

22T01c Tough Questions? – Goat in Milk?

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Even if you have been a Christian for a long time, there are some things in the bible and in the traditions of the modern church that are tough to understand. I find many of these downright confusing. Some of these have troubled me for years.

We want to ask those “tough questions” and then do the research to see if we can find or develop a better understanding for these “tough questions”.

Today, I want to talk about a very strange verse from Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 14:21 (NKJV) *You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.*

Let's pray. Heavenly Father please guide our discussion today. Help me to stay out of the way, so you can use me. We trust you and we know you have promised the wisdom we need to understand your word in the Bible. Help us to let the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay, yes this is a little strange but I think I need to back up a little bit. This verse is part of a section of Deuteronomy defining clean and unclean meat as part of the Israelis diet restrictions in the Pentateuch.

Let me read the whole section starting with verse 3. Deuteronomy 14:3-21 (NKJV)
³You shall not eat any detestable thing. ⁴These are the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the mountain goat, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶And you may eat every animal with cloven hooves, having the hoof split into two parts, and that chews the cud, among the animals. ⁷Nevertheless, of those that chew the cud or have cloven hooves, you shall not eat, such as these: the camel, the hare, and the rock hyrax; for they chew the cud but do not have cloven hooves; they are unclean for you. ⁸Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses. ⁹These you may eat of all that are in the waters: you may eat all that have fins and scales. ¹⁰And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you. ¹¹All clean birds you may eat. ¹²But these you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ¹³the red kite, the falcon, and the kite after their kinds; ¹⁴every raven after its kind; ¹⁵the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after their kinds; ¹⁶the little owl, the screech owl, the white owl, ¹⁷the jackdaw, the carrion vulture, the fisher owl, ¹⁸the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat. ¹⁹Also every creeping thing that flies is unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. ²⁰You may eat all clean birds. ²¹You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien who is within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you are a holy people to the Lord your God. “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Believe it or not this command is also in Exodus 23:19 and Exodus 34:26 both are associated with first-fruits commandments. So, what is the deal with boiling a young goat in its mother's milk. I mean this is very specific.

Believe it or not, there are a lot of arguments about this. And Jewish custom has taken this even farther to say you cannot eat dairy with meat. No cheese and salami, No pizza with cheese and peperoni. I'm not expert on Kosher dining rules but this would be hard for me to adhere to since I like both combinations. I don't want to talk about kosher rules, since I simply don't know enough about them.

First, most of us need to understand clean and unclean. What does it mean to be unclean? In the Mosaic Law, unclean means unfit to use in worship to God. It was a ceremonial designation governing corporate worship of God at the tabernacle and later at the temple. If you touched something "unclean" like a dead body you were ceremonial unclean until evening of that day, not permanently. Most times when you became ceremonially unclean, after some length of time, you become ceremonially clean again.

So, Kosher eating rules don't explain this. Why "you shall not cook a goat in its mother's milk"? I don't see support for all dairy/meat prohibition. This appears three times in the bible exactly in this same matter. Kind of tacked on to another statement. So why.

One of the best explanation I've heard is that it was a common practice in Canaan to do this as a sacrifice and worship of Moloch. This was a specific and was most likely meant to warn them from these detestable worship practices of Moloch which included child sacrifices. But this is only a guess.

The bigger question is does this apply today. Well probably not. Paul addresses eating food offered to idols in 1 Corinthians 10:28. Also, the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 decided what Gentiles should follow of the Mosaic law with this simple list. Acts 15:28-29 (NKJV) *²⁸It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.*

So, the council does not mention the goat in milk along with these other suggested food guidance. So, if ceremonially unclean no longer matters to the Christian who is not practicing Jewish traditions, then what.

This is just one of those odd things we may never completely understand. But, I'm personally confident that I can eat peperoni pizza or cheese on my hamburger without causing myself to sin against God. And I imagine if the situation ever arose to cook a goat in its mother's milk, I'd be okay since I know nothing of worshiping Moloch. My intentions determine if it is right or wrong. Jesus told us in Matthew 15:10-11(NKJV) *Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand. What goes into*

someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them."

Jesus clearly says food does not defile us; we defile ourselves by the things we say.

Father God, thank you for giving us the resources and sources to answer these tough questions. We know you know all things. Thank you for guiding our process and giving us the wisdom, we need to understand and help us to be satisfied if you choose not to explain. Thank you for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us. Help us to open the Bible and look into history to answer our questions. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join us for the rest of the series about the "Tough Questions" that we struggle with as Christians.

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