

Biblical Clean and Unclean Foods

The Torah provides clear guidelines regarding clean and unclean foods. These dietary laws, found primarily in **Leviticus 11** and **Deuteronomy 14**, are part of Yah's instructions for His people, emphasizing holiness, obedience, and distinction from the nations. These commands reflect Yah's wisdom and care, guiding His people in what is good for their bodies and spiritual lives. Below is a look into these categories, their common traits, biblical examples, and some modern considerations.

Clean vs. Unclean Foods: Defining Characteristics

Land Animals

•Clean:

- Must have a divided hoof *and* chew the cud (Leviticus 11:3, Deuteronomy 14:6).
- Examples: Cattle, sheep, goats, deer....
- Biblical Example:** Abraham prepared a calf for his divine visitors (Genesis 18:7-8).

•Unclean:

- Do not meet both criteria. Examples: Pigs, camels, rabbits.
- Pigs are specifically called unclean (Leviticus 11:7-8). Yahshua demonstrated the demonic association with swine when He permitted demons to enter a herd of pigs, which then drowned (Matthew 8:30-32).

Sea Creatures

•Clean:

- Must have fins and scales (Leviticus 11:9-12).
- Examples: Salmon, trout, tuna.
- Biblical Example:** Fish was commonly eaten, as seen in Yahshua providing fish to feed the multitudes (Matthew 14:17-21).

•Unclean:

- Any creature without both fins and scales. Examples: Shellfish/crustacean (shrimp, crab, lobster). Mollusk (clams, mussels oysters, scallops), octopus, squid, catfish, and eel.....
- These scavengers are designed to clean the water, not for human consumption.

Birds

•Clean:

- Generally, birds that do not eat carrion/dying flesh or prey on other animals are clean.
- Examples: Chicken, quail, dove....
- Biblical Example:** Quail was provided as food for Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 16:13).

•Unclean:

- Birds of prey, scavengers, and those that eat carrion. Examples: Eagles, vultures, ravens.

Insects

•Clean:

- Certain types of locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers are clean (Leviticus 11:21-22).

•**Biblical Example:** John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4).tr

*There's some debate about whether it refers to a tree or an insect, but the evidence seems to lean toward it being the insect locust. Feel free to check out the locust PDF to see my research and how I came to this perspective.

•Unclean:

- All other insects, especially those that crawl on their belly.

Reptiles and Amphibians

- All are considered unclean (Leviticus 11:29-30). This category includes snakes, frogs, and lizards.

Common Traits of Clean and Unclean Animals

1. **Design and Function:** Clean animals typically eat plants or other clean foods, while unclean animals often act as scavengers or “trash cans”, consuming waste and toxins.
2. **Physical Characteristics:** Yah provided clear physical distinctions, such as the hoof and cud-chewing or fins and scales. These traits align with their roles in creation.

Modern Concerns and Applications

1. Additives Derived from Unclean Sources:

- Gelatin:** Often derived from pork or unclean animals.
- L-Cysteine:** Commonly sourced from human hair or pig bristles, used in baked goods.
- Natural Flavors:** May come from unclean animal sources unless labeled as plant-based or kosher.
- Enzymes:** Frequently used in cheese and bread, sourced from unclean animals.

2. Genetic Modification (GMO):

- Genetic engineering sometimes involves inserting genes from unclean animals into otherwise clean foods. For example, fish genes have been introduced into tomatoes.
- Torah prohibits mixing species (Leviticus 19:19), indicating Yah's intention to maintain His created order.

3. Contamination:

- Processed foods often mix clean and unclean ingredients, especially in shared facilities. Look for certifications symbols that ensure adherence to clean standards.

Biblical Examples of Obedience to Yah's Dietary Laws

1. Daniel and His Companions:

- Refused to eat the unclean food of Babylon, choosing vegetables and water instead. Yah blessed their obedience with health and wisdom (Daniel 1:8-17).

