

Culdee Christian Dietary Laws

An A.C.I. Doctrine Book

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First and foremost let us begin by recognizing that the word “*Kosher*” will not be used in this study due to its origin as a *Yiddish* word: *Kosher* (/’kooJar/ in English, Yiddish:, from the Ashkenazi pronunciation of the Hebrew term *kasher*); and because it is used by the Converso-Edomite Jews; who follow the corrupted teachings of the Babylonian **Talmud**. The correct and proper word to use is the Hebrew word “*Kashrut*” when referring to the ancient Hebrew/Israelite Dietary laws of the Scriptures.

We enter into this study with open eyes and full hearts in our quest to set aright the understanding of the *Kashrut* laws and their application through the Essene *Halakha* to which we adhere within the Assembly of Christian Israelites. For those of you who are unfamiliar with why a “Christian Assembly” would follow the Old Testament dietary laws it is because our Assembly is descended directly from the Apostle **Joseph Of Arimathea**, who established the “Culdee” Assembly in Britain as early as 37 A.D. Please consult **Appendix-A** for a brief presentation.

Kashrut; is the body of Hebrew religious law dealing with what foods we can and cannot eat and how those foods must be prepared and eaten. “*Kashrut*” comes from the Hebrew root Kaf-Shin-Resh, meaning fit, proper or correct. It is the same root as the more commonly known word “*Kasher*”, which is the verb describing the making something “fit”; to meet the *Kashrut* standards. The word “*Kashrut*” can also be used, and often is used, to describe ritual objects that are made in accordance with Essene law (*Halakha*) and are fit for ritual use.

Contrary to popular misconception, Pastors, Teachers or other religious figures (including Rabbis of Judaism) do not “bless” food to make it *Kashrut*. There are blessings that observant Israelites recite over food before eating it, but these blessings have nothing to do with making the food *Kashrut*. Food can be *Kashrut* without Clergy ever becoming involved with it: the vegetables in your garden are undoubtedly *Kashrut* (as long as they don't have any bugs, which are not *Kashrut*). However, in our modern world of processed foods, it is difficult to know what ingredients are in your food and how they were processed, so it is helpful to have a teacher examine the food and its processing and assure *Kashrut* consumers that the food is *Kashrut*. This certification process is discussed below.

Kashrut dietary laws are observed all year around, not just during Pesach (Passover). There are additional dietary concerns during Pesach, and many foods that are *Kashrut* for year-round use are not “*Kashrut* for Passover”. A piece of bread, for example, can be *Kashrut* for year-round use but is certainly not *Kashrut* for Passover! Foods that are *Kashrut* for Passover, however, are always *Kashrut* for year-round use.

Food that is not *Kashrut* is commonly referred to as ***treife*** (lit. torn, from the commandment not to eat animals that have been torn by other animals).

Why Do We Observe the Laws Of Kashrut?

Many modern Israelites think that the laws of Kashrut are simply primitive health regulations that have become obsolete with modern methods of food preparation. There is no question that some of the dietary laws have some beneficial health effects. For example, the laws regarding Kashrut slaughter are so sanitary that Kashrut butchers and slaughterhouses have been exempted from many USDA regulations.

However, health is not the only reason for Israelitish dietary laws. Many of the laws of Kashrut have no known connection with health. To the best of our modern scientific knowledge, there is no reason why camel meat (treife) is any less healthy than cow or goat meat.

The short answer to why Israelites observe these laws is: because the Torah says so. The Torah does not specify any reason for these laws; for a Torah observant Israelite there is no need for any other reason. Some have suggested that the laws of Kashrut fall into category of “chukkim”, laws for which there is no reason. We show our obedience to Yahuah-Elohim by following these laws even though we do not know the reason. Others, however, have tried to ascertain Yahuah-Elohim's reason for imposing these laws.

It has been suggested that the dietary laws are designed as a call to holiness. The ability to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil, clean and defiled, the sacred and profane, is very important to Apostolic Culdee Christianity. Imposing rules on what you can and cannot eat ingrains that kind of self control, requiring us to learn to control even our most basic, primal instincts.

The primary reason, however for the Kashrut laws of Scripture, according to our founder Dr. Wesley A. Swift, is that the Kashrut laws help Israel maintain a distinct and separate existence from the other peoples of the earth, the effect of the Kashrut law was to prevent socialization and intermarriage with other races, thus it prevents our genetic lineage from being diluted. He also points out that the laws of Kashrut elevate the simple act of eating into a religious ritual.

