

Is The Distinction Between Clean And Unclean Animals In Leviticus 11 Still Relevant Today?

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Dear Members of the Endtime Issues Newsletter:

It is hard to believe that this is the 100th ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER! When I posted the first newsletter in October 1998, I would have never imagined that this ministry of biblical research would continue so long and reach so far and wide around the world. It is with a deep sense of gratitude to God that I look back to His providential leading in my ministry of the spoken word and the printed page. His wisdom and grace have empowered me to meet many unexpected challenges. I look forward to continue to share the truths of His Word as they relate to our current issues.

For the sake of our recent subscribers, I might mention that this newsletter began as the outgrowth of the **SABBATH DISCUSSION list** where I posted 21 essays refuting the attacks against the Sabbath launched especially by former Adventist Bible teachers and pastors. The response to these essays surpassed my fondest expectations. In few weeks over 5,000 persons from all over the world subscribed to the list, requesting all the previous essays.

The incredible interest shown for an in-depth Biblical analysis of significant developments of our times, encouraged me to continue and expand this ministry by adopting the name **ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER**. I chose this name because it fittingly expresses my goal to provide an analysis of Endtime issues from a biblical perspective.

During the past four years I have examined a wide spectrum of issues, ranging from "Christian" rock music to Islam in prophecy. The overall responses have been very encouraging, as indicated by the increase in the number of subscribers from 5,000 to about 25,000. Much of the credit for this increase goes to readers like you who have shared these newsletters with your friends. Your continued support is great appreciated. Just let your friends know that they can receive this newsletter free of charge, simply by emailing me the request "SUBSCRIBE ME" at sbacchiocchi@qtm.net.

Some of the issues that I have addressed generated considerable controversy. I must confess that there have been moments when I was ready to quit. The "hate mail" and the senseless rumors that I had departed from the Adventist faith, tempted me to abandon any fresh biblical investigation of our traditional interpretations. Eventually, I concluded that the wisest thing for me to do, was to reconsider the objectives of this newsletter. I decided to avoid such controversial issues as the prophetic fulfillment of the Antichrist, focusing instead on practical aspects of our Adventist beliefs and practices.

There is a great work to be done in expanding the understanding and experience of our fundamental beliefs. For example, some Adventists view the Sabbath more as a divine obligation for salvation than a divine invitation to experience Christ's peace and rest in our lives. They experience the Sabbath more as a day of frustration than a time of joyful celebration of God's creative and redemptive love. This helps us to understand why in the past five years over 50,000 Adventists have given up the Sabbath, adopting in many cases the so-called "New Covenant" theology, which reduces the day to an OT

institution terminated at the Cross. Thus, there is a great need to help Adventists and non-Adventists to understand and experience more fully the blessings of the prophetic endtime truths God has called us to proclaim. It is to this ministry that I wish to commit myself more fully in the future through this newsletter, my writings, and preaching.

A REPORT ABOUT THE TRIP TO HOLLAND

From June 5 to 10, 2003, I spent five delightful days in the Netherlands, speaking at rallies in four different locations. What made this trip unusual, is the fact that the invitation was extended to me by various Sabbatarian groups, including Seventh-day Baptist and Messianic Jews. Truly I can say that the reception and response surpassed my fondest expectations. The fact that most Dutch people speak English, made the communication much easier than in other countries.

The most moving experience occurred on Friday morning June 6, 2003, when the Dutch edition of *From Sabbath to Sunday*, entitled *Van Sjabbat naar Zondag*, was formally released at a specially organized press conference. What made this event a moving experience was the testimony given by each person who played a significant part in translating, editing, and publishing the book. Surprisingly, none of the persons involved in this project are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Until recently, they all belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, which is the dominant and official state church in the Netherlands.

The translator, Mrs. Ruth van Wijk, shared the heartwarming story of her translation. Until a couple of months ago she still belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. She is a busy and attractive lady in the mid-thirties. Besides teaching Dutch three days a week, she looks after her husband and five lovely children, ranging in age from 7 to 15 years.

About four years ago she received a copy of *From Sabbath to Sunday*, which caused her to reexamine her religious convictions. She was so impressed by the validity and value of the Sabbath, that she decided to translate it into Dutch for the benefit of her immediate family members. She said: "I felt the Lord asked me to translate the book so that others might benefit from it."

She began the translation on September 1999, writing it by hand in 8 notebooks, because she did not like working on computers. During the Press Conference she handed over to me the 8 notebooks as a lasting memory of her labor of love. You can see the photo of the event at my website: www.biblicalperspectives.com. Look in the opening page for the folder entitled "Dutch Edition of *From Sabbath to Sunday*." A year later Ruth finished the translation and placed the notebooks in the hands of Anton en Clara de Rooter, a professional editor, who is very interested in the Sabbath. She was hoping that he would find time to correct the manuscript and to enter the text in the computer.

Anton discovered that it was too big of a job for him. With deep regret he gave back the notebooks to Ruth, asking her to enter the text in the computer. With the help of her 13 years old daughter, Ruth worked for another year to enter the text in the computer. When she finished the job and she handed over the digital text to Anton for the final corrections.

The next step was to find a publisher. Surprisingly, two publishers showed an interest to publish the book. They accepted the offer from a Christian publishing house called "Bread of Life Iutgeverij." The owners of the company, Mr. and Mrs. Neeteson, told us during the Press Conference that while evaluating the manuscript for possible publication, they became convicted of the validity and relevance of the Sabbath for today. They said: "We saw the hand of the Lord in this project." In spite of the market limitation of only few thousand Sabbatarians in Holland, they decided to go ahead and publish the book anyway as a venture of faith.

Mr. and Mrs. Neeteson attended the SABBATH SEMINAR together with their son. In an email message Mrs. Neeteson writes: "We have learned a lot from your presentations. . . . I am convinced that the Lord did a work through your presentations on our son who attended the meetings with us. He has difficulties to accept the Sabbath, but the Lord did speak to his heart through your PowerPoint messages."

When the Neeteson learned that I would speak in Holland at Sabbath Conferences from June 5 to 10, 2003, they worked hard to ensure that the book would be out in time for my visit. During the Press Conference Mr. Neeteson held tight to the copy of *Van Sjabbat naar Zondag* which he intended to give me. He said that he would not give me "his baby" until he had told his story of how the Lord impressed him to publish the book and accept the Sabbath.

It was indeed a moving experience for me to hear how the Lord had used the printed page to lead these lovely Christians people to translate, edit, and publish in their Dutch language *From Sabbath to Sunday*. To share this experience in a visual way with our subscribers, I have decided to post in my website: www.biblicalperspectives.com a set of six pictures featuring these lovely Christians who made this dream come true. Take a moment to look at these pictures of God's providential leading. You will find them listed in the opening page under the title "Dutch Edition of *From Sabbath to Sunday*."

Let us now pray that the Lord will use this timely book to lead many sincere Dutch-speaking people into the understanding and experience of the blessing of the Sabbath. The book could not have been published at a better time, since few months ago the Dutch Senate approved a most stringent Sunday Law. To this development I will return in a moment.

You can order copies of *Van Sjabbat Naar Zondag* directly from the publisher at the following address: Bread of Life Uitgeverij, Postbus 114, 4380 AC Vlissingen, Netherlands. The telephone is 0118-462280. The website is: www.bread-of-life.nl. If you live in the United States, you can order the book directly from us by calling (269) 471-2915. I did bring a limited supply of the Dutch edition back with me to America.

The attendance at the four different locations was very good. Some Adventists came all the way from Belgium and Germany. In fact, a couple who came from Germany, Annelise and Rudloff Miglio, are now instrumental in bringing me to Bonn, Germany, for a rally of our Adventist churches on July 4-5, 2003. Our Adventist Pastor Manfred Prieser succeeded in renting a nice hall at the local university. The name of the hall is "Haus der evangelischen Kirche." It is located in Konrad-Adenauer-Allee 37, 53113 Bonn, Germany. For further information, feel free to call Pastor Prieser at 49 - 2241 - 34 33 03 or the Miglios at 49 - 2241 - 31 28 59.

SUNDAY LAWS IN THE NETHERLANDS

During my short visit to the Netherlands I learned about the recent Sunday Law that was approved by the Dutch Senate. For the sake of accuracy, I asked Niko Koffeman, an influential Adventist who works as the major political strategist for the socialist party, to supply me with official information about the Sunday Law. Koffeman went out of his way to email me the press release in Dutch, accompanied by his English translation. The source is *Nederlands Dagblads* of December 5, 2002, which reads as follows:

“The Sunday Law in the Netherlands is a fact as the Senate has approved the proposal from the Orthodox Christian Union (4 MP's) and the Labor Party PVDA (42 MP's) in the Netherlands. The biggest newspaper *De Telegraaf* called it ‘a pact with the devil.’ The Christian Union has a complete different background and goal than the Labor Party. Together they like to make Sunday a ‘Community Day,’ but their ideas about such a day differ like day and night. The Christian Union asks for the closing of shops on Sundays, forbidding open-air concerts and circuses on Sunday and strives to make Sunday a day rest for everyone. By contrast, the PVDA allows people to do whatever they like on Sundays, like playing football, shopping, pop concerts etc.

“It's curious that a very small orthodox right wing party and a big left wing party find each other in agreement on the controversial subject of Sunday rest. For years the unions have fought for the free weekend, without work and school on Saturday and Sunday, thus granting two days off every week. This law, however, will cut the weekend by 50%, from the two days to only one day which will be Sunday, the only official day of rest. Only the liberal parties voted against this law. All the other parties from left-wing to right-wing voted in favor.

“Christian Union MP Leen van Dijke said: ‘I am very glad, but it doesn't go far enough, because Christians should not be asked about working on Sundays. That would be a misunderstanding, with this law the government is committed to defend the Sunday only as a collective day of rest. Therefore, we will take more initiatives for more Sunday Laws.’ Van Dijke is planning for a law-proposal which bans commercial trucks on Sundays and he is waiting for ‘an opportune moment’ to ask the government to reduce the number of shopping Sundays.

‘For long time the economy came in the first place, but now we have proved there are more important things than that. We can now take further steps to guarantee the Sunday rest.’

“The Chairman of the Dutch Reformed branch-organization RMU , P. Schalk, said that he is very happy with this result which represents ‘the heavy fighting over many years.’ “I hope that workers from now on will experience Sunday as a real day of rest, not just an ordinary day off.”