2. The Maccabees:

- During Greek oppression, many Jews chose death over eating pork, showing their devotion to Yah's commandments (2 Maccabees 7).

3. Yahshua's Example:

- While not directly addressing food in terms of clean and unclean animals, Yahshua upheld Torah (Matthew 5:17-18). There is no biblical record of Him eating unclean foods.

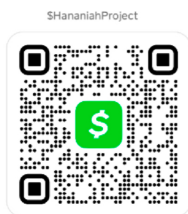
Spiritual Implications of Eating Clean

- Holiness:** Yah's dietary laws teach His people to be set apart (Leviticus 11:44-45).
- Obedience:** Observing these laws reflects submission to Yah's wisdom and commands.
- Health:** Clean foods align with Yah's design for optimal health.

The dietary laws are not arbitrary but have a rich purpose in shaping Israel's identity, fostering obedience, and pointing to deeper spiritual realities. They serve as a constant reminder of Yah's holiness, the distinct calling of His people, and the importance of purity in their relationship with Him.

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Plant Life

The distinction between clean and unclean foods is a timeless part of Yah's instructions, providing both physical and spiritual benefits. In a modern world filled with processed foods, genetic modification, and hidden ingredients, believers must remain vigilant and informed. By adhering to Yah's guidelines, we honor Him, maintain holiness, and demonstrate our trust in His perfect wisdom.

The topic of **clean and unclean plant life** is less explicitly defined in the Torah compared to the laws regarding animals, but there are important principles and cultural understandings within Scripture and the Hebraic worldview that guide us in distinguishing what plants were considered suitable for consumption or sacred purposes.

1. Torah Principles on Plant Life

Permitted Plant Foods

•Genesis 1:29:

At creation, Yah gave humans plants for food:

“And Elohim said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.’”

This indicates that plants bearing seeds and trees producing fruit were divinely designated as food sources for humanity.

•Leviticus 19:23-25:

Trees and plants had regulations for their use:

“When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten.”

This passage emphasizes purity and patience, suggesting Yah's desire for intentional cultivation and consumption of plants.

Prohibited Plants or Plant Products

Certain plants or practices involving plants were forbidden or associated with uncleanness:

•Leaven During Festivals:

During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, leavened products (fermented dough or grains) were prohibited (Exodus 12:15-20). This restriction symbolized purity and separation from sin.

•Hybridization:

Yah forbade crossbreeding of plants:

“You shall not sow your field with mixed seed” (Leviticus 19:19).

This command highlighted respect for Yah's created order and natural boundaries.

•Plants Used in Idol Worship:

Any plant or tree associated with pagan worship or idolatry was forbidden:

“You shall not plant for yourselves any tree as an Asherah pole near the altar of Yahweh your Elohim” (Deuteronomy 16:21).

2. Clean vs. Unclean Principles for Plant Life

While Scripture doesn't label plants as “clean” or “unclean” in the same way as animals, certain criteria align with broader Torah principles:

Characteristics of Clean Plants

- Seed-Bearing Plants:** Plants that reproduce by seed were deemed clean (Genesis 1:29).
- Edible and Nutritious:** Plants fit for human consumption, like grains, fruits, vegetables, and herbs, were considered suitable and clean.
- Cultivated with Respect for Torah Laws:** Plants grown according to Torah guidelines (e.g., no mixed seeds, rest during Sabbatical years) were aligned with Yah's commands.

Characteristics of Unclean Plants

- Poisonous or Harmful Plants:** While not explicitly labeled “unclean,” plants that were harmful to humans, such as certain wild berries or poisonous herbs, were naturally avoided.
- Plants Used in Pagan Rituals:** Plants involved in idol worship or pagan practices (e.g., sacred groves, plants burned in offerings to foreign gods) were unclean by association.
- Mixed or Hybridized Plants:** Plants produced through forbidden hybridization could be viewed as unclean.