I would also add to this a concept; that the Essenes understood well, which is the belief that everyday life is imbued with channels connecting with Elohim, the activation of which it sees helping the divine presence to be drawn into the physical world. By extension the Kashrut laws are related to the way such channels, termed “sparks of holiness” interact with various animals. The sparks of holiness are released whenever an Israelite manipulates any object for a Holy reason [which includes eating]. Not all animal products are capable of the release of these sparks, and the differences are expressed in the Scripture's categorization of ritually clean and unclean animals.

How Difficult Is It To Keep Kashrut?

People who do not keep Kashrut often tell me how difficult it is. Actually, keeping Kashrut is not particularly difficult in and of itself. What makes it difficult to keep Kashrut is the fact that the rest of the world does not do so. As we shall see below, the basic underlying rules are fairly simple. If you buy your meat at a Kashrut butcher and buy only Kashrut

certified product at the market.

Keeping Kashrut only becomes difficult when you try to eat in a non-Kashrut restaurant, or at the home of a person who does not eat Kashrut. In those situations, your lack of knowledge about your hosts ingredients and food preparation techniques make it very difficult to keep Kashrut. Some commentators have pointed out, however, that this may well have been a part of what Yahuah-Elohim had in mind: to make it more difficult to socialize with those who are not of our own race.

General Rules

Although the details of our Essene Kashrut laws are extensive, the laws all derive from a few fairly simple, straight forward rules:

- (1) Certain animals may not be eaten at all. This restriction includes the flesh, organs, eggs and milk of the forbidden animals.
- (2) Of the animals that may be eaten, the birds and the mammals must be killed in accordance with Israelite law.
- (3) All blood must be drained from the meat and poultry or boiled out of it before it is eaten.
- (4) Certain parts of the permitted animals may not be eaten.
- (5) Fruits and vegetables are permitted, but must inspect for bugs (which cannot be eaten).
- (6) Utensils (including pots and pans and other cooking surfaces) that have come into contact with with non-Kashrut things or foods may not be used to prepare Kashrut foods. This applies only where contact occurred while the food was hot.
- (7) Grape products made by non-Israelites may not be eaten.
- (8) There are few other rules that are not universal to every Assembly, but are covered in the discussions below.

The General Details About What May Not Be Eaten.

The laws of Kashrut can be classified according to the origin of the prohibition (Old Testament or New Testament) and whether the prohibition concerns the food itself or a mixture of foods.

Scripturally prohibited foods include:

Non-Kashrut animals and birds: mammals require certain identifying characteristics (cloven hooves and being ruminants), while birds require a tradition that they can be consumed. Fish require scales and fins (thus excluding catfish, for instance). All invertebrates are non-Kashrut apart from certain types of locust, on which most communities lack a clear tradition. No reptiles or amphibians are Kashrut.

Carrion (nevelah): meat from a Kashrut animal that has not been slaughtered according

to the laws of shechita. This prohibition includes animals that have been slaughtered by non-Israelites.

Injured (terefah): an animal with a significant defect or injury, such as a fractured bone or particular types of lung adhesions.

Blood (dam): The blood of Kashrut mammals and fowl is removed through salting, with special procedures for the liver, which is very rich in blood.

Particular fats (chelev): particular parts of the abdominal fat of cattle, goats and sheep must be removed by a process called nikkur.

The Twisted Nerve (gid hanasheh): the sciatic nerve, as according to Genesis 32:32 the patriarch Jacob's was damaged when he fought with an angel, cannot be eaten and is removed by nikkur.

A Limb of a Living Animal (ever min ha-chai): God forbade Noah and his descendants to consume flesh torn from a live animal. Hence, Essene law considers this prohibition applicable even to non-Israelites, and therefore, an Israelite may not give or sell such meat to a non-Israelite.

Untithed food (tevel): produce of the Land of Israel (including the **“Wilderness” land** of *II Samuel 7:10-14* which is Europe, Britain and the U.S.A.) requires the removal of certain tithes, which in ancient times were given to the priests, Levites and the poor (terumah, maaser rishon and maaser ani respectively) or taken to the Old City of Jerusalem to be eaten there (maaser sheni).