What has happened in Holland exemplify how political parties with different agendas can join together in pushing for Sunday Laws under the pretense of promoting the social well-being of their people. The impact of such law is reflected in a revealing incident that was reported to me by Mr. Koffeman on Sunday morning, June 8, while he was driving me to speak at a Messianic Jewish gathering in Amersfoort. He showed me a farm house that was recently sold. An Adventist wanted to buy it, but his offer was refused because he would not sign a specific condition of the sale agreement, namely, to observe Sunday as a Holy Day. I would have never imagined that such discriminatory practices would exist in a liberal country like Holland, known for its tolerance of sex and drugs.

MARY'S STARS ON THE EUROPEAN FLAG, CAR PLATES, AND EURO CURRENCY

Another revealing information Mr. Koffeman shared with me, is the subtle influence of the Vatican within the European Community. Though the Vatican as a State is not represented within the 15 nations of the European community, its unofficial delegates have influenced the promulgation of certain European laws, including the constitution. Due to his unique position and knowledge of these developments, I have asked Mr. Koffeman to prepare a report that I will gladly post in a future newsletter.

For the time being Mr. Koffeman has emailed to me a most revealing article with color pictures showing how the 12 stars in a circle used in the traditional iconography of Mary, are reproduced in the European Flag, car-plates, and Euro currency. Instead of attempting to explain with words what can be clearly seen with the pictures attached to the article, I have decided to post in my website the article entitled "MARY'S STARS ON THE EUROPEAN FLAG."

You should find this article fascinating because it shows with revealing pictures how the traditional image of Mary with the 12 stars in a circle around her head, has found its way in the European Flag, car-plates, and Euro currency. To read the article and view the pictures, visit my website: www.biblicalpherspectives.com The article is listed in the opening page.

The article explains that the designer of the European Flag, Arsene Heitz, is a devout Catholic, profoundly "devoted to Mary." He was inspired by the vision of the Woman in Revelation 12, who is "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (v. 1). This imagery is interpreted by the Catholic Church as representing the Plenitude of Powers of the "Virgin Mary."

The article explains that "perhaps without realizing it, the delegates of the European Ministers officially adopted the design proposed by Heitz on the feast of Our Lady: December 8, 1955 . . . That's a lot of coincidences, so henceforth it should not be difficult for us to discover in the folds of the Europeans' flag the smile and affection of Our Mother, the Queen of Europe, ready to lend a hand in that great challenge that St. Peter's successor has proposed to us: to re-Christianize the Old Continent with the example of our lives and the testimony of our words."

For Adventists it is informative to see how the subtle influence of the Vatican is present even in the political symbols of the European Community—a community made up of nations that are largely secular today. It is evident that European secularism is not immune from the Vatican commitment to influence the social and political structures of the international community of nations. As the article explains, Pope Pius XII placed a 20 meters high statue of Mary on Mountain Serenissima, calling it "Our Beloved Lady, Ruler of Europe."

The same Pope called Mary "Mother of all Nations." As Bishop Dr. Graber explained, the goal is for the Western world to become "IMPERIUM MARIANUM," that is, "THE EMPIRE OF MARY." The problem is that the "Empire of Mary" is the Empire controlled by the Pope who in a most subtle way is succeeding in becoming the symbol of the religious unity of mankind. Read the rest of the story in this fascinating article "MARY'S STARS ON THE EUROPEAN FLAG," which is posted in my web site: www.biblicalpherspectives.com

“IS THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLEAN AND UNCLEAN ANIMALS IN LEVITICUS 11 STILL RELEVANT TODAY?”

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Is the distinction of clean and unclean animals made in Lev 11:2-23, 41-45 (and in Deut 14:3-20)¹ still relevant today? The majority of Christians and even certain groups of Jews no longer observe these distinctions in their dietary habits. It is claimed by some that the adherence to the Biblical dietary instruction is an inconsistency on the part of observing Christians, being based—so it is alleged—on the ceremonial law, a law fulfilled in Christ and not binding for Christians.

This matter raises the essential issue whether the dietary instruction of Lev 11 (and Deut 14) is outside the framework of Old Testament ceremonial/ritual law. Are these food instructions part of universal Biblical law and “moral imperatives”² that are still valid for Bible-believing people today? These questions pose major issues that are faced as regards the distinction of clean and unclean animals and their relevance for dietary practice today.

The majority of modern commentators and exegetes interpret the clean/unclean distinction to be a ritualistic, cultic, and ceremonial in nature. That is to say, the clean and unclean animal distinction is part of the Israelite cult and belongs to the so-called ceremonial law. This interpretation has had the primary, but not exclusive, support in the Christian Church over the centuries. In the early Christian centuries the subject of clean and unclean animals was given attention within the larger context of the laws of cleanness.³ For example, the Eastern Church generally has given support to the laws of uncleanness for centuries. This historical fact reveals that it is not as easy to assign a given instruction in the Pentateuch to ceremonial law as some suggest and assume that the issue is resolved.

The frequent association of the Biblical instruction on dietary matters involves fundamental matters of Biblical interpretation. The essential issue is the question, Is the instruction of Lev 11 regarding the dietary distinction of clean and unclean animals the result of “pentateuchal food laws promulgated by the priests”⁴ and thus limited in scope to ancient Israel,⁵ its cult prescriptions, and ceremonial laws? Or, is Leviticus 11 (and Deuteronomy 14) divinely given instruction that belongs to what may be designated “universal law,” namely, law that is not restricted in time to a specific people, ancient Israel, but is universally valid for God’s people for all times and in all places. If the latter is the case, and if it can be shown to be so on Biblical grounds, then the distinction between clean and unclean animals will have continuing relevance for Bible-believers today?

Based on the remarks outlined above, it will be the purpose of this study to address the following matters: 1) Does the clean/unclean animal distinction of Lev 11 belong to the general category of clean/unclean distinction in ceremonial law? 2) What does the location of the clean/unclean animal distinction in Leviticus 11 reveal about its significance within the context of the book of Leviticus? 3) How do comparisons and contrasts of specific language used in the dietary law serve as determinative pointers to demonstrate that the clean/unclean animal distinction belongs to universal law? 4) What other internal indicators are provided by conceptual linkages between the dietary law and other parts of the Old Testament that likewise show Leviticus 11 to lie outside ceremonial/ritual law and, thus, to belong to universal law? 5) What rationale is provided in Leviticus 11 for its dietary guidelines and how does this indicate its abiding relevance for Bible-believers today?

Two Types of Clean/Unclean Distinctions

Foundational to any discussion of the clean/unclean distinction is the fact that the Old Testament refers to two clearly defined types of uncleanness. One type of uncleanness is permanent, non-ritual, non-cultic, and non-ceremonial in nature and

purpose; the other type is distinctly ritual, cultic, and ceremonial in nature and design. The first type of uncleanness, the one that is non-ceremonial, is permanent in nature and, therefore, no action, ritual, or activity can remove it. The other type of uncleanness, the one that is ceremonial in nature, is clearly ritual and ceremonial in nature and a cultic action is prescribed, because it is in need of removal. It is an acquired uncleanness that is attached to something or someone previously ritually, cultically clean. The ritual, cultic uncleanness is temporary in nature and the person or thing which has become unclean stands in need of cleansing. We will return to this vital distinction between permanent, non-cultic, non-ritual, non-ceremonial uncleanness, on the one hand, and temporary, cultic, ritual, ceremonial uncleanness, on the other hand, in a moment.⁶

It must be noted that there are parts in the book of Leviticus that are outside the framework of ritual/cultic instruction such as most of Leviticus 17, 18 and 26, 27.⁷ The book of Leviticus contains both ceremonial-ritual **and** moral-universal laws. The assumption that all material in the book of Leviticus is ceremonial in nature can hardly be sustained.

As will be further discussed below, Leviticus 11-15 is a new block of material within the book. Leviticus 11:2-23 is at the beginning of this larger block of material that deals with various clean and unclean matters of which not all are automatically ritual/cultic in nature. This cautions the careful student to be sensitive to distinctions in matters clean and unclean and calls for careful consideration.

It has been stated above at the beginning of this section that there are two kinds of clean/unclean distinctions.⁸ These distinctions are basic to any understanding of cleanness and uncleanness in the Bible.⁹

First, it has to be concluded on the basis of the entire Biblical witness that there is a general cleanness that is innate to all humans and things, and most animals. Under certain circumstances that which is inherently clean can acquire uncleanness—it can become unclean. The acquired uncleanness comes through contact with a carcass (Lev. 11:29-40; Num. 19:11-17), bodily emissions (Lev. 15:2-28) and human skin disease, usually designated leprosy (Lev. 13, 14), and so on.¹⁰ This acquired uncleanness is cultic or ceremonial in nature in the sense that it attached itself to what previously was clean, making that which was clean unclean.

The uncleanness thus acquired calls for a removal by means of some ritual prescription that has been provided. In the case of leprosy there was an elaborate cleansing ritual which included washing and/or bathing and sacrifices (Lev. 14:1-32). In the case of the acquired uncleanness which came through touching of a carcass there was washing of clothes and waiting until the evening (Lev. 11:24-28, 38, 39). The uncleanness acquired through the touching of a corpse lasted for seven days (Num. 19:11). In order to become pure from this acquired uncleanness, the defiled or unclean person needed to cleanse him/herself with the ashes from a specially prepared red heifer and with water running from a vessel ((Num. 19:1-19). Other prescriptions for removal of acquired uncleanness can be catalogued beyond the examples cited here.

The examples of acquired/attached uncleanness sufficiently demonstrate that acquired uncleanness demands some ritual or cultic action, or a combination of action(s) and time, through which uncleanness can be ceremonially removed and cleanness can be restored. This kind of acquired uncleanness is ritual and cultic in nature and is part of what is designated ceremonial law. It demands a ritual ceremony for its removal, and the divine instruction is part of the ceremonial law with its rituals of cultic purpose and design.

Let us discuss next the type of uncleanness which is not acquired, and thus non-ritualistic and non-ceremonial. This uncleanness can be said to be innate or inherent in certain animals alone.¹¹ These animals are called “unclean” in the Bible. Let us be more specific. The unclean animals of Leviticus 11:2-23 are not unclean because of an acquired/attached uncleanness. They have not become unclean from contact with anything that was unclean as is typical in acquired uncleanness. They are unclean in themselves. They are declared by God to be “unclean” (*tame*) and/or “detestable”

(*sheqets*).¹² In this sense we may speak of a designated uncleanness. The uncleanness designated by God plays a role only in regard to animals that are unacceptable for food, but in no other way.

