

DID THE LAW OF GOD/MOSES KNOW ABOUT INFECTION?

Bible-believers are confident that God told the ancient Hebrews things about germs and infection that were only rediscovered centuries later. If they are right then that would indicate that they knew things that nobody could have found out unless they were told by some supernatural being or alien.

The Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy were supposed to have been revealed by God and have absolute infallibility.

Is the fundamentalist notion that Deuteronomy 14:21, which forbids the Hebrews to eat an animal that died naturally, proves that they knew about bacteria long before they were discovered, credible? How can it be when the verse doesn't say why it must not be eaten except that it is ritually unclean?

The Bible says that touching a seat used by a menstruating woman was unclean so perhaps unclean means that God doesn't allow it and not that it necessarily is dirty or infectious or that it is magically infectious. Even many pagan gods hated dirt, real and imagined, and considered it disrespectful. Thus, some believe they detect that eating animals that have died without being killed is not forbidden because of the danger of infection at all. But the Hebrews saw a connection between dirt and sickness but they did not know what the connection was. They did not know about germs. They were thinking in terms of dirt magically causing the dirt of sickness as did many occultic systems in those days. The verse says that the animal may be given for food to other races. Are we to conclude that God does not mind who dies from food poisoning and infection as long as it is not people from Hebrew descent? We would if the fundamentalists had their way for the Bible has a racist God. Many nations unrelated to the Law encapsulated this ban on eating such animals in their own laws. This is a sign that no miraculous enlightenment was required for knowing that the consumption of animals who died naturally was not commendable.

Deuteronomy 23:12-14 tells the people to dispose of sewage by burying it away from where people live. Fundamentalists drop their jaws in false amazement at this pretending that it is proof that God knew that this prevents infection which was not known in those days and that the Bible must be inspired. But the text tells us that this must be done for God does not like it dirtying the land or to see it when he goes about the land and who would want excrement on full view? It also shows that God would despise sodomy for he would find it grossly indecent.

Moses forbade people to drink water from stagnant pools and which flesh had rotted in (Leviticus 11:29-36). This does not mean that God told him in advance of science about the discoveries of bacteriology for God said that any pan touched by this water must be broken and thrown away and not boiled to sterilise it. God forbids it because he doesn't like it – who would? – and not because it is dangerous. God never said that contaminated water is infectious yet fundamentalists pretend that this is the proper reasoning behind this verse!

Is the Bible law that people must avoid contact with leprosy (Leviticus 13) evidence that God revealed to humanity that it is infectious? But the blasted book says that leprosy could spread when it infects a damp wall so the sense came from human observation and not from a divine revelation. Leprosy in the Bible is any mould or rash or skin infection and is not just the disease we call leprosy now (page 122, Bible Dictionary and Concordance, New American Bible).

Pigs are maligned as unclean food but they are not when cleaned and cooked right. Animals revered by the pagan nations around Israel were thought to be unclean just because Israel disputed other religionists (ibid 29).

The Bible has a magical and not a scientific understanding of infection. It supposes that magical forces spread disease. It is plain that God did not know about germs or understand fully how infection could be stopped.

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