

## Did Jesus Really Declare All Foods Clean? (Revised)

### Introduction

On a recent visit to England to visit family, my observance of the kosher (clean and unclean) laws applicable to foods was challenged by a family member which led to a discussion concerning the relevance today of the Law concerning clean and unclean foods. During the discussion I was directed to the apostle Peter's experience described in Acts 10 where the apostle Peter was instructed by God to eat that which he considered was unclean and prohibited. My relative's point was that, with this instruction to Peter, Elohim declared all foods acceptable. Although I explained the true message behind Peter's experience my relative was not entirely convinced and simply raised other scriptures in support of the view that the clean/unclean food law was abolished by Messiah. Unconvinced my relative presented the website article referred to below, which attempts to prove annulment of the clean/unclean food law is Scriptural. Because the article is a concoction of misconceptions supported by Church teaching, I felt the need to provide an accurate interpretation of what is in the Scriptures. This paper will examine in detail each of the Scriptures referred to in the article presented to me but let us start with the record of Peter's experience in Acts.

### Acts 10:9-17

*On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.*

*And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. **And the voice spoke unto him again the second time, What God has cleansed, you shall not call common.** This was done three times: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,*

It is possibly the section emphasised in red is the basis for quoting this event in support for annulling the clean/unclean laws. The issue is whether these words are to be taken literally or metaphorically: fortunately, the following verses provide the context and verse 28 in particular leaves us in no doubt that the issue is about the salvation for non-Jews and has nothing to do with food,

*And he said unto them, you know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come to one of another nation; **but God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.** (Acts 10:28)*

To correctly understand the message contained in this section of Acts it is necessary to read the whole of the chapter from verse 1. The message is that God requires His apostle to teach the Gospel truth to non-Jews, something that the Jewish custom of the day prohibited. Jewish teaching was that salvation was only for the Jewish people all others were considered heathens (unclean) and could only achieve salvation by becoming proselyte Jews, that is, by accepting Jewish customs and lifestyle. But this was the doctrine of the Jewish leaders and not God's will. Thus, God used the metaphor of clean vs unclean to correct a Jewish sense of superiority arising from the conviction that, being the true descendants of the patriarchs, they alone by special favour, were the inheritors of the venerable promises and salvation is for them alone. Had God not presented the example He did, Peter would never have entertained Cornelius' messengers because they were gentiles. The event had nothing to do with food, God wanted

to correct an unacceptable Jewish custom. The point is this event occurred after the death and resurrection of Mashiach, which means the apostles were still keeping the dietary laws. Thus, they were either disobeying their master Mashiach or their belief was He never annulled the dietary laws. The truth is the latter. Now let us consider the following article from the web that my relative presented to me which I have repeated verbatim.

### **Does the bible say not to eat pig products?**

The Old Testament books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy contain a whole bunch of rules and regulations which God gives to his people, the Israelites. The reason he did this is mentioned by Moses in Deuteronomy chapter 14:

*“...for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession.” – Deut. 14:2 (NIV)*

God gave the laws to the Israelites because they were chosen by him to be set apart from the rest of the world – and thus they were to live differently to everyone else. Part of this affected what they ate. A little later in chapter 14, after Moses begins outlining what God says they can and can't eat, he says:

*“The pig is also unclean; although it has a split hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses.” – Deut.14:8 (NIV)*

It seems pretty clear for the Israelites – bacon, pork and ham are off the menu. So does the bible say not to eat pig products? Yes. But who exactly is God commanding not to eat pig products.

### **Understanding the context**

At first glance, we might assume these words are God speaking to us. After all, the Old Testament is the word of God, inspired by him and according to Paul, “useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” – 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (NIV).

But like any literary text, we need to read it in context. We can't just pluck out a sentence and automatically assume it's talking to us.

This verse is part of Moses' farewell speech to his people, which makes up the book of Deuteronomy. So it is Moses imparting the wisdom he has received from God to his people.