A second observation is of equal importance. The innate, inherent, or designated uncleanness is an uncleanness which can never be removed by any ritual or cultic activity specified in ceremonial law. It is never removed by time, or a combination of cultic activity and time as in the case of the ritual/cultic uncleanness that has become attached to something that was originally clean. In other words, there is no possibility to remove innate and non-acquired uncleanness by cooking, boiling, washing, sacrifice, lapse of time, or by anything else. None of these activities, nor any combination of them, will make an unclean animal clean.

This demonstrates that the uncleanness of animals designated unclean/detestable is of a different origin and has a different purpose than cultic or ritual uncleanness. The ritual and cultic uncleanness is acquired by someone or something which was not previously unclean. Thus there is need, by means of some appropriate ritualistic/cultic action, to restore such to the former clean status. The innate or inherent uncleanness, to the contrary, is permanent and unremovable. It is not in need of a ceremonial cleansing. It is divinely designated unclean for food purposes.

A third observation is in order regarding the non-acquired uncleanness of animals in Leviticus 11. The uncleanness inherent in live animals cannot be transferred to those who come into contact with unclean animals.¹³ The non-transferability of the inherent uncleanness indicates that it is of a different nature than ceremonial, ritual, cultic uncleanness. This is different from what was true of certain other ancient cultures among Israelite neighbors.¹⁴ In Israel only the carcass of dead animals, regardless whether clean or unclean, brought about uncleanness by contact. No live animal by itself whether clean or unclean brings impurity to humans.

If the uncleanness of live animals were cultic or ritual in nature, there would be a cultic, ritual transference of uncleanness to persons or things that come into contact with such animals. But this is not the case. Therefore, there is no need for a prescription for the removal of pollution/impurity caused by live unclean animals. In short, the non-transferability of uncleanness from live unclean animals seems to reveal that the uncleanness of animals is of a different kind than ritual, ceremonial uncleanness, i.e. it is non-cultic and non-ritual.

In view of these distinctions, the following may be concluded:

- 1) There is a ritual/cultic uncleanness, one that is acquired and is in need of removal by some sort of ritual (with or without time) as is prescribed in ceremonial law.
- 2) There is to the contrary also a non-ritual, non-cultic uncleanness which is non-acquired. It is innate and inherent to those creatures that are designated unclean/detestable, and it is non-ceremonial in nature and purpose.
- 3) Inherent uncleanness cannot be removed. It is permanent. There is no action or ritual provided for its removal, because it is different in origin, nature and purpose.
- 4) The non-ritual, non-cultic uncleanness of a live animal does not pollute or cause impurity or uncleanness whether cultic or other. This indicates that it is non-cultic in nature and not part of ceremonial law.

We may suggest on the basis of this evidence that the innate, inherent, or designated uncleanness has a different origin and purpose than the acquired, ritual uncleanness. Both are radically separate from each other in origin, purpose and design. They cannot be equated. Each has its own meaning and relevance. Each one functions differently.

Non-Ceremonial Clean/Unclean Distinction of Lev 11: Its Literary Context

The specific location of the instruction of clean/unclean animals within the literary context of the book of Leviticus is of determinative importance for its meaning and purpose.

The book of Leviticus contains universally recognized major blocks of material: chapters 1-7 contain the divine instruction on sacrifice; chapters 8-10 contain instruction regarding priests; chapters 11-15 treat matters relating to clean and unclean; chapter 16 concentrates on the Day of Atonement, the day of cleansing the sanctuary; chapters 17-27 contain non-ritual and ritual laws with various exhortations.¹⁵

It is not our purpose to study the literary structure of the book of Leviticus, an undertaking much too complex and lengthy.¹⁶ Instead we limit our observations to the most immediate context of the dietary law.

Is the dietary law of Leviticus 11 placed into this broader setting of general instruction of clean and unclean in the book, because all such instruction is ritualistic/cultic, and thus ceremonial in nature? This question is valid, because it has been stated that "it is uncertain whether the terms *clean/unclean* as they are used in this chapter have a ritual or religious basis, or whether they have hygienic implications."¹⁷ What is the basis of the dietary law in Leviticus 11? Is it ritual and ceremonial or hygienic and universal?

We have seen above that there is a foundational distinction between two types of uncleanness. The literary structure of the book of Leviticus itself provides further insights regarding the non-ritualistic, non-ceremonial clean/unclean distinction of animals within the third block of materials (Lev. 11-15).

To begin with we will analyze the literary structure of Leviticus 11 itself.¹⁸ This chapter contains several major segments. The following analysis contains in square brackets the major literary structure, namely, a chiasm,¹⁹ in the well-known chiasmic A-B-A pattern:

Introduction, vs 1

[A] Creatures both Clean and Unclean, vss. 2-23

1. Land Creatures, vss. 2-8
 - a. Regulation for eating land creatures, vss. 2-3a
 - b. Regulation for inedible land creatures, vss. 4-8
2. Water Creatures, vss. 9-12
 - a. Regulation for edible water animals, v. 9
 - b. Regulation for inedible water animals, vss. 10-12
3. Air Creatures, vss. 13-23
 - a. Regulation for inedible birds, vss. 13-19
 - b. Regulation for winged insects, vss. 20-23
 - 1) Inedible winged insects, vs. 20
 - 2) Edible winged insects, vss. 21-22
 - 3) Inedible winged insects, vs. 23

[B] Acquired Uncleanness from Contact with Carcasses and its Removal, vss. 24-40

1. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Carrying Carcasses of Land Creatures and its Removal, vss. 24-28
2. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Contact with Dead Swarming Creatures and its Removal, vss. 29-38
3. Acquired Uncleanness from Touching or Carrying Carcasses of Edible Creatures and its Removal, vss. 39-40

[A'] Unclean Swarming Creatures and the Basic Rationale, vss. 41-45

1. Regulation of Inedible Swarming Creatures, vs. 41
2. Regulation of Inedible Small Land Creatures, vs. 42

3. Regulation Regarding Acquired Uncleaness from Inedible Swarming Creatures, vs. 43
4. Basic Rationale: Be Holy for I am Holy, vss. 44-45

Conclusion, vss. 46-47

1. Law of Living Creatures of Large Animals, Birds, Water Creatures and Swarming Creatures, vs. 46
2. Distinction of [A] Unclean and [B] Clean, [B'] Edible and [A'] Inedible, vs. 47

The literary structure²⁰ of Leviticus 11 reveals that aside from the outer frame made up of introduction (vs. 1) and conclusion (vss. 46-47) there are three major sections of material which seem to have the chiasmic structure of A-B-A, which is familiar from many parts of the Old Testament and ancient Near Eastern literature. We have not concerned ourselves with literary sub-patterns of each major section.

Part A in the chiasm consists of vss. 2-23. It deals with clean and unclean creatures and which of these animals are edible (vss. 2-23). As mentioned before the uncleaness of the unclean creatures is not contagious and, therefore, different in kind as compared to the uncleaness that is acquired and attaches itself to persons or things.

Part B in the chiasm is made up of vss. 24-40. This unit, which is placed between the other parts (vss. 2-23 and 41-45), treats the topic of acquired, ritual uncleaness from dead creatures—that is, animal carcasses—and how to achieve cleanness. It reveals that a clean animal killed for food does not bring about uncleaness to the person who eats it or has contact with it. It affirms, however, that a person or utensil that has come into contact with a carcass of a creature that died of natural causes, whether inherently unclean or not, becomes unclean. It prescribes regulations on how such acquired uncleaness is disposed of in the Hebrew ceremonial system.²¹

Part B seems to be placed into this middle position in the chiasm for several reasons: (1) It is located here because of the catchword principle of “carcass” (vss. 8, 11, 24, 25, etc). (2) It clarifies the distinction between non-cultic, non-ceremonial and ritual/cultic, ceremonial uncleaness. (3) It addresses the problem of the distinction between creatures which are killed for food and do not defile and creatures which die naturally and create uncleaness by contact. (4) It reveals the implications of both for holiness.

Part A' includes vss. 41-45. It is the third part of the chiasm, coming back to the matter of unclean creatures not to be eaten. There was one category of creatures which had not received attention in the previous taxonomy of creatures in vss. 2-23. The first major grouping of “creatures” (*chayyah*) of vss. 2-11 consisted of large land “animals” (*behemah*), the second one consisted of water creatures (vss. 9-12), and the third one included the winged creatures (vss. 13-23). The group that is missing in this taxonomy of creatures are the small creatures on land that crawl on the belly, small quadrupeds and many-legged creatures. This group is now dealt with in this third section.

In short, parts A and A' deal with the matter of universal law; in this case, dietary law. They handle non-acquired uncleaness. On the other hand, part B of the chiasm deals with the matter of acquired, ritual/cultic uncleaness of a ceremonial type that attaches itself to the person that handles the carcass of a creature which has died a natural death. Part B is placed here for two reasons: (1) because of the catchword principle, and (2) because of the need to define which kind of carcass defiles ritually; namely, the one that dies a natural death, not the one that is slaughtered for food. Part B in the chiasm, provides thus an important clarification with regard to every dead animal which defiles. The answer is clear: only the animal that dies a natural death defiles ceremonially.

Having considered the immediate contextual relations, we need to probe into the larger context and inquire why the author of Leviticus has put the subject of clean and unclean animals and the subject of dietary law, universal law, at this place in the book. Aside from various possible reasons, there seem to be at least (a) literary and

compositional reasons and (b) a thematic reason that seem to play a role. Let us consider these.

The literary and compositional reasons seem to be evident in two aspects. The first aspect resides in the fact that the entire third part of the book of Leviticus, namely chs 11-15, handles the subject of uncleanness/cleanness,²² including non-acquired and non-transferable as well as acquired and transferable uncleanness, in a general manner. It would, therefore, be natural to deal with both kinds of uncleanness and with cleanness from the point of view of compositional technique and subject matter.

In addition to the chiasm of A-B-A, the author employs the literary device known as the “catchword principle.” At times, Biblical writers place subjects or topics next to each other, without a particular logical or sequential order, on the basis of a “catchword” which mentions the subject or topic. This seems to be the case here as well. Notice that at the conclusion of the legislation pertaining to the sanctuary, which began as far back as Exodus 25 and is carried through Leviticus 10,²³ two key topics are mentioned. The first topic is referred to by the “catchwords” of “clean/unclean.” They appear in Leviticus 10:10 in the phrase marking the distinction “between the clean and the unclean.” This topic becomes the general theme of Leviticus 11-15. The second is the catchword “eating,” which is found no less than six times in Leviticus 10:12-19 (vss. 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19), the section just preceding Leviticus 11. The topic introduced by this “catchword” is the matter of animal food proper or improper for consumption.

