."*** Genesis 1:29. Then we read in Genesis 9:3-4, ***"Every***

moving thing that lives shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life of it, which is the blood of it, shall you not eat.”

It is apparent that Almighty Yahweh has indeed given animal flesh to the human race for food. He is specifically speaking about animals because He directs that the flesh food should be drained of blood. But some people read this passage as though there are no restrictions placed upon what animals can be eaten. This is certainly not substantiated by the context.

Almighty Yahweh refers the reader back to when He gave the herb and fruit of the tree to man for food, Genesis 1:29. Let us never forget that there are plants which are poisonous and cannot be eaten. Yahweh informed Noah that He had given to him the flesh of animals just as He had given the green herb to the human race for food before the Deluge. Yahweh certainly had not placed Adam in the Garden of Eden without showing him the herbs that were not to be eaten because they were poisonous. Yahweh wished to protect His creation, man. He loved the creatures He had made.

Similarly, Yahweh would have informed Noah which animals were clean for food and which were unclean. In fact, He had already done so when the ark was being loaded with specimens of each species! Yahweh told Noah to take into the ark seven pairs of all clean animals and only two pairs of all animals that were not clean, Genesis 7:2. Such is the proportion of clean animals to unclean, since the unclean animals are merely to be scavengers to keep the environment clean of all organic pollution. Therefore, it becomes obvious that Yahweh did indeed restrict the use of animal flesh just as He restricted the eating of vegetation to every **GREEN HERB SEEDING SEED** (corrected translation), and to plants that are non-poisonous. Once again the Word

of Yahweh emerges as teaching a very consistent line of doctrine from Genesis to Revelation. The Word cannot be broken! See John 10:35. Why then don't more people obey its perfect instruction?

Will You Obey?

The evidence here is quite conclusive when it is weighed with an open mind. Both contemporary science and the Inspired Scriptures reinforce the fact that when Yahweh gave His commandments to mankind they were good laws. They were given for the benefit of man, to help them have a happy and fruitful life. The law was given to man to be a kind of textbook for life. **“And Yahweh commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our Elohim, FOR OUR GOOD ALWAYS, THAT HE MIGHT PRESERVE US ALIVE, as at this day,”** Deuteronomy 6:24.

The choice is yours whether you want to disobey and die, or obey and live, Deuteronomy 30:15-20. Why will you die, O House of Israel? Follow the commandments of Yahweh and live! He knows best because He is the Creator and He has loved His people enough to warn them of impending danger if they break His Law. Just like a loving human father will warn a beloved child not to play in the street or he might be killed by a speeding car, Yahweh has warned us not to eat certain things so that we will not have to die from a disease that is carried by contaminated meat.

Have Swine Changed?

Yahshua the Messiah was accosted one day by a man possessed by unclean spirits. The incident is recorded in Mark 5. Yahshua cast out the unclean demonic spirits, and as they came out of the man they requested not to be sent from the country. Let us take up the narrative with verse 11, reading down to verse 14. **“Now there was there**

on the mountain side a great herd of swine feeding. And they supplicated him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And he gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea, in number about two thousand; and they were drowned in the sea. And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city, and in the country.”

Yahshua the Messiah sent this unclean legion of spirits into unclean animals. The unclean spirits, reacting upon the unclean animals, caused confusion and the whole herd was destroyed in the sea of Galilee. One might wonder what a herd of swine was doing in the Holy Land in the time of Yahshua. Undoubtedly they were being fattened for the Roman garrisons that were stationed in the land of Palestine as an army of occupation. Pork was the favorite meat of the Roman people.

Where did the European people acquire their taste for pork? Was it not from the Roman armies who took a whole host of false religious ideas and teachings throughout the known world? On Easter Sunday it is almost compulsory to serve ham for dinner and when one is asked why they adhere to this custom, the usual response is, “We are not Jews.” History records that many people have died simply because they would not eat one bite of pork and, thus, violate the commandments of Yahweh. Today the people are still having to prove they are not Jews by breaking Yahweh's Law. It might also be noted that the Romans died quite young because they failed to keep the commandments of Yahweh. Remember the biblical definition of sin is found in 1 John 3:4. **“Everyone that commits sin also transgresses the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”**