3. Biblical Examples of Plant Use

Clean Plant Life

- Grains:** Wheat and barley were staples in Israelite diets and used in offerings: “You shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest” (Leviticus 23:10).
- Herbs and Spices:** Herbs like hyssop were used for purification (Exodus 12:22), while spices like frankincense were burned as offerings (Exodus 30:34-38).
- Fruits and Nuts:** Figs, olives, and dates were essential foods. The Promised Land was described as a place “flowing with milk and honey” and abundant in fruits (Deuteronomy 8:8).

Unclean or Forbidden Plant Associations

- Forbidden Fruit of Knowledge:** The fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was forbidden (Genesis 2:16-17).
- Leaven in Sacrifices:** Leaven was not allowed in certain offerings, symbolizing the absence of corruption (Leviticus 2:11).
- Plants Burned to Idols:** Incense or plant products offered to idols were abominable (Jeremiah 44:15-23).

4. Modern Applications: Clean and Unclean Plant Additives

In today's world, distinguishing clean and unclean plants can extend to understanding how plants are grown, processed, and used. Here are things to watch for:

Genetic Modification and Hybridization

- Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs):** GMOs may violate the principle of keeping Yah's creation pure and unaltered (Leviticus 19:19). Many are created by mixing genes from different species, raising concerns about their alignment with Torah principles.
- Hybrid Crops:** While hybridization for agricultural purposes is common today, it raises questions about respecting Yah's boundaries in creation.

Additives and Processing

•Unclean Additives:

Some plant-based foods may contain unclean additives, such as:

- Gelatin:** Derived from unclean animals, used in some plant-based products.
- Alcohol:** Certain vinegars or flavorings may contain trace amounts of unclean fermentation processes.
- Pesticides and Toxins:** The use of harmful chemicals on plants can compromise their purity and safety.

5. Symbolism of Clean Plant Life in Scripture

Plants often carry rich symbolic meaning in Scripture, representing life, growth, and Yah's blessings:

- The Tree of Life:** Symbolizes eternal life and Yah's provision (Genesis 2:9; Revelation 22:2).
- The Vine and Branches:** Yahshua used the vine as a metaphor for abiding in Him (John 15:1-5).
- Seeds and Growth:** Yah's kingdom is likened to seeds growing into fruitful plants (Mark 4:26-29).

Unclean plant life, by contrast, often symbolizes sin and corruption:

- Thorns and Thistles:** A result of sin, representing toil and hardship (Genesis 3:18).
- The Fig Tree Without Fruit:** A symbol of spiritual barrenness (Mark 11:12-14).

Heres a quick limited food list

Clean Animals

Clean land animals must have split hooves and chew the cud.

•Cattle:

- Cow
- Ox
- Buffalo

•Sheep and Goats:

- Domestic sheep
- Domestic goats
- Wild goats (ibex)

•Deer-like Animals:

- Deer
- Gazelle
- Antelope
- Roebuck
- Wild ox
- Mountain sheep

•Other Ruminants:

- Elk
- Moose

Clean Birds

Clean birds are generally non-predatory, seed-, insect-, or plant-eating, and not scavengers.

•Game Birds:

- Chicken
- Turkey
- Quail
- Pheasant
- Partridge
- Grouse
- Dove
- Turtledove
- Pigeon

•Waterfowl:

- Ducks (certain species, excluding scavenger-like varieties)
- Geese
- Swans (disputed in some traditions)

•**Small Birds:**

- Sparrows
- Finches
- Robins
- Canaries
- Larks

•**Other Possible Clean Birds:**

- Peafowl (peacocks)
- Guinea fowl

Clean Fish

Clean fish must have **fins** and **scales**.

•**Popular Clean Fish:**

- Salmon
- Trout
- Cod
- Haddock
- Halibut
- Snapper
- Bass
- Perch
- Sardines
- Anchovies
- Tilapia
- Mackerel (specific species)
- Tuna (only species with scales, such as albacore)

•**Other Clean Fish:**

- Whitefish
- Flounder
- Sole

Clean Insects

Clean insects must have jointed legs above their feet for hopping (e.g., locust-like species).

