

Cleanliness Next to Godliness?

Leviticus 11-15

Instructions for Cleanliness Laws

• Leviticus 10:10-11

A) Laws related to Food (Lev.11)

- a. This chapter explains which creatures were considered clean and which were considered unclean (same basic divisions as Gen 1)
- b. You'll be glad to know that some insects were allowed (locusts / grasshoppers) - John the Baptist stuff
- c. Be Holy...Be distinct

B) Laws related to the Body (Lev.12-15)

- a. After childbirth (Lev.12)
- b. With skin problems (Lev.13-14)
- c. Regarding discharges (Lev.15)
- d. When uncleanness occurs

Interpretations of Cleanliness Laws

A) Related to Food

- a. Some say Health guidelines
- b. Others say Reaction to pagan / Canaanite rituals (Rom.14)
- c. Or Natural foods
- d. Essentially shows God's guidelines ...

B) Related to the Body

- a. Some speculate it proves that God is different in the OT - this plan just wasn't going to work (huh?)
- b. Certainly Reveals how "fallen" we are in our very nature

Intention of Cleanliness Laws

• Leviticus 15:31

A) The Extent of God's Holiness

- a. God's Holiness permeates everything: This proves that God is interested in purity in every area of our lives
- b. 1 Cor.10:31
- c. God will not dwell in the presence of any uncleanness or sin

B) The Extent of Man's Depravity

- a. People are Unclean because they Disobey God's Word (11)
- b. People are Unclean because of Who They Are (12-15)

C) The Extent of God's Grace

- a. Makes Clean what was Unclean
 - i. Matt.15:10-11,16-20
 - ii. Acts 10:9-16
 - iii. Mark 5:25-34
- b. Keep in mind that what follows in Leviticus 16 is instruction for the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest goes before the Lord to offer atoning sacrifice for the sins of the people
- c. Hebrews 9:6-14

Implications of Cleanliness Laws

- A) For man to be right with God, he must be cleansed within and without (Christ does this in making us new thru the Cross)

B) The whole person must be cleansed, therefore the whole person must be sanctified

- a. **1 Peter 1:14-15**
- b. **Heb.10:14**
- c. **2 Peter 1:9**

C) This turns the most subdued believer into a cheerleader for Jesus!

- a. Not merely because of how stringent and embarrassing these laws seem
- b. Because it reveals just how impossible it is to be cleansed apart from Jesus -- then He cleanses us through and through!
- c. We are redeemed wholly so that we may worship wholly...this would make us Holy!
- d. **Mark 12:30**

D) We must consider the Community!

- a. Sin has its consequences, and they are always more extensive than we think
- b. While foods are now clean, we are charged to think first of the body of Christ (**Romans 14**)
- c. Grace does not exalt personal rights over joy in the community
- d. **1 Cor.10:23-33**

E) Redemptive message to the World!

- a. You can be clean!!!
- b. **Jude 22-23**
- c. **Hebrews 10:19-22**