

PETER'S VISION WHERE ALL FOOD IS DECLARED CLEAN BY GOD

Christians say that God did away with the rules in the Old Testament that unclean food is banned. This leads to people thinking God lets you break the rule but what if it merely is saying God cleaned the food. The law then is not abolished but made no longer relevant.

Some groups hold that unclean food is still a reality.

Peter's vision seems to be an obstacle to those who believe in clean and unclean food.

In Peter's vision of being told to eat unclean animals for they were made clean (Acts 11) we find no proof that the laws about eating are a thing of the past. Peter never said that the dream was divinely inspired but only that the realisation that nobody was dirty just because of their race was caused by it. The reason he talked about it and considered it important was simply because it convinced him to evangelise the Gentiles instead of considering them too dirty to even think about. Peter misinterpreted the Law which did not tell him to go that far in concern about purity. The dream somehow made him learn through making him think.

Suppose Peter had been told by God that what is unclean in the Law is now clean seeming to mean that the purity laws and food laws are cancelled (Acts 10:28). Could Jews be opposed to them and be loyal to the Law? Yes! Peter could have been told that the laws were rendered obsolete, not rescinded for God had purified the dirty things for a greater purpose. God has promised to miraculously prevent the foods infecting people from now on. Making a law no longer applicable is not revoking it. If Peter did declare the law revoked then he was a heretic for the Law of Moses made it clear that distinctions between clean and unclean animals had to be made (Leviticus 10:10;11; Deuteronomy 14:3-20).

When the dream showed Peter that no Gentile was dirty just because he was not a Jew it could be that Peter saw animals in this dream that he thought were dirty but which were not dirty at all according to the Law. Perhaps they were animals that did not even exist. He must have thought that the animals represented the Gentiles when he was able to discover that Gentiles were clean in themselves by God chastising him for saying they were dirty. Otherwise, there would be no comparison and no lesson. You can't work out that Gentiles are clean if God tells you that animals are clean for the two could be different.

It will be objected that in the dream God said he was making what was unclean clean so Gentiles were dirty. But God could have made them clean by inspiring the prospective convert Gentiles to keep within the purity laws. That was why Jews thought they were filthy for they did not keep those laws.

In 2 Peter, Peter or his disciple says that though Peter had a vision of Jesus transfigured the Law of Moses and the Prophets in other words the Old Testament, is even more certainly from God than this vision. This tells us that Jesus had no authority and did not claim any to do away with the civil or the religious laws of the Torah. You can't do away with what is superior to you and which you have set up to give you your authority provided you stand by it.

The dream was about people in themselves. The Law never said that anybody was dirty in themselves as persons.

Conclusion: The purity laws are still in force and true Christians will abide by them. Even if Christians do not have to keep them the reason is not that the laws are abandoned but that Christians are put beyond them. The Christian is still to regard them as true and correct and valid.

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