

Christ in the Dietary Laws (Leviticus 11)

I. Dietary Laws: An Example from Leviticus 11

a. Four main views put forward

- i. Arbitrary view
- ii. Cultic view
- iii. Hygienic/Health view
- iv. Symbolic view

1. Dietary laws exhibit a restriction of things that are somehow mixed or deformed/abnormal in relation to the original creation, the pinnacle abnormality being death.
2. They symbolically function to call Israel to recognize their distinct status from the nations, an illustration of the separation between Jew and Gentile, Israel and the nations.

b. The Context of Leviticus: Communion with a holy God (Lev. 19:1–2)

c. Outline of Leviticus 11

- i. Identifying clean/unclean animals (vv. 1–23)
- ii. Pollution from animals and their treatment (vv. 24–45)
- iii. Concluding exhortation (vv. 46–47)

d. Leviticus 11 draws from Genesis 1

- i. Created order in three “spheres” with three categories of inhabitants: land, sea, and air. Leviticus 11:1–23 exhibits the same threefold order:
 1. Lev. 11:3–8 (land creatures); 11:9–12 (sea creatures); 11:12–23 (flying creatures).
- ii. In Genesis 1 God “separates” between the various “spheres” using the *hifil* of the Hebrew verb (בָּדַל) meaning “to separate” followed by the preposition (בֵּין) “between.”
 1. Lev. 11:47 alludes to that same language (cf. Lev. 10:10; 20:25).
 2. The dietary restrictions in one way or another reflect the *original created order* in what is allowed and reflect the *ramifications of the fall* in what is forbidden.

iii. Creatures that violate creaturely realms

iv. Creatures associated with death/Sheol

v. Creatures associated with the curse

e. Four ways Christ is revealed Leviticus 11

- i. Leviticus 11 reflects on the reality of sin and its consequences, looking forward to its remedy
- ii. Leviticus 11 is part of a narrative of redemptive re-creation, looking forward to the new heavens and new earth
- iii. Leviticus 11 tells of redemptive communion with God as a holy people marked by their diet, looking forward to a time where that people will be a united Jew-Gentile people in Christ marked by a dietary change
- iv. Leviticus 11 calls us to be holy as God is holy