Fruit during the first three years (orlah): according to Leviticus 19:23, fruit from a tree in the first three years after planting cannot be consumed (both in the Land of Israel and the diaspora). This applies also to the fruit of the vine-grapes, and wine produced from the New grain (chadash): the Bible prohibits newly grown grain (planted after Passover the previous year) until the second day of Passover; there is debate as to whether this law applies to grain grown outside the Land of Israel.

Wine of libation (yayin nesech): wine that may have been dedicated to idolatrous practices.

Non-Israelite cheese (gevinat akum): cheese that may have been produced with non-Kashrut rennet.

Non-Israelite wine (stam yeinam): wine that while not produced for idolatrous purposes may otherwise have been poured for such a purpose or alternatively when consumed will lead to intermarriage.

Food cooked by a non-Israelite (bishul akum): this law was enacted for concerns of intermarriage.(i.e. “Miscegenation”)

Non-Israelite bread (pat akum): this law was enacted for concerns of intermarriage.

Plants grown together (kilayim): in the Land of Israel plants are to be grown separately and not in close proximity according to Leviticus 19:19 and Deuteronomy 22:9-11. A specific subdivision of this law is kil'ei ha-kerem, the prohibition of planting any grain or vegetable near a grapevine; this law applies to Israelites throughout the world, and one may not derive benefit from the produce.

Permitted And Forbidden Animals.



Examples of cloven hooves in goats (upper left), pigs (lower left) and cattle (lower right). But horses lack cloven hooves (upper right).

Only meat from particular species is permissible. Mammals that both chew their cud (ruminant) and have cloven hooves can be Kashrut. Animals with one characteristic but not the other (the camel, the hyrax, and the hare because they have no cloven hooves, and the pig because it does not ruminate) are specifically excluded. Giraffes and their milk are eligible to be considered Kashrut. The giraffe has both split hooves and chews its cud, characteristics of animals considered Kashrut. Findings from 2008 show that giraffe milk curdles, meeting Kashrut standards. Although Kashrut, the giraffe is not slaughtered today because the process would be very costly. Giraffes are difficult to restrain, and their use for food could cause the species to become endangered.

Non-Kashrut birds are listed outright but the exact zoological references are disputed and some references refer to families of birds (24 are mentioned). First, a dares (predatory bird) is not Kashrut. Additionally, Kashrut birds possess three physical characteristics: an extra toe in the back (which does not join the other toes in supporting the leg), a zefek (crop), and a korkoban (gizzard) with a peelable lumen. However, individual Israelites are barred from merely applying these regulations alone; an established tradition (masorah) is necessary within the community to allow birds to be consumed, even if it can be substantiated that they meet all four criteria. The only exception to this is the turkey. There was a time when certain authorities considered the signs sufficient, so Israelites started eating this bird without a masorah because it possesses all the signs (simanim) in Hebrew.

Fish must have fins and scales to be Kashrut. Shellfish and other non-fish water animals fauna are not Kashrut. (See Kashrut species of fish.) Insects are not Kashrut, except for certain species of Kashrut locust. Generally, any animal that eats other animals, whether they kill their food or eat carrion, is not Kashrut, as well as any animal that has been partially eaten by other animals.

Draining of Blood.

The Torah prohibits consumption of blood. Lev. 7:26-27; Lev. 17:10-14. This is the only dietary law that has a reason specified in Torah: we do not eat blood because the life of an animal (literally the soul of the animal) is contained in the blood. Thus, it is necessary to remove all blood from the flesh of Kashrut animals. The first step in this process occurs at the time of slaughter.

Shechitah allows for rapid draining of most of the blood. The remaining blood must be removed, either by broiling, or soaking, or salting. This final process must be completed within 72 hours after slaughter, and before the meat is frozen or ground. Most butchers and all frozen food vendors take care of soaking and salting for you, but you should always check this when you are buying someplace you are unfamiliar with. An egg that contains a blood spot may not be eaten. This isn't very common but I find them once in a while. It is a good idea to break an egg into a glass and check it before you put it into a heated pan, because if you put a blood stained egg into a heated pan, the pan becomes non-Kashrut. If your recipe for multiple eggs,

break each one into a glass separately, so you don't waste all of your eggs if the last one is not Kashrut!

Shechita.

Mammals and fowl must be slaughtered by a trained individual (a shochet) using a special method of slaughter, shechita. Among other features, shechita slaughter severs the jugular vein, carotid artery, esophagus, and trachea in a single continuous cutting movement with an unserrated, sharp knife.