The “catchwords” of “clean/unclean” and “eating” cause the topics of “clean/unclean” animals and the dietary law to be placed at this juncture at the beginning of Leviticus 11-15. If this literary device of “catchwords” that introduce topics has any merit, and it seems undeniable in this context, then it is possible to understand why a universal law can be placed in this literary context and why it should not be construed to be ceremonial in nature because of its particular placement in a given literary arrangement of the book.

The recognition of this inner literary and compositional technique seems to illuminate why something that is non-cultic and non-ceremonial in nature may precede (Lev. 11:2-23) and follow (Lev. 11:41-45) a section that is cultic and ceremonial in nature (Lev. 11:24-40). The assumption that all matters regarding clean/unclean are of necessity cultic and ceremonial simply because of their location in a book, or section of a book, or its proximity to matters cultic seems unwarranted as one understands the literary and compositional nature of the writing.

The larger thematic aspect calls now for brief attention. The theme of animals—those which are “clean” and edible and those “which are unclean in themselves”²⁴ and are designated “detestable” and inedible—is placed first in this section of Leviticus 11-15. Once this theme or subject is handled in chapter 11, the author proceeds to the subject of acquired ritual uncleanness and the cultic rituals for the removal of such acquired impurity in other parts of Leviticus 12-15.

In this manner the author moves from the general, non-cultic subject matter of innate uncleanness pertaining to creatures that are inedible, that is, from non-acquired uncleanness, to a broader cultic subject matter of acquired uncleanness which is ritual and ceremonial in nature. The compositional move from a general and brief treatment of clean/unclean animals to a specific and extended treatment of ritual, ceremonial uncleanness discloses a style of writing manifested also in other parts of the Pentateuch. Such compositional moves from the general to the specific may be seen in the creation narrative.²⁵ Genesis 1 presents the picture of creation in its general and comprehensive aspect. Genesis 2 follows with a treatment of expanded creation themes, even aspects not previously touched on, but deals more with the creation of Adam and Eve and their perfect home environment. Both have to do with the topic of creation, yet they are not identical in their thematic emphases.

We have seen how a number of considerations regarding the non-ceremonial clean/unclean distinction in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 seem to explain why this section is located where it is in the book. The regulations pertaining to the sanctuary itself that began in Exodus 25 are concluded in Leviticus 10. It is natural that the matter of cleanness and uncleanness needs now to be taken up by the Biblical writer.

It is not accidental that the new divine instructions is given to both “Moses and Aaron,” as is stated in Leviticus 11:1 (cf. Lev. 13:1; 14:33; 15:1). This wording is in contradistinction to any previous instruction in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Never before has God given any instruction to both leaders at the same time. God speaks through both leaders, addressing now Israel as a whole (Lev. 11:2). By means of the “catchwords” “clean/unclean” and “eating” these topics are taken up without putting them and everything else in Leviticus 11-15 into a cultic, sacrificial, or ritual/ceremonial context.

We now turn to a closer examination of the dietary law itself for further evidence that its instruction belongs to the category of universal law.

Specific Language in the Dietary Law

The key word in Lev 11 is “unclean”. Its Hebrew form is *tame’* and it occurs a total of 34 times in this chapter.²⁶ The antonym is “clean” (Heb. *tahô*). It is used only four times (Lev. 11:32, 36, 37, 47). A second key word in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 is the Hebrew term *sheqets*, meaning “detestable.”²⁷ The term “unclean” (*tame’*) is used in Leviticus 11 for land animals that are inedible. However, the water creatures in vss. 9-12 are *sheqets*, “detestable” (vss. 10, 11, 11, 12), and so are the winged creatures in vss. 13-23 and 41-42. The question that poses itself here is whether the designation “detestable” (*sheqets*) “appears to represent a more extreme cultic disqualification”²⁸ as compared with the designation “unclean (*tame’*).” Does the term *sheqets* indicate “simply prohibition as food”?²⁹ Different answers have been provided on these matters. It is noteworthy, however, that what is described in Leviticus 11:9-12 as “detestable” is described in the parallel passage in Deuteronomy 14:10 as “unclean.” The winged creatures of Leviticus 11:20, 23 which are described as “detestable” are described in Deuteronomy 14:19 again as “unclean.” This suggests that both terms cover nearly the same meanings, but “detestable” seems to contain broader connotations.

There may be additional reasons for the usage of this twofold terminology. David P. Wright has suggested that “the use of the root *shqts* with the animals in vv 9-23 [of Lev. 11] does not refer to their being able to pollute by touch, only to their abhorrent nature in regard to eating.”³⁰ He supports the idea that unclean/detestable animals do not create acquired uncleanness.

The usage of the Hebrew verb *sheqets* certainly indicates the serious nature of the prohibition against the eating of unclean creatures. The verbal form of the same word is used to denounce the detestable worship of graven idols (Deut. 7:25-26). This connection may indicate the gravity with which the unclean/detestable creature is to be viewed when it comes to its consumption as food. It is as if one partakes of or ingests an idol.

The summary sentence in Leviticus 20:25 declares that a person becomes “detestable” by consuming a creature that is unclean. The person that consumes an unclean animal does not become “unclean” but “detestable.” If a person would simply become “unclean,” then it may be assumed that such a person would be able to undergo a ceremonial ritual of cleansing to be freed from the acquired uncleanness. But this is not the case.³¹ To be “detestable” means to be in a state too serious to be handled by ritual, ceremonial cleansing.

Let us consider next the regulations of the “sojourner/alien” (*ger*) in Israel and how these illuminate the universal law aspect of the dietary instruction in the book of Leviticus. The law of hunting (Lev. 17:13) refers to both the Israelite and the sojourner/alien (*ger*) and applies the rule that the hunted animal which “may be eaten” needs to have its blood

poured out. This regulation for the animal which “may be eaten” from those that are hunted is not restricted to the Israelite alone but applies universally also to the “sojourner/alien” in Israel.

In Leviticus 17-18 there are a number of regulations that apply to both Israelite and non-Israelite. The phrase “any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens [*gerîm*] who sojourn among them/you” (Lev. 17:8, 10, 12, 13) brings this out. These laws pertain to the Israelite and the “alien” or “sojourner”³² and, therefore, cannot be restricted to Israelites and the cult of the Israelites. In other words, certain laws have a universal application; they are outside of the limited focus of ceremonial, ritual, cultic law. These laws are universal in nature.

The sacrificial laws of Leviticus 1-7 do not specifically mention the “alien” or “sojourner.” They do not apply universally to all non-Israelites, unless the latter become full members of the covenant community.³³ But the universal law known from Genesis 9:4, before there was an entity known as Israel, which prohibits the eating of blood continues to apply universally to the Israelite and the “alien” in Leviticus 17:10-12. The law of hunting in Leviticus 17:13 thus is seen to belong to universal law as well in both design and application, because it applies to both the Israelite and the “alien” (*ger*).

In this law the distinction is made regarding “a beast or bird which may be eaten” (vs. 13). The reason, although not explicitly stated but understood, is that they are “clean.” By implication there are other hunted animals and birds which may not be eaten, because they are unclean. The clean and unclean distinction is here applied to hunted game. This distinction applies to both the Israelite and the “alien.” Since both the Israelite and non-Israelite is in view it seems to indicate that the distinction of the animals which may be eaten and those which may not be eaten is universally valid and cannot be restricted to the Israelite or Jew alone.

The non-ceremonial and universal laws of Lev 18 apply again to both Israelite and “alien” (*ger*). These laws include laws of forbidden marriage (Lev. 18:6-17), sins of unchastity (Lev. 18:18-21), homosexuality (Lev. 18:22), and bestiality (Lev. 18:23). These universal laws have caused the pagan nations to be cast out (Lev 18:24) so that the “land has spewed out its inhabitants” (vs. 25). Verse 26 sums up, “Neither the native nor the alien who sojourns among you” shall do any of these “abominations” (*tô’ebôth*).

It is particularly noteworthy that the unclean animals are part of the “abominations” (*tô’ebôth*). The term of “abominations” (*tô’ebôth*) is used in the introductory statement (vs. 3) of the dietary law in Deuteronomy 14:3-21. The term “abomination” has various connotations, but it means essentially something that, by its nature, is defined in opposition to what is acceptable and/or permitted by God.³⁴

Here there is an additional linguistic consideration that the dietary law of clean and unclean animals is a universal, non-ceremonial law. The pagan “nations” of Canaan indulged in “abominations” (*tô’ebôth*) that were prohibited in universal laws and they suffered the consequences of such activity by wholesale judgment (Lev. 18:24-30). Just so, the eating of unclean animals is an “abominations” (Deut. 14:3 *tô’ebôth*) of another universal law that is valid for all humankind.³⁵

Conceptual Connections with Genesis

It is readily acknowledged by interpreters that the distinction between clean and unclean animals does not appear for the first time in Leviticus 11. The first distinction is found in Genesis 7:2-8, a text that is assigned by historical-critical scholars to the J stratum.³⁶ The source strata hypothesis is under such radical criticism that it can be left outside of our considerations.³⁷

It is important to recognize that the passage in Genesis 7 precedes the ones of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 in time and setting. The setting of all of Genesis 1-11 is universal in outlook.³⁸ It is pointed out that one cannot “imagine a time in which there were

ever human beings which did not understand the distinction between clean and unclean [animals].³⁹ It does not matter for our concerns whether the distinction mentioned in Genesis 7 “between the clean and the unclean animals . . . is a distinction based on their utility for humans, not on later legal ideas”,⁴⁰ or whether it was known for the sake of sacrificial purposes,⁴¹ or for something else. In any case, Noah sacrificed after the flood from “every clean animal and of every clean bird” (Gen. 8:20).

The distinction of clean/unclean is important in this early time and universal context. Not only were clean animals and birds used for sacrifice, but after the Flood, humans were permitted to eat animals (Gen. 9:3-5). The implication is that they were permitted to eat only clean animals. In this pre-Israelite passage in Genesis 9 there is also the statement that man shall not eat flesh with its blood in it (vs. 4). This is universal law and binding for all Christians, as the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15:20 indicates.

Essential to our discussion is the fact that the distinction between clean and unclean animals is known before the Israelites came into existence. Indeed, it is a distinction known in the antediluvian world, taking us back into pre-Flood times, in a passage and context that has a universal emphasis. It can, therefore, be maintained that the distinction of clean/unclean animals is applicable to humankind in general. It is unlimited in scope and design and outside the ceremonial legislation provided to ancient Israel in later times.