We have to remember that these words were given to a specific people – the Israelites – at a particular point in time.

It's true that as Christians, we are the new chosen people of God (see 1 Peter 2:9). But does that then mean we are to follow all the rules that God gave to his old chosen people, the Israelites?

It's a tricky question. I think we should look at what Jesus says about it.

### **What does Jesus say?**

The religious leaders of Jesus' day criticized him and his disciples for not conforming to the Old Testament food laws. In response, Jesus said:

*“Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.” – Mark 7:15 (NIV)*

Jesus makes the point that with his arrival, the Old Testament rituals no longer have the same power – now, what is more important is what comes out of a person – things like gossip, lying and slander. Jesus’ disciples were perhaps a little shocked at what Jesus says, so they ask for clarification. He replies:

*“‘Are you so dull?’ he asked. ‘Don’t you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, then out of the body.’ (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)’*

Jesus repeats his message, and just to make absolutely certain we’ve got the point, Mark clearly tells us in brackets that in saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean – fit to be eaten. So while the Old Testament food laws were important for the Israelites to obey, Jesus makes it clear that these laws are not necessary for his followers. For God’s people in the new covenant, what comes out – slander, gossip and lying – is much more important than what goes in.

### **How then, should we eat?**

The question of what to eat seems to have come up again in Paul’s time. In Romans 14, he reaffirms what Jesus said, but at the same time he advises what Christians should do when others believe only special foods can be eaten for religious reasons.

I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean. If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.” – Romans 14:14-15 So, can Christians eat bacon, pork, ham and other pig products? Yes – and I believe Jesus and Paul make this pretty clear. But there might be situations where it’s best to lay off the bacon – if eating pig products is going to turn people off the gospel, don’t do it, because after all, our aim as Christians is to share the good news of Jesus to the world.

End of abstract

This is one of the gravest misinterpretations of Scriptural truth that I have ever witnessed, and its author should be gagged. I will comment against each heading however, we can group the first to headings together.

### **Does the Bible Say Not To Eat Pig Products? / Understanding the Context**

The assertion that the food laws were given to the Israelites is correct, as were the Ten Commandments, but what the author has missed is that God only has a relationship with Israel and that applies today. What is more, God only knows ‘covenant relationship’ and he only ever established a covenant relationship with Israel. Nowhere in the Scriptures will you find God making a covenant with Gentiles. Even the New Covenant was made with Jewish disciples only. For Gentiles to enter into a relationship with God they must become a part of Israel as confirmed by the apostle,

*And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, have been grafted in among them, and came to share the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. And if you boast, remember: you do not bear the root, but the root bears you! You shall say then, “**The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.**”*

*Good! By unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by belief. Do not be arrogant, but fear. For if Elohim did not spare the natural branches, He might not spare you either.*  
(Rom.11:17-21)

Remember the Apostle is writing to the Gentile congregation in Rome and if the Gentiles had their own covenant there would be no need for the apostle to speak in these terms. The apostle is using the metaphor of the olive tree to describe the Jewish people who he terms as 'natural branches' because they are Israelites. This is clear from the preceding verses. The apostle is remembering God's declaration to the prophet Jeremiah,

*The LORD called your name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he has kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.* (Jer.11:16).

Incidentally, there are three trees mentioned in the Scriptures all are euphemisms for Israel

1. The Vine: A symbol of Israel's Spiritual privileges (we are grafted into the vine we inherit the spiritual promises given to Israel), Isa.24:7, Gal 3: 29
2. The Fig Tree: A symbol of Israel's National privileges (the ownership of land, the ownership of the city Jerusalem) Hos.9:10, Jer.24:5, Matt.24:32-33
3. The Olive Tree: A symbol of Israel's religious privileges Hos.14:5-6, Isa.17:4-6, 24:5-15, Jer.11:16, Ps.52:8, 128.