Failure of any of these criteria renders the meat of the animal unsuitable. The body must be checked after slaughter to confirm that the animal had no medical condition or defect that would have caused it to die of its own accord within a year, which would make the meat unsuitable. These conditions (treifot) include 70 different categories of injuries, diseases, and abnormalities whose presence renders the animal non-Kashrut. It is forbidden to consume certain parts of the animal, such as certain fats (chelev) and the sciatic nerves from the legs, the process of excision being done by experts before the meat is sold. As much blood as possible must be removed through the kashering process; this is usually done through soaking and salting the meat, but the liver, as it is rich in blood, is grilled over an open flame. Fish (and Kashrut locusts, for those who follow the traditions permitting them) must be killed before being eaten, but no particular method has been specified in Israelite law. Legal aspects of ritual slaughter are governed not only by Israelite law but civil law as well.

Preparation Of Meats

When an animal is ritually slaughtered (shechted) the raw meat is traditionally cut, rinsed and salted, prior to cooking. Salting of raw meat draws out the blood that lodges on the inner surface of the meat. Salting is made with any coarse grain of salt, while the meat is laid over a grating or colander to allow for drainage, and where the salt is allowed to remain on the meat for the duration of time that it takes to walk one biblical mile (appx. 18-24 minutes). Afterward, the residue of salt is rinsed away with water, and the meat cooked. Meat that is roasted requires no prior salting, as fire acts as a natural purgatory of blood.

The Essene practice, requires that the meat not be larger than half a "rotal" (i.e. ca. 216 grams) when salting. This allows the effects of the salt to penetrate. **The Assembly of Christian Israelite** communities require the additional stricture of submersing raw meat in boiling water prior to cooking it, a practice known as balitah, "blanching". This is to constrict the blood lodged within the meat, to prevent it from oozing out when the meat is eaten. The raw meat is left in the pot of boiling water for as long as it takes for the meat to whiten on its outer layer. If someone wanted to use the water for soup after making balitah in the same pot, he could simply scoop out the film, froth and scum that surface in the boiling water. Blalitah is not required when roasting meat over a fire, as the fire constricts

the blood.

Forbidden Fats and Nerves.

The sciatic and its adjoining blood vessels may not be eaten. The process of removing this nerve is time consuming and not cost-effective, so most American Kashrut slaughterers simply sell the hind quarters to non-Kashrut butchers. A certain kind of fat, known as chelev, which surrounds the vital organs and the liver, may not be eaten. Kashrut butchers remove this. Modern scientists have found biochemical differences between this type of fat and the permissible fat around the muscles and under the skin.

Fruits and Vegetables.

Genetically Modified Foods:

With the advent of genetic engineering, a whole new type of food has been brought into the world, and scholars in both academia and the Apostolic Culdee Christianity faith have differing viewpoints on whether these new strains of foods are to be considered Kashrut or not. The first genetically modified animal approved by the FDA for human consumption is the Aqua Advantage salmon, and while salmon is normally an acceptably Kashrut food, this modified organism has a gene from a non-Kashrut organism. As the Overseer (*Bishop*) I have decreed that this intermixing of species is against the teachings of the Torah and thus against Essene Law and non-Kashrut.

Additionally, bugs and worms that may be found in some fruits and vegetables are not Kashrut. Fruits and vegetables that are prone to this sort of thing should be inspected to ensure that they contain no bugs. Leafy vegetables like lettuce and herbs and flowery vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower are particularly prone to bugs and should be inspected carefully. Strawberries and raspberries can also be problematic. The Star-K Kashrut certification organization has a very nice overview of the fruits and vegetables prone to this and the procedure for addressing it in each type.

Separation of Meat and Dairy.

On three separate occasions, the Torah tells us not to “boil a kid in its mother's milk”. (Ex. 23:19, Ex. 34:26; Duet. 14:24). The **Talmud** explains that this passage prohibits eating meat and dairy together. The Jewish Rabbis extended this prohibition to include not eating milk and poultry together. In addition, the **Talmud** prohibits cooking meat and fish together or serving them on the same plates. This of course is all nonsense, and Essene Kashrut allows the consumption of meat and dairy products together so long as both individually meet Kashrut standards of course and are not prepared in the manner described in the above cited Scriptures.

Utensils.

Utensils (pots, pans, plates, flatware, etc., etc.) must also be Kashrut. A utensil picks up the Kashrut “status” (Pareve, Kashrut or Treife) of the food that is cooked in it or eaten off of it, and transmits that that status back to the next food that is cooked in it or eaten off it. Thus, if you cook chicken soup in a saucepan, the pan becomes meat.