These facts affirm that the distinction of clean and unclean animals is not the product of Hebrew cultic legislation, but precedes it into antediluvian times. It has been stated that “the distinction between clean and unclean animals did not originate with Moses, but was confirmed by him as a long established custom, . . .”⁴² Certainly the clean/unclean animal distinction does not have its beginning in the Mosaic legislation.⁴³ The clean/unclean animal distinction is joined to other fundamental institutions that antedate Israelite times and go back to the history of beginnings in the antediluvian period. The clean/unclean animal distinction is joined to such eternal verities as marriage (Gen 2:18-15), the Sabbath (Gen 2:1-3), and the like.⁴⁴

There is a second major conceptual connection between the dietary law in Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 and the history of beginnings in Genesis 1-11. More precisely, the classification or taxonomy of animals in Leviticus 11 appears to correspond with the classification, taxonomy, and the sequence of animals in the creation narrative in Genesis 1:20-25. Genesis 1:20-25 has the sequence in the order of creation of the animal world from fish (vs. 20a), followed by birds (vs. 20b), to land animals (vss. 24, 25), that is to say, a sequence of creatures in the water, air, and on the land. Leviticus 11:9-31 has a similar sequence of water animals (vss. 9-12), flying things (vss. 13-23) and land animals (vss. 24-31).⁴⁵ Of course, verses 2-8 precedes in the presentation with a description of large land animals. Thus the full sequence does not follow entirely what we find in Genesis 1. Nevertheless, there is still a sequential connection that can be noted. It may be suggested that here again there is a pointer to a larger world of thought than is allowed when Leviticus 11 is restricted to merely ritual/cultic connections.

It has also been inferred that the usage of two different designations of animals in Leviticus 11:2 reflects the creation account of Genesis 1.⁴⁶ The wording of Leviticus 11:2 indicates that there are “creatures” (*chayyôth*)⁴⁷, which in this context mean generically “living creatures”⁴⁸ that may be eaten from all the land “animals” (*behemôth*), a group subsumed under the general classification of *chayyôth*, “living things” or “living creatures.”⁴⁹ This distinction between the generic group of *chayyah*, “living creature,” and the specific group of *behemah*, “land animal,” corresponds with the classification of Genesis 1:24. In this text the term *chayyah* is also generic and the term *behemah* is again a specific group of “land animals.”⁵⁰ Evidently there exists a close connection between the creation narrative’s classification and the taxonomy used in Leviticus 11.

The dependence of Leviticus 11 on Genesis 1 seems to be confirmed,⁵¹ placing the two passages into the common conceptual framework of a universal outlook. Based

on these connections it is suggested that there seems to be an attempt “to link them [the dietary laws] to the creation account.”⁵²

The Rationale for the Dietary Law

Time and again the question has been raised, and justifiably so, why unclean animals are proscribed for human consumption and a source of food? There are more than a dozen or so suggestions⁵³ which will not be reviewed here in detail. Not all can have our attention within the restrictions pertaining to this study. Still we will touch on several of the more significant ones.

One explanation, put forth many years ago, holds that the animals were perceived as unclean because of their association with pagan religions.⁵⁴ This religio-cultic explanation has in its favor that there are a number of unclean animals (particularly the pig,⁵⁵ but also the dog, etc.) that were used in Egyptian, Canaanite, and other pagan cults.⁵⁶ In its disfavor is the fact that not all unclean animals are used in pagan cults⁵⁷ and also the fact that some clean animals (such as bull, cow, ram, goat, some clean fish) were used in pagan cults.⁵⁸ There is also no indication anywhere that pagan cults play a role in these proscriptions.

W. Robertson Smith has taken up an earlier idea⁵⁹ and developed the concept that the clean/unclean distinction of animals is the remnant of totemism.⁶⁰ He has been followed particularly by Bernhard Stade.⁶¹ Totemism is the belief in the kinship of man with animals and plants. “The sacred character of the totem excludes the species as common food, but the totem animal is the victim of the ritual meal of the clan.”⁶² The totemism interpretation has been given up, because of its inadequacy⁶³ and the lack for evidence of totemism in the Old Testament.⁶⁴

Using the approach of phenomenology of religion W. Kornfeld more recently suggested that the idea of unclean animals was developed from known carnivores and creatures that ate carrion, and animals that live in the desert or waste places and ruins aside from chthonic⁶⁵ animals. In other words the unclean animals were life-threatening. The primary reason why they have been disqualified is to be discovered in their “life threatening practices and spheres of existence.”⁶⁶ It is difficult to find enough support for these claims on the basis of the Old Testament itself. “This theory,” it has been observed, “cannot explain the exclusion of such domesticated, herbivorous animals as the camel, donkey, rabbit, or horse.”⁶⁷ This unsatisfactory hypothesis has not attracted much following.

A social-anthropological approach has been put forth and has been adopted by a growing number of scholars in recent times. It deserves more detailed attention. Mary Douglas, a social anthropologist utilizing the Durkheimian hypothesis that animal classification is reflective of societal values, has pointed out that “any interpretation will fail which takes the Do-nots of the Old Testament in piecemeal fashion.”⁶⁸ She comes to the Biblical data on animals via the Lele tribe of Africa which has complex dietary regulations.

Douglas suggests that the species declared unclean in Leviticus 11 are those “which are imperfect in their class, or whose class itself confounds the general scheme of the world.”⁶⁹ This she links to the concept of holiness which involves “keeping distinct the categories of creation.”⁷⁰ She asserts, “To grasp this scheme we need to go back to Genesis and the creation. Here a three-fold classification unfolds, divided between the earth, the waters and the firmament. Leviticus takes up this scheme and allots to each element its proper kind of animal life.”⁷¹

In Douglas’s view land animals have four legs and hoofs to walk on. She, however, overlooks the datum that only those four-footers who have split hoofs are clean. In the air birds need two wings to fly and two legs to walk. In the water fish have fins and scales to swim with. Once more Douglas overlooks the fact that scales are not used for swimming. In her view any creatures that cross these boundaries are anomalies

and declared unclean. Animals that do not fit the proper order are unfit, or “dirt,” in her view. Her concept of “dirt” has been severely criticized.⁷²

In summarizing her position we cite H. Eilberg-Schwartz, “Douglas argues that the creation myth (Gen. 1:1-2:4) provides a conceptual model for understanding the universe. In Douglas’s view, this account of creation provides a cognitive scheme in which reality is demarcated and defined. Anything that violates the classifications that are established in this story is treated as a flaw in creation and hence is considered abnormal and unclean.”⁷³ The animals that conform to the classification of creation are considered clean and holy.

Douglas’s hypothesis has been adopted by a number of scholars,⁷⁴ but it has also received incisive criticisms from others. Robert Alter has noted that Douglas’s (and J. Soler’s) suggestion does not explain why the chicken and the duck are considered clean since they are anomalous and do not fit the established classification.⁷⁵ The chicken has wings but does not fly and the duck has wings but lives largely on the water. This objection is considered to be “weighty,”⁷⁶ because it shows that the classification method employed does not consistently explain the variety of animals designated as unclean. Jacob Milgrom has to make major adjustments in Douglas’s hypothesis to make it come close to the text of Leviticus 11 to make her anomaly view more valid.⁷⁷

While there seems to be a conceptual linkage between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1, as we have attempted to show above, it does not follow that the creation narrative gave rise to the dietary laws the way Douglas suggests. Leviticus 11 has a sequence of land animals—water creatures—birds—winged insects—whereas Genesis 1 has the sequence of water creatures—birds—land animals. The classifications of Genesis 1 find only partial duplication in Leviticus 11, and at that in a partially differing order. Furthermore, not all clean animals follow the supposed creation classification. On the other hand, Douglas’s attempt to seek a comprehensive answer and not a piecemeal one is on the right track. On the whole her theory remains problematical and is severely criticized for the lack of validity of her “original criterion (proper means of locomotion), but also the value of the general statement of her thesis that the notion of impurity underlying the biblical dietary laws is based on the anomaly of the prohibited animals relative to their respective classifications (e.g. cattle, fish, fowl).”⁷⁸ Douglas’s theory does not stand, if her own criteria are applied.

One of the oldest explanations is the hygiene/health one. This is “probably the most popular explanation of the food laws The unclean animals were recognized by the ancients as a danger to health, and were therefore pronounced unclean,” writes Gordon Wenham.⁷⁹ Roland E. Clements says, “What we have here is a simple and comprehensive guidebook to food and personal hygiene.”⁸⁰ The hygienic position is supported also by others, including William F. Albright.⁸¹ Roland K. Harrison is a modern commentator who makes a strong case for the hygiene/health rationale for the dietary laws. He lists various parasitic organisms and worms that can be contracted from unclean animals including fish.⁸² Much more could be said on the subject of health as regards unclean and clean animals. Its validity cannot be easily overturned.

There are various reactions to the hygiene/health rationale of the dietary laws. Among the reactions are several that may be briefly considered. One objection is that “other peoples have held or hold certain animals to be unclean, yet their demarcations seldom coincide with the biblical.”⁸³ The reason(s) why other people hold some animals to be unclean may have a variety of backgrounds and purposes, some of which are religious, cultic, divinatory, and so on.⁸⁴ Accordingly the demarcations do not need to align themselves since the backgrounds and purposes vary.

Another objection suggests that “some of the clean animals are more questionable on hygienic grounds than some of the unclean animals.”⁸⁵ This assertion remains unproven. Supposedly “it is far from clear that all unclean animals . . . are harmful to health.”⁸⁶ We do not know as yet everything regarding the harm in short or long range terms of the consumption of the meat of unclean animals. Is it necessary to know all ramifications of the dietary instruction for it to be valid?

A third caveat claims that “the OT gives no hint that it regards these foods as a danger to health” and the dietary law lacks motive clauses.⁸⁷ As regards motive clauses in the Hebrew sentence structure, it is to be noticed that they lack in most of the laws and instructions in the book of Leviticus. But nowhere is there an indication that the lack of a motive clause relegates a ceremonial or a universal law invalid. Thus the patterns of the book applies to Leviticus 11. Whether the Old Testament gives no hint regarding the health issue depends on how one understands the call to “be holy” (Lev. 11:44-45). Holiness involves wholeness in all spheres, including the physical. Health is included in holiness.

It is objected that if hygiene was a motive, why are poisonous plants not “classed as unclean?”⁸⁸ The regulation for plants fit for eating is already given in Genesis 1:29-30, a universal instruction that still holds despite the permission to eat the meat of certain animals after the Flood. Why should it be repeated here where the question of animals is under discussion and not the question of plant food?

Gordon J. Wenham raises the issue, “If health were the reason for declaring certain foods unclean in the first place, why did our Lord pronounce them clean in his day?”⁸⁹ Or stated differently, “why did the early church allow their [OT regulations] abolition in the first century AD?”⁹⁰ These questions assume that the dietary laws were abolished by Christ and the apostles.

