

## BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

## LEVITICUS 11

Leviticus 11 records laws for the Israelites concerning what they were to eat and what they were not to eat. If an animal was designated as a “clean” animal, they were able to eat it, but if God declared it an “unclean” animal they were not to eat it. Regulations like these were intended to keep the Israelites as a separate people until Christ came.

**“CLEAN” ANIMALS**

- ! Any animal that has a split hoof completely divided  
and  
Chews the cud
- ! Sea animals with fins and scales (fish)
- ! Winged insects that walk on four legs with legs jointed for hopping

Examples of Clean Animals:

locust, katydid, cricket, grasshopper, fish, ox, sheep, goats, cattle

**“UNCLEAN” ANIMALS**

- ! Animals that did not fit the above requirements. The people were not to eat the meat or touch the dead bodies of unclean animals (v8). A living unclean animal, however, could be touched. Thus camels were able to be ridden.
- ! Sea animals without fins and scales
- ! Certain birds (particularly certain birds of prey)
- ! Certain animals that move along the ground
- ! “Swarming” animals that moved along the ground

Examples of Unclean Animals:

camel, coney, rabbit, pig, vulture, raven, hawks, certain owls, stork, heron, bat, lobster, crab, shrimp, eels, weasel, rat, lizards, snakes, worms

## CONTACT WITH UNCLEAN ANIMALS

If a person touched the dead carcass of an unclean animal or touched the carcass of a clean animal that had died of natural causes, he had to wash his clothes and he was considered ceremonially unclean until evening.

Other articles that into contact with such carcasses were to be put in water and considered unclean until evening.

If cooking utensils and pots were made unclean, they were to be broken and not used again. (An exception was if a carcass fell into a cistern— the cistern would not have to be destroyed).

## THE REGULATIONS EMPHASIZED GOD'S HOLINESS

Through the requirements concerning eating, the Israelites were taught that holiness (cleanness) before God is important. If they understood that they were to come before God "clean," they would be prepared to understand the cleanliness of soul that Christ would bring.

Read vv43-45 (esp. 45) for the LORD's own explanation of these regulations.

From the *People's Bible*: "Twice in this section the LORD says he is holy —holy in an absolute sense, separate and distinct from man who by nature is unholy. Because God is holy it is impossible for him to tolerate man's sin. But God in his love conceived a plan in eternity to let man become holy again and live in his presence. No sooner had man fallen into sin than God revealed his plan of salvation. Down through the centuries he said that forgiveness and salvation for mankind would be accomplished by the promised Messiah. By his grace he brought a nation of slaves out of the land of Egypt and gave them worship procedures which assured them of the removal of their sin for the sake of the one who was coming. Then when Jesus' perfect life was given into death on the cross for the sins of the world these outward symbols of holiness were no longer necessary. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ (Col 2:17)."

## CLEAN AND UNCLEAN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

During Jesus' day and after His ascension into heaven, the matter of clean and unclean food caused great controversy in the church (Ac 15). The Jews insisted that the Gentiles (non-Jews) must comply with these laws of Moses. Peter's vision (Ac 10) and other Scripture made it clear that the distinction between clean and unclean animals was done away with when Christ came.