You have heard the facts and now you must sit as judge. Evidence

from both scientific investigation and from the Inspired Scriptures agrees that we should avoid those animals that Almighty Yahweh has declared to be unclean for human consumption. Have swine changed? Of course not! Has Yahweh changed or has His Word fallen to the ground void? Yahweh does not change and neither does His Word, Malachi 3:6 and Psalm 119:89. Who changed then? OBVIOUSLY IT WAS MAN

THAT CHANGED THE LAW OF YAHWEH! Daniel 7:25, ***“And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time.”*** But you have the opportunity to change back to a life of obedience. You can repent and be

CONVERTED into a new creature, a spiritual creation that is made after the image of Messiah Yahshua, one that is always obedient to the Will of the Heavenly Father. Will you embark upon this change for the better so that you can receive the Holy Spirit in a temple cleansed and prepared to receive Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah as they make their abode with you? The choice is yours! Choose life!

FLESH FIT FOR FOOD

When the True Worshiper first learns that Almighty Yahweh has prohibited in His Word the eating of certain kinds of flesh commonly consumed, the first reaction is usually one of disbelief. Has the Almighty prohibited the use of all meat in our diets? Usually one who is unconverted will have been eating a great deal of pork and when we examine the contents of many prepared meats we find that they contain pork. Most bakery products sold in the north contain some animal fat that is usually lard.

However, Almighty Yahweh has legislated in His Word that His people can indeed eat meat and these commandments are found in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. When a person reads the long list of animals, birds, and fish that are approved for food in the Inspired Scriptures, he immediately realizes that there are many creatures whose flesh can be eaten. This article will devote itself to giving a list of those animals, birds, and fish that Almighty Yahweh has declared to be safe to eat. It will also examine some reasons for prohibitions against some of the creatures commonly eaten that are forbidden for human consumption. It will set forth reasons why animals which are satisfactory for human use are so specified by our Heavenly Father.

It should be initially established that we eat only the creatures that

Almighty Yahweh has specified in His commandments because we wish to be obedient to His Word. Yahweh has created us to be the Temple of His Holy Spirit. We should follow His directions because we wish the Holy Spirit to remain in us and therefore we cleanse His Temple in anticipation of receiving His guiding presence. We obey these commandments, not because we are legalists, but because we love Him. When we were deep in sin and spiritually dead because of unrighteousness, Yahweh looked down upon our shameful condition and He sent the Messiah to rescue us by becoming our substitute sacrifice. Subsequently, because of all He did for us, we love Him so much that we wish to do all in our power to please Him.

There is no burden in obeying Yahweh with this attitude because we desire to show our love to Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Can you see the difference between keeping the Law of Yahweh spiritually and trying to obey it only in a fleshly, physical manner? This is where the New Covenant is so much more superior to the Old Covenant. There is no legalism, there is no coercion, to keep the Law of Yahweh. It is a pleasure to do so because we realize that the Law of Yahweh reveals His Love for us. He has watched over us as a thoughtful parent would wish to protect a beloved child.

Clean Animals

If you have never had the opportunity to read a modern version that lists the animals which Yahweh has approved for human food, we shall utilize the **New English Bible** translation. We shall first quote Leviticus 11:2-3. ***“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, These are the living things which you may eat among all the beasts that are on the earth. Whatever has a split hoof completely divided, and chews the cud, among the beasts, that may you eat.”*** Why, that leaves us an excellent variety of animals to use for food, doesn't it? The believer is not so restricted in a choice of meat-producing animals that he must have a monotonous diet. These animals are listed in Deuteronomy 14:3-6. ***“You shall not eat any abominable thing. These are the beasts which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat, the hart, and the gazelle, and the roebuck, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the antelope, and the chamois. And every beast that has a split hoof divided in two, and chews the cud, among the beasts, that you may eat.”***

Consequently, we can see that Almighty Yahweh has given us examples of the four-footed animals that we may use for food. We can use beef, veal, lamb, mutton, and

venison. The animals commonly falling into this category are the bovine (cattle) family, sheep, goats, deer, buffalo, mountain goats and sheep, antelope, moose, caribou, bison, gazelle, and elk. That is quite a selection and we have not completely exhausted the list. Looking over the list of animals, it is apparent that there should be no difficulty in selecting a variety of meat that is approved by our Heavenly Father. Remember, we have a wide latitude in selecting four-footed animals. We can consume flesh from any animal that has BOTH split hooves and chews the cud.