Returning to this article. What the apostle is saying is, it is necessary for Gentiles to join with (be grafted into) Israel. However, the apostle does not complete the picture in Romans but in Galatians where he explains why Gentiles must be grafted into Israel,

*And if you are of Messiah, then you are seed of Abraham and heirs according to promise.*  
(Gal.3:29)

To be beneficiaries of God's promises – promises made only to Abraham's seed (Israel), we must become a part of that seed, which today we can only do through our acceptance of and belief in Messiah. If we are grafted into Israel then we are as Israel, we cannot be different to Israel that would be nonsense. Indeed, God says in Exod.12:49, that there is only one Law for Israel and for the stranger who joins them. Therefore all that applies to Israel must apply to those who are grafted into Israel. Christians need to wake up to this fact, not to live 'as Israel' is to live in disobedience and look at what is promised to those who live in disobedience,

*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these the wrath of Elohim comes upon the sons of disobedience* (Eph.5:6).

Today God's Israel is the 'Body of Messiah' comprising physical Israel (Jews) and Gentiles. But those in the 'Body of Messiah' must observe all of the laws originally given to physical Israel if it is to enjoy the benefits of the covenant promises given to Abraham. The whole purpose of Messiah was to enjoin us to the seed of Abraham, that is, Israel. We must therefore be enjoined to the rules of Israel. This is the only route for our salvation.

Not only does the author of the above abstract completely miss this essential point, but he also actually infers this no longer to be true commenting, *"that as Christians, we are the new chosen people of God"* This is replacement theology i.e., Christians have replaced Israel as the chosen people of God and is most unscriptural. If this was true, there would be no need for any 'grafting into the olive tree. What is more God promises that He will never forget Israel are His chosen,

*Thus says the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divides the sea when the waves thereof roar; The*

*LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus said the LORD; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, said the LORD. (Jer.31:35-37).*

The concept of replacement theology (the Church has replaced Israel) was one of the problems the apostle had to deal with in Rome and he expressly rebukes this theology,

The apostle goes on to say,

*For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. (Rom,11:25-26).*

The two statements above preclude any sort of substitution for Israel as Gods chosen. It needs to be remembered that neither Jesus nor His apostles ever preached from the New Testament – it didn't exist. They preached from the Old Testament and the Old Testament is wholly about the nation of Israel: its selection as Gods people, the nation's falling away and its ultimate revival. Nowhere in the Old Testament will you find God permanently casting away Israel. You will find Him constantly rebuking them just as any loving father rebukes his child for misconduct. Not to correct is not to care.

Replacement theology is a heresy of the Church which has led to the belief that Christians are under a new and different covenant to Israel. The apostle does refer to a new covenant (Heb.9:15) but unfortunately the Church fails to recognise the fundamentals of the new covenant. One of the most salient facts, completely ignored by the Church, is that the instigator of the new covenant had to be a Jew – he had to be a descendant of Abraham. Why! because the new covenant is all about Israel it has nothing to do with Gentile Christians. The new covenant is a replacement for the old covenant which Israel broke via the golden calf incident. The golden calf transgression necessitated a new covenant which God promised via the prophet Jeremiah,

*Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; my covenant which they broke, although I was an husband to them, says the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer.31:31-33)*

What is more the writer of Hebrews confirms that the new covenant is with the house of Israel not the Gentile nations when he affirms the words spoken to Jeremiah,

*For finding fault with them, he says, Behold, the days come, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (Heb.8:8-10).*

There is nothing new about the new covenant, it was promised to the house of Israel through the prophet Jeremiah. What is most pertinent and not realised by most Christians is what is covenanted – it

is the Abrahamic promise. It is for this reason Gentiles must be grafted into Israel and become seed of Abraham the basis of the apostle's declaration in Galatians,

*And if you are of Messiah, then you are seed of Abraham and heirs according to promise. (Gal.3:29).*