This issue deserves a full scale investigation which cannot be provided here. We are restricted to but a few essential observations. There is but one passage in the NT where a saying is attributed to Jesus that calls for some attention here. A brief sentence in Mark 7:19 is put in a parenthesis in English translations and often rendered, “(Thus He declared all foods clean)” (NASB). A discussion is going on whether this as a genuine statement from Jesus.⁹¹

Both the translation and the meaning of this clause is highly disputed as a cursory look at the commentaries indicates. The words “thus He” in italics in the NASB indicate that the Greek participial construction is ambiguous, having no direct syntactical connection. This is a serious problem in itself. The translation provided in the NASB makes the masculine participle (*katharizôn*, lit. “cleansing) dependent on “he says” (*légei*) in vs. 18. Is this justifiable?

A number of competent commentators see the syntactical connection differently, namely as an anacoluthon in which the obvious conclusion is drawn that the normal digestive process “cleanses all food.”⁹² Still different is Matthew Black who takes the term “food” (*brómata*) as singular and the preceding participle “cleansing” (*katharizôn*) as a passive. He renders the sentence, “for it enters not into his heart but into his belly, *all the food being cast out and purged away.*”⁹³ In this case Jesus said nothing of the kind the NASB and other similar translations read. By now it is obvious that these divergences of opinion show that this little sentence is not as easily understood as it appears. If some of the suggestions referred to are correct, then the sentence would have nothing to do with Jesus declaring all foods clean. Caution is in order with this sentence, its syntactical relationship and its meaning.

The second observation pertains to the variant readings of Mark 7:19 in Greek manuscripts. A footnote in the Jerusalem Bible on this problematical phrase in verse 19 states that “the clause (possibly a gloss) is obscure and variously interpreted.”⁹⁴ Aside from the reasons already stated above, there are four different forms of the Greek word “to cleanse” in a great variety of Greek manuscripts, each one leading to a different meaning of the difficult clause.⁹⁵ This is the reason for the KJV’s translation, “purging all meats” made in 1611 of this disputed phrase. This rendering is supported by the Textus Receptus reading of the neuter participle *katharizon*, “cleansing,” which is understood to modify the phrase “everything that goes in from without” (*pan to exothen eisporuomenon*) of vs. 18.⁹⁶ While more and more recent translations render this problematical clause as “Thus he declared all foods clean”,⁹⁷ there is by no means any

certainty that this is what this clause actually means. Literally the Greek words “*katharizôn panta ta bromata*” mean “cleansing all foods.” In view of these major textual problems, it would be unwise for a serious student of the Bible to conclude that it is certain that (1) Jesus is speaking and (2) that the phrase means for sure that he declared all foods clean and thus edible.

Our third observation pertains to the question of what Jesus would have meant with this sentence, if the translation of the NASB (and others) were to be followed, and if he actually said something like this. Here a brief comment on the word “foods” (*brómata*) may be helpful. Mark 7:19 appears in the larger context of the controversy of Jesus regarding Rabbinic food regulations (Mark 7:3-5). Within this context the idea of unclean animals would not even enter the idea of “foods,” because unclean animals were not considered to belong to “foods” for a faithful Jew in Jesus’ day.

A fourth consideration is in order. Does Mark 7:1-23, of which vs. 19 with the alleged Jesus’ saying is a part, deal with the unclean/clean distinction of Leviticus 11 (and Deut 14) or with the clean/unclean distinction of ritual washings of the rabbis, namely with Jewish tradition? If the latter is the case, and the larger context points in this direction, then the alleged Jesus’ saying has nothing to do with the dietary law of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.

What is Jesus arguing against within the larger context of Mark 7, the dietary law of the Pentateuch given by God or the oral law (**halacha**) added to God’s laws by the rabbis? It is important to consider the entire passage of Mark 7:1-23 and to avoid working in atomistic form-critical separation of small units. Mark 7:2-5 clearly indicates that the issue is the “traditions of the elders” (vs. 3), and that the disciples ate foods without observing the proper regulations of the rabbis to wash hands according to a particular human tradition, making the clean food that they ate unclean because they did not wash hands in a prescribed way.

In verses 7-10 Jesus upholds the Law of God and contrasts this with the “tradition of men” (vs. 8), indicating that Jesus maintains God’s laws, even introducing Moses in a positive sense in verses 7 and 10. Jesus is thus not anti-divine law but anti-human tradition. Joachim Jeremias points out that the key saying of Jesus in verse 15 “does not mean an abrogation of all regulations of the Torah concerning clean and unclean food (i.e. Lev 11; Dt 14:3-21: clean and unclean animals)”⁹⁸ but that Jesus denies the “Rabbinic purity *halacha*.”⁹⁹ C. E. B. Cranfield also argues that in the context of Mark 7:1-13 Jesus “is taking the side of the written Law against the oral law [*halacha*].”¹⁰⁰ These scholars maintain that Mark 7:1-23 should not be separated, that the entire passage concluding in verse 23 is the proper context of verse 19. This position seems contextually valid. William H. Lane comments regarding Mark 7:19, “Jesus has no intention of denying that the purity laws occupy a significant place in the Mosaic code (Lev. 11:1-47; Deut. 14:1-20) or of detracting from the dignity of men who suffered death rather than violate the Law of God governing unclean foods (I Macc. 1:62f.). Rather he presses home the recognition that the ultimate seat of purity or defilement before God is the heart.”¹⁰¹

These interpreters demonstrate, on the basis of the context, that is inappropriate to conclude that Jesus did away with the distinction of clean/unclean in the dietary laws of the Torah. This view is supported on the basis of the parallel passage of Matthew 15:1-20 in which the saying of Mark 7:19 is missing. The debate in Mark is against the “tradition of men,” the Rabbinic purity laws, that prescribed how hands had to be washed before eating so that one would not ritually defile oneself in eating. If the problematical clause in verse 19 were to be rendered in the way of Jesus making a statement whereby he declared all “foods” ritually clean, then he would contextually simply declare that “foods” eaten with ritually “unclean hands” (vs. 5) according to Rabbinic tradition is not binding upon Jesus’ followers. Jesus did not remove the distinction of non-ritual clean/unclean animals of Leviticus 11 (Deut. 14) as the context makes clear and as the word “foods” (*brómata*) in Greek indicates. The latter term is never used to distinguish food derived from clean/unclean animals as compared to other kinds of food.¹⁰²

We are unable to discuss in detail other New Testament passages that deal with the issue of food or food offered to idols. Acts 10-11, however, is frequently invoked as indicating that the distinction of unclean/clean animals is removed for the Christian. It has been shown that the distinction of “common” (*koinós/koinóo*) and “unclean” (*akáthartos*) is of vital importance and that the traditions of Judaism, not of the Old Testament, made the “clean” into something “common” or “defiled” through contact with the “unclean.” Thus the “clean” creatures were now made “common” by contact in the sheet with the unclean creatures.

Peter refuses to comply with the command, “Sacrifice and eat” (Acts 10:13). “By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common [*koinós*] and unclean [*akáthartos*]” (vs. 14). Evidently Peter did not understand the saying of Jesus in Mark 7:19 in the sense of removing the distinction of clean and unclean animals of the Law. The “unclean” creatures were the ones so declared in the dietary laws of the Pentateuch. The “common” creatures were the ones designated “clean” in the dietary laws. However, in Jewish tradition they had become “common” by contact with the “unclean” ones. The Rabbinic declaration that the “clean” would become “common” by contact with the “unclean” was in direct opposition to the Old Testament where the “unclean” animals made nothing “common” or “unclean” by contact.

Therefore, the declaration, “What God has cleansed [*katharízo*], you must not call common [*koinós*]” (vs. 15, RSV), indicates that “you,” Peter, as a man, must not designate something “common” that God has declared to be otherwise. What God has declared clean,¹⁰³ must not be made into something that is “common” by man.

The whole issue in Acts 10-11 is not the matter of clean/unclean food but the problem of the association with Gentiles. They were not to be considered “unclean” or “common” and thus unworthy of being a member of the worshiping community of God. This unwarranted Rabbinic distinction as applied to human association was shown to be against God’s declaration and Peter and other Christians were not bound by such Jewish traditions of associations between Jews and Gentiles.¹⁰⁴ Here too the issue is not one of foods to be eaten, but it is a case of social association and fellowship between Jew and Gentile.

Now we need to return to the motive provided and the explicit rationale mentioned in Leviticus 11:44-45 for the dietary laws, namely the call “to be holy; for I am holy” (vs. 44). There is also the reminder, “For I am the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy” (vs. 45). These verses provide as it were their own rationale by linking the matter of clean/unclean animals to the two great themes of holiness for God’s people and the redemption theme from Egyptian slavery. Deuteronomy 14:2 is the introduction to the dietary law, “For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth” (RSV). W. Gispén notes that “holiness is the supreme motive of these [food] laws” and that the “only satisfying explanation of the distinction between clean and unclean is this that the Holy One by these regulations shows the necessity that His people is a holy people, a nation that is not as other nations.”¹⁰⁵

Holiness means both separation from the unholy and separation unto God. It may be noted as well that to be holy means to share in the uniqueness of God who is also holy. In following the instruction of the dietary law the believer engages in an *imitatio dei*,¹⁰⁶ that is, the believer follows the example of God Himself.

The *textus classicus* of the “holy people” idea is Exod 19:3-6. Israel had been redeemed from Egyptian slavery and is at the foot of Mt. Sinai about to enter into the covenant relationship with God. At this crucial juncture Israel’s Redeemer declares, “You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (vs. 6, RSV). The connection between the “holy nation” in Exodus 19:6 and the imperative “you shall be holy” as a people by not eating from the unclean animals, as specified in Leviticus 11:44-45, is particularly striking.

In Leviticus 11:44-45 we have the very first mention again of the theme of a holy people since it was first mentioned in Exodus 19:6. Among the various reasons for Israel to be a “holy” (*qadôsh*) people and to be separated or “consecrated” (*qadash*, Piel in Lev. 11:44) unto God, the dietary instruction of refraining to eat from the meat of unclean animals has special prominence. To be a “holy nation” means among other things also to follow the divine dietary instruction.

It is well known that the terminology in Hebrew for such interrelated ideas as “holy” (*qadôsh*), “holiness” (*qodesh*) and “sanctify” (*qadash*, Piel) derive of course from the same Hebrew root (*qdsh*) and indicate the larger concept of holiness, wholeness, wellness, and the like. It is instructive that in the related Semitic language of Akkadian the verb *qadashu(m)* has the double meaning of “holy” and “to be clean” which is also manifested in other terms deriving from the same root word.¹⁰⁷ There is thus beyond the writings of Moses a larger interrelationship between holy and clean.

