

Immerse Day 44 :: Apr. 1

As I read this section, it seems fitting to read on Apr. 1; it seems like an April Fools joke. Really God? A list of foods we can't eat? And in that list, you put BACON!?! You're joking, right?

I have heard pastor after pastor, theologian after theologian try to explain why this particular list of foods is bad and the other list is good. I've heard that these were the most likely culprits when it came to carrying disease. I've heard that these had something to do with Creation. I've heard that this was God's Omniscient Diet Plan, with clean animals being more healthy than unclean ones. But I have yet to hear an explanation that makes much sense to me. Why is a locust clean but a fishfly isn't?

The reality is, we just don't know. And beyond that, it is not our place to know. If we can't find a scientific explanation for the delineation of clean and unclean animals, that's ok. Our Holy God has decreed it, shared it with His people not to take away the fun of eating a gecko (yuck) but to draw them closer to Him. Even in the obedience, whether it makes sense or not, we draw closer to God.

I couldn't help but think of a great song from The Jonah Movie by VeggieTales about this. Here you go if you want a giggle. Just click the picture below.



An interesting thing to note here is that with all this talk about clean and unclean, we see a marked shift in the language and theology of uncleanness. Back on Day 34 of this blog, we discussed the fact that Cleanness was contagious! If the holy things of God touched anything else, they became holy as well. We had a funny moment as a family imagining Aaron walking around with the Holy Ladle from the temple, bonking people on the head saying, "You're holy, and you're holy, and you're holy!" Yup, we're weird, but not too sacrilegious!

Today, that concept is flipped on its head. Now it's Uncleanness that is contagious. When an unclean person or object touches clean things, they too become unclean. And it is this concept that will hold sway through the rest of the Old Testament and into the new. In fact, one of the only things that can make an Unclean person Clean again is flowing water. This makes sense since still water holds the dirt and uncleanness (ever try to put a clean spoon in a sink of water you just used to wash a greasy pot? Ew!) But flowing water takes the uncleanness away, sweeping it "out to sea". They called this flowing water "living water", and we know how Jesus played with that image (John 4:10).

How do we view Clean and Unclean today? I know we don't live by the OT Law anymore, but we still have trouble touching dirty, ill, or diseased people at times (insert COVID warning here). But what if we truly recognized our own Christlikeness and realized that when we touch the unclean things of this world, they become clean, just like if they were dipped in Living Water? How might we live differently?