Messiah inaugurated the new covenant prophesied to Jeremiah during His Passover meal with His disciples – all Jews. Thus, just as was the first covenant, the new covenant was made with Jews only and its complete fulfilment will not be achieved until the remnant of Israel enters it (Jer.23:3). Furthermore, Zechariah leaves us in no doubt that the Jewish people will remain God's people,

*And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God. (Zech.13:9).*

Scripture does not contradict Scripture if this was the case we would not know what to believe. However, in support of his replacement theology misconception the author of the above abstract quotes 1 Peter 2:9,

*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

The author is clearly ignorant of whom Peter is talking. The opening verse tells us that the apostle Peter is directing his words to his brethren the Jewish people, not the Gentile nations,

*Peter, an emissary of Messiah, to the chosen, strangers of the dispersion in Pontos, Galatia, Kappadokia, Asia, and Bithunia. (1Pet.1:1).*

There is no record in the Scriptures of the Gentiles ever being dispersed or scattered. Where would they be dispersed from? Only the Israelites had a land from which they were exiled and scattered. They were finally scattered by the Romans after 70 AD. We have further confirmation that this epistle is directed at the Jews in chapter 2,

*Which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1Pet.2:10).*

Who was it that in the past were accused of not being a people, who was it that in the past were without mercy? Peter is referring to what was said of Israel many centuries earlier by the prophet Hosea,

*And she conceived again and bore a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-Ruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. (Hos.1:6)*

*Then said God, Call his name Lo-Ammi: for you are not my people, and I will not be your God. (Hos.1:9).*

*Lo-Ruhamah* is the Hebrew for no mercy and *Lo-Ammi* is the Hebrew for not my people. Only in the book of Hosea will you find these statements by God and the whole of the book of Hosea is about God's treatment of Israel. By way of a final comment, Paul categorically states that Peter was the apostle to the Jews not Christian Gentiles,

*But to the contrary, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision (*Gentiles*) was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision (*Jews*) was unto Peter. (Gal.2:7).*

Clearly the author of the abstract is not as well versed in the Scriptures as he may believe himself to be. The apostle says we must be enjoined to Israel therefore, we must be bound by the same rules as Israel. You cannot be 'joined to' and be different, not only is that an oxymoron but it is against the Torah,

*There is one Torah for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you.*  
(Exod.12:49)

*For this community there will be the same law for you as for the foreigner living with you; this is a permanent regulation through all your generations; the foreigner is to be treated the same way before Adonai as yourselves.* (Num.15:15)

Let us now examine the next section from the abstract.

### **What Does Jesus Say**

Here the author quotes from Mark chapter 7, what is ironic is that the author warns against taking verses out of context but proceeds to do exactly that. He has isolated two specific verses; 7:15 and 7:18 and chosen to ignore the rest of the chapter. This is a dangerous practice generally resulting in misconception, as is the case with this abstract. Let me give an example, if I take the phrase from a book such as, 'John shot and killed Peter,' we immediately believe John to be guilty of murder. But if the preceding sentence says Peter attacked John with a knife and in his defence John shot and killed Peter,' we now have an entirely different aspect of the situation. It is the same when we isolate verses from the Scriptures – we lose the true context of the issue. So, what exactly is Mark chapter 7 about?

The issue Messiah is dealing with has nothing to do with clean and unclean food. The opening verses of this chapter show us that the issue is eating food with unwashed hands which, as verse 2 explains, was considered a defilement by the Jewish leaders of the day,

*And seeing some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. (Mark 7:2)*

*And He said to them, "Are you also without understanding? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside is unable to defile him? (Mark 7:18)*

The religious leaders of the day had made the rule that it was unlawful to eat without washing one's hands. Within God's law there is a section that deals with contamination, and it says that if anything unclean (defiled) touches that which is clean, the clean becomes unclean. Thus, the religious leaders taught that eating without washing hands defiled the food itself. They reinforced this doctrine by further teaching that by not washing hands invited the evil spirit Shibta to sit on the food making it unclean, therefore eating it would be harmful. But these were their own rules, not commanded by the Father and were a violation of the Father's command not to add to His law (Deut.4:2, 12:32). It was for this reason that Messiah said it is not what goes into a person that makes him unclean it is what comes out of him (out of his mouth) that makes him unclean. He was referring to them making up their own doctrines.

