

Did God Flip a Coin?



Scientific Support for the Biblical Food Laws

God has wisdom for every subject imaginable: dating, marriage, sex, money, leadership. This makes me wonder: why did God designate some animals as clean and others as unclean? Did He just flip a coin to determine which would be which? Are the Leviticus 11 commands arbitrary? Or have we overlooked some kind of hidden wisdom in the dietary laws?

Many traditional interpretations—both Christian and Jewish—claim that there is no rhyme or reason for God's classification system. This perspective implies that God essentially pulled names out of a hat when deciding how to categorize His many creatures. I don't buy it! Let's look at some differ-

ences between cows and pigs as an example for why the clean/unclean designation is most likely not random.

Bovine Vegetarianism

Think back to grade school science class: do you remember the difference between 'omnivores' and 'herbivores'?

Here is a hint: herbivores do not eat meat; they eat plant-based foods. Omnivores, on the other hand, eat everything—both plants and animals, including those animals that God calls unclean, like rats, spiders and cockroaches. Given their innate diets, would you rather eat an herbivore or an omnivore?

Interestingly, clean mammals—like cows—are inherently designed to be her-

bivores. God hard-wired them to eat plant-based foods—the same ones He gave to man in Genesis 1:29 as his primary food source. Because cows do not eat the flesh of other animals, they avoid many of the diseases, parasites and worms that other animals may carry. This makes herbivores healthier to eat than omnivores.¹ In addition, the prevalence of Mad Cow Disease—caused in part by cattle being fed ground-up cattle brains and other remains—is just one of the consequences of circumventing God's plan for bovine vegetarianism.

Most *messiah magazine* readers know that clean animals (as designated in Leviticus 11) must “chew the cud,” which is a complex digestion process. Known as ‘rumi-

God designed these unclean animals intelligently—as environmental cleaners, not as food sources. Scavengers were created with a purpose. . . but not to be eaten.

nants,’ these animals essentially regurgitate their food for another pass at chewing. Once I can get beyond this aspect of God’s design, I am fascinated. God gave ruminants a unique, multi-stomach digestive system that removes toxins from their food before it is absorbed into their flesh.

The herbivores’ natural instincts would lead them to a diet of grains, grass and other vegetation.² As one of the clean animals listed in Leviticus 11, it seems like cows are designed to be eaten by people, since their meat—in its God-given state—would be free from contaminants.

The Other Side of the Coin—Unclean Animals

Omnivores, on the other hand, do not chew the cud and are designed quite differently than herbivores. Pigs, for example, have a simpler, shorter digestive system that does not detoxify their food before it reaches their flesh.³ Considering pigs as a food source is troublesome. Why? Because on their own, pigs will eat everything, including mice, dead animals and feces.

God designed these unclean animals intelligently—as environmental cleaners, not as food sources. Scavengers were created with a purpose. They were created to clean up anything left dead in the fields, but they were not created to be eaten.⁴ Dr. Rex Russell provides an interesting example of this intelligent design:

Pigs have eaten Philadelphia’s garbage and sewage for more than 100 years, saving the city \$3 million a year in landfill costs. This is a wise use of hogs. They are designed to clean our environment.⁵

Can present-day farmers and scientists raise pigs that do not consume such foul food? Of course. But I am captivated by God’s

thoughtful, careful design for the animal kingdom. Erring on the side of caution, I avoid eating those intended to clean the environment, regardless of the ‘advances’ man has made.

Scientific studies support the apparent wisdom of the biblical food laws. A Johns Hopkins University study illustrates how pigs and other unclean mammals, birds, fish and insects have significantly higher toxicity levels than clean ones, like cows.⁶ Another study, in which medical students were fed organic pork that was trichinosis-free, revealed serious changes in the subjects’ blood chemistry after the pork was eaten.⁷ The longer-term study could not be completed, since the subjects stopped eating pork after the initial testing.⁸

Our Master Creator

Elmer Josephson affirms the wisdom of God’s Torah: “There is no portion of the commandments of God in general, or of the Mosaic code in particular, that is not based on a scientific understanding of fundamental law.”⁹

Ultimately, however, our choice to obey God’s Word should flow not out of our desire to benefit ourselves, but out of our love for and trust in Him.

Adapted from *Holy Cow! What the Bible Says about Eating Meat*, a new book from FFOZ.

For more information visit www.ffoz.org or www.holycownews.com.

Endnotes

- 1 Tessler, Gordon. *The Genesis Diet*. Be Well Publications, 1996, p. 50.
- 2 The reputation that goats have been given for eating tin cans and clothing is a myth. While their intense curiosity may lead them to nibble on non-plant food, they are indeed herbivores.
- 3 Tessler, p. 51
- 4 Josephson, Elmer A. *God’s Key to Health and Happiness*. Revell, 1976, p. 47
- 5 Russell, Rex. *What the Bible Says about Healthy Living*. Regal, 1996, p. 160
- 6 This study is cited by Russell, pp. 150–153.
- 7 Fallon, Sally. *Nourishing Traditions*. New Trends Publishing, 2001, p. 32.
- 8 Fallon, p. 76
- 9 Josephson, p. 160



Now Available — HOLY COW!

“ I am excited to find a book that addresses biblical meat eating as thoroughly as Hope Egan and D. Thomas Lancaster have. . . *Holy Cow!* is an invaluable resource, one that I certainly recommend to others. ”

Dr. Rex Russell
 Author of *What the Bible Says about Healthy Living*

HOLY COW!
Does God Care About What We Eat?

- 🔗 What does the Bible says about eating meat?
- 🔗 Does science support the biblical food laws?
- 🔗 How do we reconcile Old Testament meat passages with the New Testament

Join *messiah* magazine editor and best-selling author Hope Egan on her personal journey through what the Bible says about eating meat. With the help of author and Bible teacher D. Thomas Lancaster, Hope helps you see how science and Scripture brilliantly intertwine. Promoting neither legalism nor vegetarianism, *Holy Cow!* gently challenges believers to take a fresh look at how they live out their faith and what obedience looks like.

Visit holycownews.com for more info, excerpts and extra resources!

Price: \$14.00 each | 150+ pages
 Price excludes Shipping & Handling

Bulk Rates
 Buy in Bulk and get up to 40% Discount