Why has Almighty Yahweh prohibited the use of such animals as swine, camels, bear, rabbits, woodchucks, armadillos, squirrels, and horses? The reason is that they have only one digestive system which processes the food they eat. This is insufficient refinement of the food to eliminate harmful ingredients that may be ingested by the animal. Clean animals have a multi-faceted stomach that thoroughly refines anything eaten. Some of the unclean animals are predators and they eat carrion. Eating their flesh is actually very dangerous, since it is possible to die from diseases such as trichinosis that you can contract from eating their flesh.

Yahweh has loved His human creation so much that He warned them specifically **NOT** to eat animals unfit for food. He said, ***“Nevertheless these you shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that have a split hoof completely divided,”*** Deuteronomy 14:7. Yahweh has not spoken in nebulous, vague, or indecisive language. His commandment is plain and crystal clear. We obey Him because He has shown His love for us by **warning** us against eating things that would be harmful to us. Do you perceive how the Scripture in 1 John 4:19 is fulfilled in this Law? ***“We love, because he first loved us.”*** Yahweh has admonished us to avoid contact with these ani-

mals and not even to touch their dead carcasses, Deuteronomy 14:8.

Clean Fish

Let us move along and examine the marine and fresh water creatures that may be eaten. Our Heavenly Father has not specifically named any of the multitude of fish that can be eaten other than to say, ***“These you may eat of all that are in the waters: whatever has fins and scales you may eat; and whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean to you,”*** Deuteronomy 14:9-10.

Consequently, we must examine each water creature to see if it meets the two-point criteria established by Yahweh for use as human food. Fish such as bass, trout, salmon, shad, anchovies, bluegills, bluefish, bonito, carp, chubs, cod, crappies, flounder, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, muskellunge, perch, pickerel, pike, pollack, porgy, sardine, sole, sea bass, sea perch, sea trout, suckers, and tuna, all bear the biblical characteristics of clean fish. These are the most common fish that are used for food and have both fins and scales. If you have any doubts, be certain to examine the fish before you buy it or eat it for food. Usually, when you are in the seafood department of a supermarket, the counter man can tell you something about the fish if it has already been cleaned and prepared for cooking. Catfish is becoming a common sight in grocery stores, but it is not a scripturally clean fish and should be avoided! It is becoming common because it is being raised in controlled conditions for sale as food. Whitefish is shark meat. It should be avoided also. Swordfish is also a prohibited sea creature.

A word of warning to each True Worshiper: do not eat shellfish. These water creatures have been proven to be carriers of the dreaded hepatitis virus. These creatures were never created to be eaten as food. They were created by Almighty Yahweh to absorb the pollution that

might find its way into tributaries which flow into the ocean. Occasionally we hear in the news that certain shellfish, clams, oysters, mussels, and scallops have been removed from the market and declared to be contaminated with the hepatitis virus by the Federal government. Don't take a chance with **YOUR life!** Obey the commandments of Yahweh and develop a strong, healthy body.

Several other forbidden creatures that are considered delicacies are shrimp, crabs, lobsters, and frogs. The author was once fishing from a pier at an ocean inlet, cleaning the fish as they were caught and dropping the offal into the water. Later an elderly couple arrived and began to fish for crabs using bacon and chicken necks as bait. Striking up a conversation with them, it was learned that they complained about various illnesses they had, including cancer. They left the pier with a bushel of crabs which contained some of the most **lethal** flesh that could be ingested. The crabs they had caught had just feasted on fish viscera and other refuse that is generally washed into the inlet. Then people catch these creatures and eat them, in effect eating garbage second hand. Is it puzzling to you why people get sick and fail to live out their allotted three score and ten years? Do you find it baffling why so many people develop cancer and die at a young age?

Clean Fowl

Concerning fowl that have the approval of the Heavenly Father to be used as food, we find the following legislation in Deuteronomy 14:11. ***“Of all clean birds you may eat.”*** In Leviticus 11:13-19 we read a list of the birds that can be eaten. ***“And these you shall have in abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the gier-eagle, and the black vulture, and the kite, and the falcon***

after its kind, every raven after its kind, and the ostrich, and the night-hawk, and the sea-mew, and the hawk after its kind, and the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, and the horned owl, and the pelican, and the vulture, and the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe, and the bat.” Deuteronomy 14:11-18 reads similar to the previous passage from Leviticus 11.