When He said what goes into his mouth does not make a person unclean, He was speaking metaphorically. We must remember He was speaking to Jews who would never eat anything unclean: the food was never the issue. The doctrine instituted by the religious leaders was that clean food became unclean if eaten without first washing your hands. Messiah is reprimanding them for making their own rules (rules coming out of their own mouths), this was the problem, the problem was not what was going into their mouths, the problem was not what they were eating, Jews only eat what is declared clean, hence His comment "It is not what goes into a person that makes him unclean". Subsequent verses 19-23 highlight the issue as being the correct conduct of a person, not what he is eating.



Unfortunately, the author quotes from the NIV which like some other translations contains a corruption of verse 19,

*Because it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach and is expelled as waste." (By this he declared all foods clean.) (Mark7:19).*

The words in red have been added by translators and are not present in the original manuscripts. For this reason, this phrase is always shown in parenthesis. Indeed, the better translations; KJV, The Scriptures, ET Cephher, Aramaic/English Peshitta and the Ancient Roots Translinear Bible, do not contain this additional and erroneous statement. Everything we eat is purged by the body and exits the body thus, what enters the mouth cannot defile the body. It is what comes from the heart that defiles the body. But Messiah is not declaring all food is acceptable. What Messiah is saying is that nothing we eat, in and of itself can cause spiritual defilement. Spiritual defilement is the result of transgressing God's law and when it comes to diet, not observing God's clean and unclean rules will result in spiritual defilement.

Let us now consider the final section in the abstract.

### **How Then Should We eat?**

The abstract started by stating which foods God decreed as acceptable and unacceptable. The contention is, did Jesus annul or amend what God decreed? Scripture unequivocally tells us He did not, quite the contrary, Scripture tells us that Jesus confirmed all that God decreed. The Psalmist is unequivocal,

*Your word is true from the beginning: and every one of your righteous judgments endures for ever. (Ps 119:160).*

To change that which God has given is tantamount to telling Him that He got it wrong, and the Son would never accuse the Father of making a mistake. So just what did Messiah say?

*"Do not think that I came to destroy (Kataloū) the Law or the Prophets. I didn't come to destroy them, but to fulfil them. (Matt.5:17)*

*Because I tell you with certainty that until heaven and earth disappear, not one letter or one stroke of a letter will disappear from the Law until everything has been accomplished. (Matt.5:18)*

Some translations have complete not fulfil in Matt.5 17 and it is incorrectly understood to mean end. But such an understanding contradicts the previous statement in which Messiah clearly states He has not come to *Kataloū* (subvert, demolish, bring to nought, end) the Law. To remove any confusion Messiah clarifies his comment in the following verse, in which He confirms that not the smallest part of the law is to be ignored until heaven and earth pass away and when will this be?

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (Rev.21:1)*

Revelation chapter 21 is describing the 'Eighth Day,' that is after the millennium (the 1000 years of Messiah's rule). So, from Matt 5:18 it is clear that the whole of the Father's law (every word that came from His mouth) is to be observed. We do not know the circumstances concerning the 'Eighth Day' but until then Messiah leaves us all in no doubt,

*But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. (Matt.4:4)*

How could Messiah say this if He was going to annul what the Father had decreed? He couldn't, what is more Messiah knew He did not have the authority to change what the Father had decreed because He was sent by the Father to do the will of the Father,



*I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. (John 5:30).*

And what is the will of the Father?