•**Locusts:**

- Desert locust
- Migratory locust

•**Grasshoppers:**

- Long-horned grasshoppers
- Short-horned grasshoppers

•**Crickets:**

- Field crickets

- House crickets

Ancient grains, original fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

Not an exhaustive lists, but they reflect many staples of the diet in ancient times.

1. Ancient Grains

1. Einkorn Wheat (*Triticum monococcum*)

- One of the earliest domesticated forms of wheat.
- High in protein; lower yield but more nutrient-dense than modern wheat.

2. Emmer Wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*)

- Also known as “farro” in some modern contexts.
- Widely grown in the ancient Near East and Egypt.

3. Spelt (*Triticum spelta*)

- A hulled wheat that was prominent in Europe and parts of the ancient Near East.
- Known for a nutty flavor and robust nutritional profile.

4. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*)

- One of the oldest cultivated grains, mentioned frequently in Scripture.
- More tolerant of poor soils and drought than wheat.

5. Millet (e.g., Pearl Millet, Foxtail Millet)

- Popular in various ancient cultures, especially in semi-arid regions.
- Naturally gluten-free and highly resilient.

6. Sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*)

- Grown in Africa and parts of the Middle East.
- Often used for porridge, flatbreads, and beverages.

7. Rye (*Secale cereale*)

- Though more common in later European contexts, it has ancient roots in parts of the Near East.
- Thrives in cold climates; used in bread-making.

8. Teff (*Eragrostis tef*)

- A staple in ancient Ethiopia and surrounding regions.
- Ground into flour for traditional breads (e.g., injera).

9. Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) – *New World Example*

- While not from the Near East, quinoa was an ancient staple in the Andes of South America.

- Included here as an example of a globally recognized “ancient grain.”

10. Amaranth (*Amaranthus spp.*) – *New World Example*

- Cultivated by Aztecs, Mayans, and other ancient civilizations.
- High in protein and considered a pseudo-grain.

2. Original (Ancient) Fruits

1. Figs (*Ficus carica*)

- Highly significant in ancient Israel; referenced frequently in the Bible.
- Eaten fresh, dried, or used to make cakes.

2. Pomegranates (*Punica granatum*)

- Symbolic of fertility and abundance in ancient cultures.
- Mentioned as part of priestly garments' decoration (Exodus 28:33-34).

3. Grapes (*Vitis vinifera*)

- One of the oldest cultivated fruits; used for eating, juicing, and winemaking.
- Central to ancient Near Eastern agriculture.

4. Dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*)

- Staple sweet fruit in desert regions.
- High in natural sugars, a vital source of energy.

5. Olives (*Olea europaea*)

- Pressed for oil; eaten pickled or cured.
- Integral to food, light, and anointing practices.

6. Apples (Ancient Varieties of *Malus domestica*)

- Ancient apples were smaller and more tart than most modern cultivars.
- References in Song of Solomon (e.g., "apple trees" in 2:3).

7. Figs' Wild Cousins (Sycamore Fig / Fig-Mulberry, *Ficus sycomorus*)

- Grown in warmer regions; lower quality fruit but historically significant.
- Amos, the prophet, was said to be a tender of sycamore figs (Amos 7:14).

8. Melons (e.g., Cantaloupe, Watermelon)

- *Cucumis melo* (melon) and *Citrullus lanatus* (watermelon) were grown in Egypt and introduced to the region.
- Israelites longed for "melons" in Numbers 11:5.

9. Apricots and Peaches (Introduced Later)

- Possibly introduced via trade routes; not as foundational as figs, dates, and pomegranates, but still ancient in parts of the Near East and Asia.

3. Ancient Vegetables

1. Onions (*Allium cepa*)

- Staples in ancient Egyptian, Israelite, and broader Near Eastern diets.
- Mentioned in Numbers 11:5 among the foods Israelites recalled from Egypt.

2. Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

- Also referenced in Numbers 11:5.
- Used for flavor and medicinal purposes.

3. Leeks (*Allium ampeloprasum*)

- Another *Allium* family member, popular in ancient Egyptian cooking.
- Israelite nostalgia food from Egypt (Numbers 11:5).

4. Cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*)

- Grown in Egypt and the Near East.
- Also mentioned in Numbers 11:5.

5. Lentils (*Lens culinaris*)

- Lentil stew famously appears in the story of Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:29-34).

- A high-protein staple across the region.

6. Chickpeas (*Cicer arietinum*)

- Common legume, also known as garbanzo beans.
- Used in soups, stews, and later, hummus-like dishes.

7. Broad Beans (*Vicia faba*)

- An ancient legume cultivated widely in the Middle East.
- High in protein and used in various dishes.

8. Bitter Herbs (Various Greens)

- Eaten at Passover (Exodus 12:8).
- Could include endive, chicory, dandelion greens, etc.

9. Wild Greens (e.g., Mallow, Nettles)

- Gathered from the countryside; mentioned in Job 30:4.
- Eaten by the poor or in times of scarcity.

4. Ancient Herbs and Spices

1. Hyssop (*Origanum syriacum* or *Hyssopus officinalis*)

- Used for purification rituals (Exodus 12:22; Psalm 51:7).
- A fragrant herb related to the oregano family in the Near East.

2. Mint (*Mentha* spp.)

- Common culinary herb; mentioned by Yahshua regarding tithing practices (Matthew 23:23).

3. Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*)

- Popular spice in ancient Israel.
- Also mentioned alongside mint and dill (Matthew 23:23).

4. Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)

- Seeds compared to manna in Exodus 16:31.
- Leaves (cilantro) and seeds used as seasoning.

5. Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)

- Used in cooking and medicinally.
- Another herb mentioned in tithing (Matthew 23:23).

6. Mustard (*Brassica nigra* or *Sinapis alba*)

- The mustard seed is famously mentioned in Yahshua's parables (Matthew 13:31-32).
- A tiny seed that grows into a sizable plant, illustrating kingdom principles.

7. Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)

- An expensive, fragrant spice.
- Known in the ancient Near East; valued for its color and flavor.

8. Oregano and Thyme (*Origanum vulgare*, *Thymus* spp.)

- Common Mediterranean herbs used for flavoring dishes.
- Likely known in the broader biblical region, though not explicitly named in Scripture.

9. Frankincense and Myrrh (*Boswellia sacra*, *Commiphora myrrha*)

- Strictly speaking, these are resins rather than culinary herbs.
- Used for incense, anointing, and medicinal purposes.

• **Ancient Grains** like einkorn, emmer, and barley formed the backbone of staple foods in biblical times.

• **Original Fruits** such as figs, pomegranates, grapes, dates, and olives were central to nutrition and cultural practices.

• **Vegetables** (especially legumes and members of the Allium family) provided essential nutrients and flavors.

• **Herbs and Spices** not only added taste but also carried symbolic and medicinal significance.

Extra Unclean Foods

Oils

1. **Lard (Pork Fat)** - Derived from pigs, which are unclean animals (Leviticus 11:7).
2. **Tallow (Beef Fat)** - Only clean if sourced from a Biblically clean animal; otherwise, could possibly be unclean.
3. **Shortening** - May contain lard or other animal fats.
4. **Animal-Based Glycerides** - Sometimes derived from unclean animals (check the source).
5. **Blended Oils** - Can include unclean fats unless labeled "100% vegetable oil."

