

Deuteronomy 14

Verses 1 – 2

“You are sons of the Lord your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave a bald spot above your forehead for the dead. ² For you are a holy people to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for His personal possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

This is a repeat of Leviticus 19:27-28

The cutting of the body with knives was a custom in pagan worship.

See 1 Kings 18:28

The priests of Baal on Mount Carmel in the contest with Elijah did this.

The Jews were forbidden to indulge in pagan funeral customs such as shaving a bald spot above the forehead for the dead.

See Leviticus 19:28-27 (for the general public)

See Leviticus 21:5 (for the priests)

Verses 3 – 20

³“You shall not eat any detestable thing. ⁴ These are the animals that you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵ the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶ And any animal that has a divided hoof and has *its* hoofs split in two, *and* chews the cud, among the animals, that animal you may eat. ⁷ However, you are not to eat these among the ones that chew the cud, or among those that have the hoof divided in two: the camel, the rabbit, and the rock hyrax, for though they chew the cud, they do not have a divided hoof; they are unclean to you. ⁸ And the pig, because it has a divided hoof but *does not chew* the cud, it is unclean for you. You shall not eat any of their flesh, nor touch their carcasses.

⁹“These you may eat of everything that is in the water: anything that has fins and scales you may eat, ¹⁰ but anything that does not have fins and scales, you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

¹¹ “You may eat any clean bird. ¹² But these are the ones that you shall not eat: the eagle and the vulture and the buzzard, ¹³ and the red kite, the falcon, and the kite in their kinds, ¹⁴ and every raven in its kind, ¹⁵ and the ostrich, the owl, the seagull, and the hawk in their kinds, ¹⁶ the little owl, the great owl, the white owl, ¹⁷ the pelican, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, ¹⁸ the stork, and the heron in their kinds, and the hoopoe and the bat. ¹⁹ And all the swarming insects with wings are unclean to you; they shall not be eaten. ²⁰ You may eat any clean bird.

We covered clean and unclean creatures in Lev. 11

This time we will just look at the big picture concerning these rules.

Why were some creatures clean while others were unclean? In a few instances, there was a plausible reason for the restrictions.

Pigs, for example, are a prime carrier of trichinosis. But as a whole, the list seems to be arbitrary.

A lot of Christians feel uneasy with the premise that the details of a command from God could be arbitrary. But Jesus said cleanness and uncleanness comes from the heart, which has nothing to do with what a person eats.

See Mark 7:17 - 23

So why did God command the Jews not to eat certain creatures? Just because something is arbitrary doesn't mean it is without purpose. These dietary restrictions did what they were designed to do. They drew a distinction between the Jews and other nations.

Verse 21

²¹ “You shall not eat anything which dies *of itself*. You may give it to the stranger who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a stranger; for you are a holy people to the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Pagan religions taught that the new life of the kid added to its mother's milk created double fertility.

God prohibited His people from indulging in pagan superstition.

Verses 22 - 23

²² “You shall certainly tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes from the field every year. ²³ You shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always.

Here we have another change in the law

See pic 1405 **change in the law #2**

Changes in the law		
Num	18:21	To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel as an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting
Deut	14:23	You shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always
Deut	14:28 - 29	At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and you shall deposit it in your town. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the stranger, the orphan, and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand
Why did God make this change?		
A lot of time and expense went into these 3 journeys to the Tabernacle It may have taken 2 or 3 days to get there and the same coming back Plus two of the 3 feasts lasted for a week God wanted these 3 feasts to be a joyous occasion So in two of the 3 years the tithe went to that cause		

The people still had to tithe all the produce that came from the field every year and the first born of their herd and flock but instead of all of it going to the Levites it would now belong to the people to eat at the Tabernacle during the feasts (Some was given to the Levites). This was done the first two years of a three year cycle.

The 3 festivals that all the men of Israel were required to attend celebrated the beginning or end of a harvest so the tithing of the produce was done in stages throughout the year.

See chart 1410

Jewish Feasts						
Feast	Scripture	Date Observed	Roman Calendar	Sabbath	Offerings	Commemorates
Passover	Lev. 23:05	Nisan 14 At twilight	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Oldest son saved from death
Festival of Unleavened Bread	Lev. 23:6-8	Nisan 15-21	March/April	Day 1 & 7 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 28:16-24	The hasty flight from Egypt
Offering the First Fruits	Lev. 23:9-14	After the Sabbath	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Beginning of the barley harvest
Feast Of Weeks (Pentecost)	Lev. 23:15-22	50 days after F.F.	May/June	Special Sabbath	Numbers 28:26-31	beginning of the wheat harvest.
Festival of Trumpets	Lev. 23:23-25	Tishri 1	September	Special Sabbath	Numbers 29:1-6	Civil New Year
Day of Atonement	Lev. 23:26-32	Tishri 10	Sept/Oct	Sabbath	Numbers 29:7-11	Forgiveness of sin for the nation
Tabernacles Temp. Shelters	Lev. 23:33-34	Tishri 15-21	Sept/Oct	Day 1 & 8 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 29:12-38	Wilderness End of harvest

Verses 24 - 27

²⁴ But if the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring *the tithe*, since the place where the Lord your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when the Lord your God blesses you, ²⁵ then you shall exchange *it* for money, and bind the money in your hand and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. ²⁶ And you may spend the money on whatever your heart desires: on oxen, sheep, wine, *other* strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. ²⁷ Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance among you.

²⁴ But if the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring *the tithe*,

If the distance was too far to carry the tithe (produce & cattle) to the Tabernacle they could convert the tithe into money. Then when they got to the Tabernacle the money could be used to buy oxen, sheep, wine, *other* strong drink or whatever the heart desired. So the tithe was being used at the feasts.

And there you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household.

All the men were required to go to the Tabernacle 3 times during the year but by this, we can see that the whole family was involved.

²⁷ Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance among you.

During the wilderness wanderings, the Levites received the entire tithe but in the Promised Land, they received something less than that.

The Levites didn't require as much in the Promised Land because they had their own cities and surrounding fields.

They were not given a region of land like the other tribes but they did receive cities and land dispersed throughout the 12 tribes.

Verses 28 - 29

²⁸ "At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and you shall deposit *it* in your town. ²⁹ And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the stranger, the orphan, and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

The first two years the tithe was eaten at the 3 feasts with some of it going to the Levites.

On the 3rd year, the entire tithe went to the town where they lived.

This was used for the Levites, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow

So why did God change the law concerning tithing?

A lot of time and expense went into these 3 journeys to the Tabernacle. It may have taken 2 or 3 days to get there and the same coming back. Plus two of the 3 feasts lasted for a week.

This would have been a big expense for many families and God wanted these 3 feasts to be a joyous occasion. So in two of the 3 years the tithe went to that cause.

This is a lot like what happens in our time. The money we tithe comes back to us in many ways:

We have a nice building to meet in.

We have a paid staff to help meet our needs.

This includes sermons, teaching, counselling, and activities for our kids.

Marriage ceremonies, special events, and funerals

And the personal growth that comes from all of this

God also wanted the poor to be taken care of so every third year the tithe went to the needy in the town.

This was done **“In order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.”**