

ML301 Chewing the Cud

Moses gave Israel different laws that controlled many parts of their everyday life. God gave him these laws to teach the people how to discern good from evil.

The law divides clean and unclean creatures into one set of four: [1] beasts [2] fowls [3] water creatures, and [4] earth creatures [Le 11:46]. Depending on specific their features, some are eatable and others are non-eatable.

Other than certain words like “and, the, is, shall etc.,” most words that form God’s laws are symbols. So, to learn what all laws teach, we interpret their symbols.

Common to this set of clean and unclean beasts are the symbols ‘eat and meat.’ The word meat accompanies neither of these four, but it appears in Le 11:34, which refers to all four. And we know all flesh as meat. So, let’s begin by interpreting these two symbols.

In Joh 4:1-34, the 12 disciples are in the city buying food and Jesus is talking with “The woman at the Well.” The 12 return and find Him talking with the woman. Concerned that He might be hungry, they ask if He has eaten. His answer reveals the meanings of eat and meat.

Jesus said, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” In this verse, meat means work and eat means do. Thus, Jesus said, “I have work to do that you know nothing about.”

The Law of Beasts

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth. Whatsoever parteth the hoof and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat [Le 11:2-3].

Beasts “chew the cud;” we “chew the fat.” Although “chewing the cud” is symbolic, it is also a cliché. Thus, a beast that chews the cud represents a person who talks.

Another symbol is the word “hoof.” This one is a little more complex, but not by much. We already know this law pertains to a person, so the hooves of this beast relate to the feet of a person. Feet depict one’s “walk in life.” Your walk and my walk are what we do as we journey through this life.

One more symbol will complete the interpretation. The hooves of this beast must be separated. Think of a garlic bulb. It has non-separated cloves. Camels’ hooves are like garlic bulbs. The word in this law concerning hooves means “parted.” Thus,

to be clean, this beast must have hooves that separate. A camel’s hooves do not divide.

Leviticus 11:4 gives a camel as an example of a beast that chews the cud but does not part the hoof. The tops of its hooves may look like the cloves of a garlic bulb, but they do not divide. So, the camel depicts a person who speaks but does not do what he says.

Le 11:7 gives an example of a beast that is the opposite of the camel. The swine divides the hoof but does not chew the cud. Swines depict people who believe in salvation via their works. They divide the hoof like the swine but do not believe in the goal their actions strive to obtain.

A divided hoof has two parts. In Bible Numerology [see FL204], two [2] means divide. All symbol roots, including the roots of numbers [1-9], divide into branches. “Sanctify” is one branch of the root 2. Sanctify means to cleanse, to purify. Thus, a beast that divides the hoof represents a person who walks in sanctification but has no faith to justify their works.

So this is what the law of clean and unclean animals teaches: “You must sanctify your walk in this life by doing what you say.” We have a cliché that summarizes what these symbols teach. The law of clean and unclean beasts teaches us to “practice what we preach.”

Unclean Beasts

Now let’s *chew the cud* about people who break this law: Camels chew the cud but do not divide the hoof: “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not” [Mt 23:1-3].

Like the camel, the Pharisee chewed the cud but did not do what Jesus said; like the swine, the Sadducee divided the hoof [carefully sanctified their walk through life], but did not believe what he practiced: “For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both” [Ac 23:8]. Thus, to ensure that you are not unclean, you must practice what you preach and you must preach what you practice.

There is a hybrid, a mixture of the two. The name of this beast is “legalism.” The legalist believes in salvation by faith but tries to justify his faith by works of self-righteousness. “Faith without works is dead” [Ja 2:20], but so are works without faith. Work is the body of faith.