It is obvious by scanning these lists that, once again, a pattern emerges. The forbidden birds are those which are predators and carrion eaters. They have a very poor digestive system that is not suitable for refining the food they eat to the point where it will be thoroughly cleansed for man’s use.

Some of the birds that may be eaten are the chicken, turkey, goose, duck, dove, pigeon, grouse, sage hen, and quail. These birds are not predators, although most fowl will eat carrion if given the opportunity to do so.

Occasionally we are questioned about this fact. Chickens will sometimes be given to cannibalism and some people find this obnoxious. This usually occurs when they are confined in cramped quarters, so it is possible that the reason for this aberration in behavior is to make more room for themselves. Occasionally a chicken will eat carrion if given the opportunity and this is also objectionable to some people. The only solution here would be to make any such things inaccessible to their habitat. One must realize that although the bovine (cow) family has been declared by Almighty Yahweh to be approved for human food, a calving cow will often eat her own placenta after giving birth. A goat will eat many things that are not good for food, as you must be well aware, yet Yahweh has legislated goats to be clean creatures for food. Cattle will eat chicken manure if it is force fed to them, and some steer feeders have

used this kind of obnoxious feed to save money. However, Almighty Yahweh has given His approval for the use of cattle flesh for human food. Animals should be cared for properly and given proper feed as Yahweh intended. We should do our best to discover from where the meat that we eat is obtained. This is difficult in our day and age, but it can be done. We should obtain meat from creatures that have been fed only the best possible feed so that their flesh will be just as pure as possible. It is best to seek out a supply of organically produced food.

Admittedly, there are some reservations about eating ducks and geese. The Jews have declared them to be clean because they bear the characteristics of clean fowl (to perch with three toes forward and one backward, while the predators which Yahweh has declared unclean perch with two toes forward and two backward). However, their flesh is overlaid with a generous layer of fat and this alone is reason enough for rejecting them. Consequently, every man should be convinced in his own mind before eating them.

Clean Insects

Almighty Yahweh has also ruled regarding permission to use some insects as food, if someone has this kind of inclination. “You may eat every clean insect,” Yahweh says in Deuteronomy 14:19. Leviticus 11:20-23 amplifies this commandment by specifying certain of them by name. ***“All winged creeping things that go upon all fours are an abomination to you. Yet these may you eat of all winged creeping things that go on all fours, which have legs above their feet, with which to leap upon the earth; even these of them you may eat: the locust after its kind, the bald locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. But all winged creeping things, which have four feet, are an abomination to you.”***

Therefore, some kinds of grasshoppers can be considered as clean for food. (No, chocolate-covered ants are not clean!) Since there is presently an abundance of other food available for human consumption, it would hardly be necessary for us to eat insects, but one day the information could be useful in times of tribulation or persecution when living off the land; therefore, we should acquaint ourselves with the clean and unclean creatures that Yahweh has approved for our use. Most flying insects are unclean for use, such as flies, gnats, etc. These are often disease carriers and should be avoided. However, John ate locusts (Matthew 3:4) and we may also find it necessary to do so in times of trouble.

Reptiles

Just a word about reptiles: today various kinds of reptile flesh is packaged and sold as delicacies. Almighty Yahweh has legislated against the use of such flesh and we should heed His warning. Please see Leviticus 11:29-30 for the creatures that are prohibited. Just because people of the world eat turtle soup, rattlesnake meat, alligator meat, or some other such flesh, Yahweh has not approved of their use and we heed His Word as obedient children.

Should We Eat Flesh At All?

Occasionally someone will take a strong stand against eating flesh as food. Especially in recent years, vegetarianism has become popular among the people of the world. When one views the way meat is handled in some instances, individuals have determined to avoid meat as food. However, we should pause and think for just a moment before making a rash decision to avoid eating all meat. The Israelites ate meat as we can note from many passages in the Word of Yahweh, for instance Luke 15:23. The One