*Do not add to the Word which I command you, and do not take away from it, so as to guard the commands of the Lord your God which I am commanding you. (Deut.4:2, 12:32)*

What is more, Messiah divorces Himself from those who do not do the will of the Father,

*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Master, Master,' shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of My Father in the heavens. (Matt.7:21)*

*For whoever does the desire of My Father who is in the heavens is My brother and sister and mother."(Matt.12:50)*

Christianity has either misinterpreted or chosen to ignore the words of Messiah and decided for itself what law is applicable and what law is unapplicable. Nothing could be more adverse to the teaching of Messiah. So critical is it to observe the Father's will that He spelt out for us exactly what He requires of us,

*He said, "If you will carefully obey the LORD your God, do what is right in his eyes, listen to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, then I won't inflict on you all the diseases that I inflicted on the Egyptians, because I am the LORD your healer." (Exod.15:26).*

*So that you, your children, and your grandchildren may fear the LORD your God. Keep all his decrees and commandments that I'm giving you every day of your life, so you may live a long time. (Deut.6:2).*

*Be sure to observe the commands of the LORD your God, his testimonies and his decrees that he gave you. (Deut.6:17).*

We must remember it is the Father's creation not the Sons creation and quite clearly the Son was not sent to interfere with anything decreed by the Father, (John.5:30). His purpose was to correct the false teaching of the religious leaders of the day (it would be better to replace fulfil or complete in Matt.5:17 with clarify) and to extend salvation to the Gentile nations. But the terms of salvation remain as originally given to Israel. As the apostle said,

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim.3:16-17)*

Take note there was no New Testament when these words were spoken, the cannon we have today did not exist, so the apostle could only be referring to the Old Testament. How could the apostle say what he did if His Master had annulled a part of the Scriptures? As said earlier, Messiah was not at liberty to make the slightest change, He could not therefore authorise His apostles to make changes, which is why He told them,

*Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt.5:19).*

False teachers shall be considered least, i.e. last, by those in the kingdom of heaven, whereas those teaching the truth shall be considered great by those in the kingdom of heaven. Then we have James' exclamation which is equally applicable to all,

*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. (Jas.2:10).*

Our Father only ever gave one set of rules; given to Israel through Moses. His single set of rules is the only means of maintaining a proper relationship with Him: there is no other way. According to James, live outside any **one** of His rules and you have no relationship with Him.

## **Conclusion**

Look at what the apostle says in Corinthians,

*Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you. (2Cor.6:17).*

Just who are the people we are to 'come from amongst: who are the 'them' the apostle is referring to? Verse 14 explains it to be the unrighteous, the unlawful. Hence to be associated with the unclean (which must include the dietary laws) is to be unrighteous. Furthermore, the apostle emphasises not even to touch what is unclean. At the time of writing his epistle to the Corinthian congregation, only the Old Testament existed hence the apostle had to be referring to the clean/unclean laws contained in the Old Testament.

Let us examine verse 14,

*Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness? (2Cor.6:14)*

For a complete understanding of this verse we must include Rom.2:13,

*For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*

'Doers of the law,' what law? As just said the disciples knew only the Old Testament law. Nowhere within the epistles will you find any annulment of the God's law, Matt.4:4 precludes this. The apostle does refer to a change in the law (Heb.7:12) and whilst this is specific to the laws concerning the priesthood it is a change and not an annulment of God's precepts.

Now let us look at another verse from the same apostle, which has been completely misinterpreted,

*Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths: which are a shadow of what is to come: but the Body **is** of the Messiah.(Col.2:16-17)*

Verses 16 & 17 are misunderstood due to poor translations. The word 'is' is a later addition and what is significant is the colon after Sabbaths (in some translations it says Sabbath days). The colon isolates what follows from the subjectivity of the verse, thus the phrase - 'which are a shadow of what is to come' is an interjection, an elaboration and tangential to the actual message. The apostle's message becomes a lot clearer when we remove the additional word and this phrase:

*Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths: but the Body of the Messiah.*

The apostle reiterates his words in his epistle to the Corinthian congregation,

*How dare one of you with a complaint against another go to court before pagan judges and not before God's people? Don't you know that God's people are going to judge the universe? If you are going to judge the universe, are you incompetent to judge these minor matters? (1Cor.6:1-2)*

Thus, the crux of apostle's message is, let no pagan judge you but be judged only by those in the Body of Messiah. He is not undoing any of the law he is reiterating what is commanded in the Torah. If Messiah had no authority to change the law the apostle most certainly had no such authority.