Additives to Avoid

1. **Gelatin** - Commonly derived from pork or non-kosher animal bones and skin. Look for kosher or fish-based gelatin.
2. **Mono- and Diglycerides** - These can be derived from pork or unclean animals unless labeled "vegetable-derived."
3. **L-Cysteine** - Often derived from human hair or poultry feathers.
4. **Natural Flavorings** - Could be animal-derived; verify the source with the manufacturer.
5. **Shellac (E904)** - Made from insect secretions, often used on candies or shiny coatings.
6. **Carmines (E120)** - Red dye made from crushed cochineal insects.
7. **Rennet** - Enzyme used in cheese production, often derived from unclean animal stomachs unless labeled microbial or kosher.
8. **Stearic Acid** - Could come from animal fat unless plant-based.
9. **Casein and Whey** - If not sourced from clean animals.
10. **Polysorbates (e.g., Polysorbate 80)** - May include animal derivatives.

Meat Casings

1. **Natural Casings** - Made from the intestines of pigs, sheep, or cattle. Only casings from Biblically clean animals (properly slaughtered) are acceptable.
2. **Collagen Casings** - Often derived from hides, including unclean animals.
3. **Synthetic Casings** - Generally safe but check additives.

Unclean Practices

1. **Cross-Contamination** - Clean foods cooked or processed on the same equipment as unclean foods.
2. **Improper Slaughter** - Meat from clean animals is only acceptable if slaughtered according to Biblical principles (e.g., drained of blood).
3. **Mixed Dishes** - Foods containing both clean and unclean ingredients (e.g., pork fat in beans).
4. **Blood Consumption** - Meat not properly drained of blood (Leviticus 17:10-14).
5. **Shellfish and Insects** - Avoid shrimp, crab, lobster, and most insects (Leviticus 11).

Tips to Avoid Unclean Ingredients

1. **Read Labels** - Be vigilant for hidden additives and oils.
2. **Ask Questions** - Contact manufacturers when in doubt about ingredient sources.
3. **Plant a garden** - Grow your own food. Farm. Fish.
4. **Make Your Own** - Homemade products can eliminate concerns about hidden additives.

The proper slaughter of animals

1. Obedience to Yah's Commandments

- **Biblical Command:** The Torah commands that animals must be slaughtered in a way that ensures the blood is drained completely, as consuming blood is explicitly forbidden (Leviticus 17:10-14; Deuteronomy 12:23-25). Blood is seen as the life force of the animal, and consuming it is considered spiritually defiling.
- **Holiness:** Proper slaughter reflects a commitment to set-apart living (Leviticus 11:44-45). Following Yah's instructions shows reverence for His Word and helps maintain purity.

2. Respect for Life

- **Humane Treatment:** Proper slaughter (e.g., in kosher or halal practices) minimizes the animal's suffering. This reflects Yah's compassion and care for all His creation (Proverbs 12:10).
- **Acknowledgment of Sacrifice:** Proper slaughter acknowledges the seriousness of taking a life for sustenance, ensuring it is done with respect and gratitude rather than recklessness.

3. Ensuring the Animal is Clean

- **No Blood Consumption:** Biblically clean animals must have their blood fully drained during slaughter. This prevents the unintentional consumption of blood, which is forbidden.
- **Avoiding Trefah (Unfit Meat):** Improperly slaughtered animals might suffer injuries (e.g., torn organs, disease, or predatory attacks), making them unclean according to Levitical laws.

4. Separation from Pagan Practices

- **Idoltry Avoidance:** Improper slaughter could involve methods tied to pagan rituals or sacrifices, which are explicitly forbidden (Exodus 34:15). Yah commands His people to avoid any practices resembling idol worship.

5. Health and Safety

- **Preventing Disease:** Animals not properly slaughtered (e.g., those that die on their own or are strangled) may carry diseases, toxins, or decayed flesh, making the meat unsafe for consumption.
- **Bloodborne Pathogens:** Blood left in meat can harbor bacteria and pathogens, increasing the risk of illness. Draining the blood enhances the safety of the meat.

6. Symbolism of Blood

- **Life Belongs to Yah:** Blood symbolizes life, which belongs to Yah alone (Leviticus 17:11). Draining the blood demonstrates recognition that life comes from and returns to Yah.
- **Spiritual Purity:** The avoidance of blood reflects the spiritual need to stay pure and clean, both physically and symbolically.

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