

Food

In the language of the Hebrews and even Canaanites the word food meant both what could be grown in the soil and meat

Many times in the Bible, the word “bread” is also a general term for food

Kosher – literally “proper” – the dietary laws for the Jewish people that govern the choice, preparation and consumption of food and drink

Generally speaking, there are no dietary restrictions on items grown from the soil (vegetables, fruits, grains)

Meat is a different matter... probably only eaten at special times

- Leviticus 11:1-8 (p. 169) – cloven hoof *and* cud chewing are OK
- Fish: Fins and scales (Lev. 11:9-12)... what does that leave out?
- Birds: Birds of prey off limits (Lev. 11:13-19)
- Insects: Locust are OK (Lev. 11:22)

Slaughtering of permitted animals strictly regulated and blood must be removed

Some parts of animals are also prohibited

“No mixture of meat and dairy products may be consumed, prepared or used for benefit by a Jew.”

Different food types require separate utensils and dishes

Why these rules? Some possibilities:

- Purity: Pure body = pure soul
- Morality: Aversion to blood leads to aversion of bloodshed
- Stewardship: Taking care of God’s creation
- Health: Maybe God wants us to be vegetarians??

What did Jesus say? Mark 7:14 (p. 1564)

Peter’s vision: Acts 10:9-15 (p. 1709)

So we have freedom in eating... but how do we deal with those who still follow restrictions?

About Freedom and Unity

Quotes from David L. Bartlett:

“Paul calls us to the obedience of faith. That does not mean that ‘anything goes’ for Christians, but it does mean that we are free to engage in a great many activities that really do not affect our faith one way or the other. It also means that we are called to be open to other people who may live differently than we live, but who also are a part of God’s call, God’s plan, God’s justifying, God’s welcome. When we refuse to welcome those whom God has welcomed, our self-righteousness is sin.”

“Paul’s reminder to us not to judge one another and not to cause the other to stumble remains continually helpful, even if the main issues in our time are not vegetarianism or fast days.”

“Differences may have their place in the body of Christ, but divisiveness does not. Divisiveness destroys hope and encourages boasting. ... God has told me just how to understand scripture, and if you don’t see it my way, you don’t see it God’s way.”

“True faith brings us together; false faiths drive us apart.”