God decrees that for us to have a correct relationship with Him we must strive for holiness and He further decrees that holiness is conditional upon observance of His clean and unclean laws, (Lev.11:44-47, 20:24-26)

It is very true God did only give the dietary laws to Israel but only Israel will be saved and Gentiles wishing for salvation must be enjoined to Israel - that has always been the truth. The apostle knew this truth and told believers that they must be grafted into the 'olive tree' a euphemism for Israel. Thus, all the commandments, precepts, laws and statutes given to Israel also apply to all who are grafted into Israel. (Exod.12:49, Num.15:15). So, what can we eat and what should we not eat? Most are aware of the prohibition against pork but the dietary law goes much farther and Leviticus chapter 11 and Deuteronomy chapter 14 detail what is clean and unclean. The Scriptures classifies clean animals generally as ruminant animals (those that chew the cud) and having a split hoof. Cud chewing is necessary because the foods ruminant animals eat are difficult to digest and it takes extra effort to get all the nutrients from the food. Ruminants do not completely chew the grass or vegetation they eat: the partially digested food is regurgitated from the first stomach back into the mouth for a second chewing. For sea food to be classed as clean it must have both scales and fins. With respect to birds the Scriptures are not so clear generally birds of prey are considered unclean, sea birds are considered unclean. Very few insects are considered clean.

There is some confusion concerning the classification of birds: is duck clean or unclean? Are sea birds clean or unclean? According to the Talmud the answer is no. The Talmud states that clean birds must have a supernumerary toe i.e., a hind rear facing toe. This rules out all sea birds: swans ducks and geese. The Talmud also requires clean birds to have a crop and not be birds of prey.

The Appendix on the next page categorizes the most common foods.

Clifford Fearnley 2020 (Revised 2023)

1 For more teaching on this subject see 'Clean and Unclean / The whole Truth' by Walter Veith of Amazing Discoveries

2 The true relevance of the Law for Christians is explained in the separate article ' Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Law' on the web [www.undertorah.com](http://www.undertorah.com) in the Miscellaneous articles section

## Appendix

Item	Allowed	Prohibited	Comments
<b>Animals</b>			
Rabbit/hare		..	} Animals that do not chew the cud <b>and</b> have a split hoof are prohibited
Pig, camel, coney, horse, bear, llama, mule, donkey, zebra		..	
Frog, lizard, rat, snake, mole, mouse		..	
Cat, dog		..	
Beef, sheep, goat, ox, bison, buffalo, elk , ibex, onyx, deer, moose, springbok, wildebeest, yak	..		
<b>From the Sea</b>			
Turtles, octopus, eel, squid		..	No fins, no scales, no good
All shell fish: mussels, scallops, cockels, clams, oysters, mollusks, abalone		..	
Crab, lobster, prawns, shrimp, urchins		..	
Any fish not having scales <b>and</b> fins are prohibited: shark, catfish, monkfish, swordfish, sturgeon, walrus, whale		..	
Tuna, flounder, snapper, cod, bass, haddock, halibut, salmon, sardines, whiting, trout, sole etc.	..		
<b>Insects</b>			
All insects are prohibited except for locusts, crickets and grasshoppers			
<b>Birds</b>			
All birds of prey are prohibited; eagle, buzzard, owl, vulture, falcon, osprey, condor, bat, ostrich, neron, stork and all sea birds.		..	
Chicken, turkey, grouse, pheasant, pigeon partridge, dove, quail	..		