Therefore if a Non-Kashrut meat or fruits/Vegetables or cheese are ever cooked in a pan or oven or dish, that “utensil” is forever ***Contaminated***.

Kashrut status can be transmitted from the food to the utensil or from the utensil to the food only in the presence of heat, (including hot spices) or prolonged contact, thus if you are eating cold food in a non-Kashrut establishment, the condition of the plates is a not an issue.

It is necessary, therefore, to use dishpans when cleaning dishes (don't soak them directly in the sink) and to use separate spoon rests and trivets when putting things down on the stove top.

Grape Products.

The restrictions on grape products derive from the laws against using products of idolatry. Wine was commonly used in rituals of all ancient religions, and wine was routinely sanctified for pagan purposes while it was being processed. For this reason, uses of wines and other grape products made by non-Israelites was prohibited. (Whole grapes are not a problem, nor are whole grape in a fruit cocktail). For the most part, this rule only affects wine and grape juice. This becomes a concern with many fruit drinks and fruit flavored drinks, which are often sweetened with grape juice. You may also notice that some baking powders are not Kashrut, because baking powder is sometimes made with cream of tartar, a by-product of wine making. All beer used to be Kashrut, but this is no longer the case because fruity beers made with grape products have become more common.

Vegetarianism and Veganism.

It is the official position of Essene Kashrut laws, and particularly the Assembly of Christian Israelites *Yahad*¹; that vegetarianism & veganism are pagan and idolatrous practices. This position is based upon deep exegetical study of *1 Timothy chapter 4* and its direct connection to *Romans chapter one*.

In the book of 1st Timothy, the Apostle Paul is answering questions posed to him by Timothy who was at the time Pastor of the church at Ephesus. Ephesus was at that time the Roman capital of Asia Minor and a major sea harbor, additionally it was an overwhelmingly Pagan city. At the head of the harbor stood the Roman temple to the goddess Diana.

Timothy's questions are not specifically stated but can be deduced from Paul's response: at 1st Timothy 4:1 Paul warns that in latter times some believers will depart from the faith by

1 *Yahad* is the Hebrew term for the religious community/school, in this case, that of the Essenes and the “Sicarri”; warriors of the Essenes.

listening to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. He goes on to explain specifically what those doctrines are at Verse 3 “Forbidding to marry , and commanding to abstain from meats...” The Greek word translated as “meats” is BROMA Strong's #G1033 Which actually refers to all foods considered lawful under Hebrew law. Paul states at verse 4 that every creature that God created for food (Under Hebrew Law) is good and should not be refused. At verse 5 he states that these lawful foods are Sanctified i.e. Set Apart by the Word of God and prayer.

It was common for pagans of the time and area to dedicate sacred animals, fruits and grains etc... that could not be eaten as they belonged to this or that pagan deity. At the root of all Paganism and Idolatry is two concepts: 1. Animism; 2. Animatism.

1. **Animism** def. 2; The attribution of a personal life or soul to inanimate objects and to phenomena of nature.(Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary Of The English Language 1985)
2. **Animatism** def. 2; a modified form of animism that concedes personality and willpower to plants animals and heavenly bodies but denies that they possess individual souls. (Funk And Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary of The English Language. 1985)

Paul very clearly covers these concepts at Romans chapter 1 verses 18-25 of which I will quote the last three: “23; And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and four footed beasts and creeping things 24; Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts to dishonor their own bodies between themselves 25; Who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever Amen”.

The Assembly of Christian Israelites considers the practice of Vegetarianism to be reflections of Animism and Animatism and is therefore Paganism and Idolatry because lawful animals are good for food according to the Scriptures and therefore no reason exists to omit them from diet.

Cannabis

Cannabis and the Essene *Halakha*:

If smoked, under normal circumstances there is no reason cannabis (marijuana) would not be Kashrut. If cannabis is "eaten", as cannabis edibles are, on the other hand, the issue is not as clear cut, as there may be small insects inside which are not Kashrut. For the observant, you may only use brands that are certified as Kashrut.

Tobacco

Though it is not a food product, some tobacco receives a year long Kashrut certification. This year long certification means that the tobacco is certified for Passover where different restrictions may be in place. Tobacco may, for example come into contact with some “chametz” grains that are strictly forbidden during

Passover and the certification is a guarantee that it is free from this type of contamination.