The theme of the “holy people” is prominent in the book of Deuteronomy (7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9). In the book of Isaiah the future remnant are called “holy” (4:2, 3) for the first time.¹⁰⁸ Isaiah shows that while the Israel of old is to be destroyed, there will be true and “holy” remnant of faith that will carry on the Lord’s purposes (Isa. 6:13). The God of the faithful and “holy” ones is designated “the Holy One of Israel.” In the book of Daniel there are those who withstand all the pressures of the anti-God powers, even persecution in the end time, and they are called “the holy ones [‘saints’] of the Most High” (7:21, 25, NRSV). At the end of history these “holy ones” of God, these saintly believers, will receive from the Son of Man the everlasting kingdom (Dan. 7:18, 22).

The New Testament uses the same terminology to describe Christian believers. Indeed the New Testament applies and identifies the Christian believers as “saints/holy ones.” Exodus 19:6 is applied to the church as the community of “holy ones,” that is, “saints.” Peter writes, “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation [*ethnos hagion*], a people for God’s own possession” (1 Pet. 2:9, NASB). Peter shows that the expression “a holy nation” of Exodus 19:6 is no longer literal, ethnic Israel, but the new community of believers, the church.¹⁰⁹

It follows that the new community of true believers, this “holy nation” of God, will adhere to the holiness lifestyle designed for them by God. For this “holy” remnant such a lifestyle of holiness includes the universal dietary law, whereby their separateness from what is harmful and destructive and their wholeness in God is manifested.

In the Christian era, the community of true believers is the Israel of God that is to be “holy,” engaging in the *imitatio dei*. In this identification we see why in the Old Testament the dietary law is given to Israel and to all who are to be holy. Today the Israel of God of the new covenant is the community of the faithful remnant which is also called to holiness and which is in continuity with all those who have followed the way of holiness as their way of life.

Acts 15:20 affirms that the new believers continue to “abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood” (NASB). Certainly these four binding prohibitions of the so-called Apostolic Decree reflect the universal laws of Leviticus 17-18¹¹⁰ and Genesis 9. Implicit in this fourfold sequence, which is conceptually, terminologically, and in its subject matter linked to Leviticus 11:2-23, 40-45; 20:25-26 and Deuteronomy 14:3-20 as was shown above, is also the clean/unclean distinction implicitly referred to in Leviticus 17:13 as regards hunted beast and bird which may be eaten.

New Testament believers form the “holy nation” promised by God. It is a holy people that continues “to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, . . .” (Lev. 20:25) and thus, in this area as in others, is asked “to be holy . . . in all your conduct” (1 Pet. 1:15, RSV).¹¹¹

This concise conspectus of interrelated ideas of cleanness in food and holiness in lifestyle in all its ramifications only hints at the extensive Biblical picture of a “holy people,” fully

dedicated to their God and to Christ their Lord. It provides but a hint of the unmatched potential of this faithful, true, and "holy" remnant that lives now, in the end time.

Conclusion

The results of our study indicate the following:

1. The dietary law of Leviticus 11:2-23, 41-45 (Deut. 14:3-20) is part of the universal law provided in the Old Testament which is independent of the ceremonial/ritual law.
2. Its placement in Leviticus 11 is due to “catchwords” and larger literary and compositional patterns and thematic concerns within its immediate and larger pentateuchal contexts. (
3. Its linkages with the creation account and the flood narrative within the context of the universalism of Genesis 1-11 is assured on terminological and thematic grounds.
4. The special language of “clean/unclean,” “detestable,” and “abomination” and their relationships join it to universally valid divine law.
5. The contextually explicit rationale of “holiness” and “redemption” joins the dietary law to the “holy nation” theme upheld in the New Testament for all true believers who are the spiritual “holy nation” that is separated unto God to be “holy . . . in all your conduct” (1 Pet. 1:15). Holiness manifests itself in holy conduct. It reveals itself among many things in a continuous distinction of what God has designated to be proper for human consumption. In consuming food appropriate for God’s “holy” people, the church constantly manifests its Lord in an ongoing *imitatio dei*. In the Bible God is the ground for ethics, and God’s true people live a life of godliness, a life of holiness, because they are a “holy people” (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9).

Endnotes

1. There are those who suggest that Lev 11:2-23 is dependent on Deut 14:4-20 such as Rolf Rendtorff, *Die Gesetze in der Priesterschrift, eine gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), p. 45 n. 34; Klaus Koch, *Die Priesterschrift von Exodus 25 bis Leviticus 16, eine Überlieferungsgeschichtliche und literarkritische Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 76 n. 6, suggests that the appearance of *mîn* in Deut 14:13-18 is due to later assimilation to Lev 11:14-19. Martin Noth, *Das dritte Buch Mose* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), p. 76, suggests that Deut 14 is earlier than Lev 11, but that a part of Deut 14:13-18 has been influenced by an earlier version of Lev 11. A. L. Moran, "The Literary Connection Between Lv 11,13-19 and Dt 14,12-18," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (28 1966): 271-77, argues for an ancient source for both Lev and Deut, but assigns priority to Deut over Lev. He suggests that the additional ten birds listed in Lev 11 were borrowed from the latter text and added to Deut. Kim-Kwong Chan, "You Shall Not Eat These Abominable Things: An Examination of Different Interpretations on Deuteronomy 14:3-20," *East Asia Journal of Theology* 3 (1985): 88-106, follows Moran's theory of dependence (pp. 90, 94). The matter of literary dependence is obviously a complex one and cannot be pursued within the confines of this paper. For the purposes of our subject it does not seem to be decisive in one way or another.
2. E. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws and the Concept of Holiness," *Studies in the Pentateuch*, ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990) 177-208, speaks of the dietary laws as belonging to "the category of moral imperatives" (p. 184).
3. See Dorothea Wendebourg, "Die alttestamentlichen Reinheitsgesetze in der frühen Kirche," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 95 (1984): 149-70.
4. So John G. Gammie, *Holiness in Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), p. 10.
5. So again Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 184.
6. Credit for various distinctions between the two types of uncleanness go to the Dr. Jiri Moskala.
7. This is clearly recognized by Harrison, *Leviticus*, p. 37. See below n. 15.
8. Dr. Jiri Moskala has made this distinction earlier on the basis of studies of a comparative nature within the concepts of cleansing rites.
9. G. André and H. Ringgren, "tame'," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), V:330-42.
10. David P. Wright, "Leprosy," *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, ed. Paul J. Achtemeier (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), p. 555, notes that the skin diseases of Lev 13 are not modern leprosy (Hansen's disease).
11. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 183, also speaks of animals as "inherently 'unclean'."
12. In Lev 11 the designation "unclean" is used for animals that are inherently unclean in vss. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 31, 47. The translation "detestable" or "abhorrent" is employed for the Hebrew term *sheqets* also for animals that are inherently unclean as in Lev 11:10, 11, 12, 13, 20, 41, 42,.
13. André, "tame'," 332-32, writes erroneously that "an unclean animal renders unclean everything and everyone that comes into contact with it. . . . Anyone who picks it up or touches (*naga'*) it is unclean until evening . . ." Evidently this is true only of the carcass of an unclean animal, but not of a live unclean animal.
14. J. C. Moyer, "Hittite and Israelite Cultic Practices: A Selective Comparison," *Scripture in Context II: More Essays in Comparative Method*, eds. W. W. Hallo et al. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 29-33, describes the impurity of the pig and dog in Hittite culture. When these animals have contact with food they would pollute it.
15. See among the commentaries those by Martin Noth, *Leviticus* "Old Testament Library" (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 12; J. R. Porter, *Leviticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 82; Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), pp. 3-5; R. K.

- Harrison, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), pp. 36-37; Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus. The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), pp. 63-69.
16. William H. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook "Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 3" (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of SDAs, 1986), pp. 130-68, discovers a chiasmic structure with Lev 16 at the center.
 17. Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* "The International Commentary on the Old Testament" (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 231, makes this statement regarding Deut 14. It applies equally with regard to its parallel chapter of Lev 11.
 18. One such published attempt is the one by David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity. Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* "SBL Dissertation Series" (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), pp. 200-206.
 19. Among the rich literature on chiasm, its usage and examples, see Y. T. Radday, "Chiasm in Samuel," *Linguistica Biblica* 9/10 (1971):21-31; idem, "Chiasm in Torá," *Linguistica Biblica* 19 (1972):12-23; idem, "Chiasm in Joshua, Judges and Others," *Linguistica Biblica* 27/28 (1973):6-13; I. Lundbom, *Jeremiah. A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), pp. 61-112; A. R. Ceresko, "The Chiasmic Word Pattern in Hebrew," *CBQ* 38 (1976):303-11; Meir Weiss, *The Bible From Within. The Method of Total Interpretation* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984).
 20. The structure of Lev 11 and its careful composition is widely acknowledged, see Karl Elliger, *Leviticus* "Handbuch zum Alten Testament" (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966), pp. 142-149.
 21. A detailed discussion on the disposal of such impurity or acquired uncleanness is found in Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity*, pp. 200-206.
 22. Studies that treat the complex subject of clean/unclean and purity/impurity in the Old Testament in a general manner, see W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites: The Fundamental Institutions* (2nd ed.; New York: Schocken Books, 1972); J. Döllner, *Die Reinheits- und Speisegesetze des Alten Testaments in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1917); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); W. Paschen, *Rein und Unrein: Untersuchung zur biblischen Wortgeschichte* (München: Kösel Verlag, 1970); Jacob Neusner, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (Leiden E. J. Brill, 1973); E. Feldman, *Biblical and Post-Biblical Defilement and Mourning: Law as Theology* (New York: Yeshiva University and KTAV, 1977); I. Zatelli, *Il campo lessicale degli aggettivi di purità in Ebraico biblico* (Firenze: Istituto di Linguistica e di Lingue Orientali, Università di Firenze, 1978). There are two studies that survey work done on the subject of purity and cleanness, see J. Henninger, D. Meeks, M.-J. Seux and H. Cazelles, "Pureté et Impureté," *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1979), IX:398-508; E. Cortese, "Le ricerche sulla concezione 'sacerdotale' circa puro-impuro nell'ultimo decennio," *Rivista Biblica* 27 (1979):339-57.
 23. Here M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch. Its Composition and its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press of the Hebrew University, 1967), p. 45, makes the significant point that Lev 1-10 is "the completion and conclusion of the story of the tabernacle" which was begun in Exod 25.
 24. The expression is from L. E. Toombs, "Clean and Unclean," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), I:645.
 25. See the incisive study by Jacques Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story. Its Literary Structure* "Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 5" (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1978), pp. 35-80.
 26. Lev 11:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 24, 25, 26, 26, 227, 27, 28, 28, 28, 31, 31, 32, 32, 33, 34, 34, 35, 35, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 40, 43, 43, 44, 47.
 27. L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), p. 1009; William L. Holladay, Jr., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic*

- Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1971), p. 383.
28. J. G. Botterweck, "ch^azîr," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, IV:297.
 29. So Jacob Milgrom according to Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 206.
 30. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity*, p. 202.
 31. The uncleanness that is attached to a person for eating an animal that has died a natural or violent death stems from the blood contained in the carcass (Lev. 17:14, 15). The issue of Leviticus 17:15 is not the eating of unclean animals, but the eating of a carcass of an animal with blood in it, an animal that died a natural death or that was torn by a wild beast. Thus the uncleanness is not from the eating of unclean meat but the eating of a carcass with blood in it.
 32. The definition of the "sojourner, alien" as provided in W. L. Holladay, Jr., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 64, reads: "ger is a man who either alone or w. his family, leaves his village & tribe, because of war (2S 4:3), famine (Ru 1:1) pestilence, blood-guilt, &c., & seeks shelter & sojourn elsewhere, where his right to own land, to marry, & to participate in the administration of justice, in the cult, & in war is curtailed." The ger, "sojourner, alien," was usually a non-Israelite who chose to live among Israelites without becoming an Israelite.
 33. D. Kellermann, "gur," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. J. G. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), II:447.
 34. E. Gerstenberger, "t'b," *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, eds. E. Jenni and C. Westermann (Zurich/Munich: Kaiser, 1976), II:1053.
 35. Credit for pointing to these universal relationships between Lev 17-18 and Deut 14 goes to my colleague Dr. Richard Davidson.
 36. For example, Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11. A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), pp. 427-29; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (6th ed.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1963), pp. 62-64; O. Procksch, *Die Genesis* (Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913), pp. 62-65; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis. A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 114-16; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), pp. 73-88.
 37. For a critique with modern literature, see Gerhard F. Hasel, *Biblical Interpretation Today. An Analysis of Modern Methods of Biblical Interpretation and Proposals for the Interpretation of the Bible as the Word of God* (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1985), pp. 7-27.
 38. Gen 1-11 is customarily designated "primeval history." It may be more advantageous to call it "history of beginnings." It is universally recognized to be "universal" in outlook and having the whole world in view. See A. E. Speiser, *Genesis "The Anchor Bible"* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964) p. LIII; Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 1-64; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17 "The New International Commentary on the Old Testament"* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990) p. 10; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15 "Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1"* (Waco, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1987) pp. xlvi-liii.
 39. Gunkel, *Genesis*, p. 62.
 40. Westermann, *Genesis*, p. 428.
 41. So G. Ch. Aalders, *Genesis, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), p. 168.
 42. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament. The Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publ. Comp., n.d.), I:144.
 43. Hansjörg Bräumer, *Das erste Buch Mose, Kapitel 1-11* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1983), p. 171.
 44. A similar point is made by Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 177.
 45. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, "Creation and Classification in Judaism: From Priestly to Rabbinic Conceptions," *History of Religions* 26 (1987):361 n. 11.
 46. *Ibid.*, pp. 360-61.
 47. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, p. 102.
 48. Levine, *Leviticus*, p. 66.

49. J. G. Botterweck, "behemah," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. J. G. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), II:10.
50. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 25; Botterweck, "behemah," p. 9; etc.
51. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, pp. 41-57, argues that the creation narrative of Gen 1 gave rise to the dietary laws.
52. Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 361.
53. Surveys and evaluations are presented among others by W. H. Gispen, "The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean," *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, ed. P. A. H. de Boer (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948), V:190-96; I. Grunfeld, *The Philosophical and Moral Basis of the Jewish Dietary Laws* (London: The Hillel Foundation, 1961), pp. 5-22; Walter Kornfeld, "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," *Wissenschaft im Dienste des Glaubens. Festschrift für Abt Dr. Hermann Peichl* (Wien: Herder Verlag, 1965), pp. 11-27; idem, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," *Kairos* 7 (1965):134-47; J. Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System," *Interpretation* 17 (1963):288-301; Gordon J. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," *Evangelical Quarterly* 53 (1981):6-15.
54. This view is supported by Martin Noth, *Leviticus* (London: SCM Press, 1965), p. 62; idem, *The Laws in the Pentateuch and Other Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 56-57; Döllner, *Die Reinheits- und Speisegesetze*, pp. 231-32; and in part by Noordtziij, *Leviticus*, pp. 121-22; and others.
55. Frederick J. Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh. Food Avoidances in the Old World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), pp. 13-43.
56. For ancient evidence, see Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," pp. 135-36, and more recent evidence, see R. de Vaux, "Les sacrifices de porcs en Palestine et dans l'Ancien Orient," *Von Ugarit nach Qumran*, eds. J. Hempel and L. Rost (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1958), pp. 250-65; Anton Jirku, "Leviticus 11, 29-33 im Lichte der Ugarit-Forschung," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84 (1972):348.
57. Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 167; Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 136.
58. Porter, *Leviticus*, p. 84.
59. Mac Lennan, *The Worship of Animals and Plants* (1869) as cited in Kornfeld. "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 12 n. 12.
60. W. Roberston Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1889), p. 143.
61. Bernhard Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1905), I:135-42.
62. M. H. Pope, "Totemism," *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV:674.
63. See Eduard König, *Theologie des Alten Testaments kritisch und vergleichend dargestellt* (Stuttgart: C. Belser, 1922), pp. 28-29. Particularly insightful is the critique of Karl Wigand, "Die altisraelitische Vorstellung von unreinen Tieren," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 17 (1914):427-31.
64. Kornfeld, "Die unreinen Tiere im Alten Testament," p. 12.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
66. *Ibid.*
67. Jacob Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual: The Foundations of Biblical Dietary Laws," *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives*, eds. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss and John W. Welch (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), p. 175.
68. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 49.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
72. Anna S. Meigs, "A Papuan Perspective on Pollution," *Man* 13 (1978): 304-318.
73. Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 358.
74. Jacob Milgrom, "An Investigation into the Meaning of 'unclean' in Our Culture," *Directions* (Los Angeles: The University of Judaism, 1981), pp. 4-6; J. R. Porter, *Leviticus* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 84; Wenham,

- Leviticus*, pp. 168-71; idem, "The Theology of Unclean Food," pp. 9-11; Gammie, *Holiness in Israel*, pp. 10-11.
75. Robert Alter, "A New Theory of Kashrut," *Commentary* 68/2 (1979):49, where he actually objects to Jean Soler, "The Dietary Prohibitions of the Hebrews," *The New York Review of Books* (June 14, 1979):24-30, use of these animals. Soler and Douglas, however, have the same argument and so it applies to both.
 76. So Eilberg-Schwartz, p. 359.
 77. Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual," pp. 176-183.
 78. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 182.
 79. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," p. 6.
 80. Roland E. Clements, *Leviticus* "Broadman Bible Commentary" (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1971), II:34.
 81. For instance, Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* "The New International Commentary on the Old Testament" (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 231. William F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City: Doubleday & Comp., 1968, pp. 177-81, speaks of the dietary laws of Lev 11 and Deut 14 as "hygienic laws" or "hygienic regulations."
 82. Harrison, *Leviticus*, pp. 126-31.
 83. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
 84. Kornfeld, "Reine und unreine Tiere im Alten Testament," pp. 134-36.
 85. Wenham, *Leviticus*, pp. 167-68.
 86. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
 87. Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 168.
 88. *Ibid.*
 89. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, p. 168.
 90. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food," 6.
 91. With Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* "Word Biblical Commentary" (Dallas, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1989), p. 378, where he cites in his support such scholars as Taylor, Cranfield, Klostermann, Lambrecht, Gnlika and Quesnell.
 92. So among others E. Klostermann, *Das Markusevangelium* "Handbuch zum Neuen Testament" (2nd ed.; Tübingen: Kohlhammer, 1926), p. 71; W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 195; and others.
 93. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 217.
 94. Alexander Jones, General editor, *The Jerusalem Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 75.
 95. See the textual apparatus to vs. 19 in K. Aland, M. Black, B. M. Metzger and A. Wikgren, eds., *The Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bible Society, 1966), p. 150.
 96. Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida, *Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Mark* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 232.
 97. The NKJV renders the disputed phrase, "thus purging all foods." It adds in a marginal note to verse 19 the following, "NU sets off the final phrase as Mark's comment that Jesus has declared all foods clean." The acronym NU stands for the eclectic and critical text reconstructed in the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (26th edition), thus N, and the third edition of the United Bible Societies, thus U.
 98. Joachim Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie. Erster Teil: Die Verkündigung Jesu* (2nd ed.; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1973), p. 213.
 99. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
 100. C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St Mark* "The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary" (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1963), p. 243.
 101. William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p. 255.
 102. H. Krapotschek, "broma," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 2:268-69.
 103. The Aorist tense *ekathárisen* used here indicated that this was a punctiliar and historical act which points back to God's distinction of the "clean" and "unclean."

104. See the carefully argued points on this by Colin House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usages of *koinós/koinós* in Acts 10 and 11," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 21 (1983):143-55.
105. Gispen, "The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean," p. 196.
106. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws," 183.
107. H.-P. Müller, "qdsh heilig," *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, eds. E. Jenni and C. Westermann (München: Kaiser, 1976), II:590.
108. Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant. The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1974), pp. 263-68.
109. Norbert Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (Leipzig: St. Benno-Verlag, 1986), pp. 104-107.
110. F. Hauck and S. Schulz, "pornê," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), VI:592-93.
111. The "casebook" and "codebook" dichotomy argued for regarding Biblical law (see Alden Thompson, *Inspiration* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1991], pp. 110-35) is exegetically unfounded and hermeneutically a superimposition of external criteria on the Bible. In his sections on "Two Perspectives on Diet" (pp. 126-30), Thompson reinterprets and rationalizes the dietary law to mean "Do everything possible to enhance and preserve life. As for diet, eat the best food available" (p. 129). The Old Testament and later on Jesus himself is not in support of this kind of rationalizing reinterpretation. The instruction about unclean animals does not mean "eat the best food available," and by implication, one can eat anything, if the best food is not available. God's instruction on clean/unclean food confronts this kind of manipulation of the dietary matters. A later study in the next issue of *JATS* will discuss Thompson's view on law in greater detail.

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