called Yahweh, who became our Savior when manifested in human flesh, also ate meat. Please notice Genesis 18 and Luke 24:42-43. Yahshua the Messiah blessed the fishes on two occasions and gave them to the multitudes to eat, Matthew 14:19 and Matthew 15:36. In these last two passages we find that Yahshua commanded His disciples to give the flesh to the multitudes and they ate. In the book of Exodus ALMIGHTY YAHWEH COMMANDED ALL OF THE ISRAELITES TO EAT THE SLAIN BODY OF THE PASSOVER LAMB, Exodus 12:3-11. Had Israel disobeyed and not killed their individual lambs for each family, they would have died. Each family killed their own Passover lamb and sprinkled the blood on the doorposts of their houses. They were spared from death after they had eaten the flesh. Let us never forget that Almighty Yahweh gave the Law of clean and unclean meats. Had He desired His people to be vegetarians there would have been no need to include in His Word this thorough explanation of which creatures are clean and which are unclean, and even going so far as to give us two witnesses in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Eating flesh was a doctrine from the beginning since Yahweh killed beasts and clothed Adam and Eve in the skins, Genesis 3:21. Certainly the meat was not wasted, just as it was not wasted when Abel offered the best of his flock to Yahweh, Genesis 4:4. The sin offering was eaten at the time of sacrifice, Leviticus 10:16-20 and Leviticus 6:24. Notice Genesis 9:3-4. ***“Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life of it, which is the blood of it, shall you not eat.”*** Consequently, it is easy to observe that Yahweh has given man the right to eat flesh when he distinguished between clean and unclean creatures (as with herbs also, Genesis 1:29). These are

only a few reasons for declaring ourselves against vegetarianism because it is not a Bible-centered doctrine. Paul called vegetarianism a doctrine of demons in I Timothy 4:1-3. He meant that it is unscriptural.

Here we must come down again on the side of balance as the scriptural doctrine. While Almighty Yahweh has allowed the eating of meat and even commanded that the Passover lamb was to be eaten, it is a recognized historical fact that Israelites ate meat sparingly. Perhaps the misunderstanding that they ate great quantities of meat came from the **King James Version** which employs the term “meat” for “food.” The Israelites did eat meat and they were granted the right to kill and eat meat whenever they chose to do so, Deuteronomy 12:15-16. However, in our time, the people of our country eat entirely too much meat and this has caused them, in some instances, to develop serious health and character problems that they would otherwise not have if they were temperate in eating meat.

Paul also has made provision for accepting into fellowship any person who has extremely deep convictions against eating meat. Romans 14 shows that if a person has a problem with his health and does not wish to eat meat or if he has very deep-rooted feelings on the subject, the Assemblies of Yahweh shall receive him ***“not for decision of scruples,”*** however (Romans 14:1). If the individual espousing vegetarianism is a person of good will and accepts sound doctrine where eating flesh is concerned, he is always welcome in our fellowship. He is Yahweh’s servant and our Father in heaven will accept him. However, if that person becomes contentious about his beliefs, he has proven that he does not have the Holy Spirit of Yahweh and we should no longer tolerate him in the group. We must never forget that the Kingdom of Yahweh is **NOT eating and drink-**

ing, BUT righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, Romans 14:17.

The stand of the Assemblies of Yahweh today is to teach that eating flesh food is sound Bible doctrine, but we take a balanced view and caution each True Worshiper against eating too much meat. We urge that each member of Yahshua’s Body be very selective with their purchases to ensure that the animal has been fed with wholesome feed and that every effort has been made to eliminate the blood at the time of slaughter and before cooking. This can be done by salting the meat and then soaking it in cold water before cooking or by broiling the meat.

Meat is good for food for human-kind or Almighty Yahweh would not have given us a law specifying which flesh can be eaten. The Law of Yahweh is good, Psalm 19:7-14. Let us use it lawfully, realizing that the purpose of the Law of Clean and Unclean meats was given to us through the magnificent love of Yahweh. At creation Yahweh needed to place creatures on earth that would be scavengers, to clean up any pollution that would occur.

However, a loving Heavenly Father also warned us against eating such animals because their bodies were **NOT** created to be used for human food. Other animals were created for human consumption and they number so manifold that one has a broad selection of flesh that will appeal to his own particular taste, again revealing to us the love of Yahweh and His pre-planning at creation. Our love for His thoughtfulness should be manifold in return by keeping His commandments. They were given for our good (Deuteronomy 6:24), and they will help us develop strong, healthy bodies, with keen minds that come from taking care of ourselves. How great is Yahweh and His ways past finding out! Will you heed His voice and obey? This blessing for obedience is for **YOUR** good! □