

The Biblical Diet

Starter Guide

The foods of Scripture, organized for your kitchen — the clean & unclean list, a week of shopping, and seven recipes three thousand years in the making.

✓ Printable clean & unclean list

✓ 7-day shopping list

✓ 7 recipes from the foods of Scripture

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed... to you it shall be for meat.” **GENESIS 1:29**

Six rules decide *everything*.

Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 sort creatures by simple physical tests. Learn these once, and you can judge any food yourself.

1 Land animals

Parts the hoof and chews the cud

Both tests must pass. The camel chews the cud but has no split hoof; the pig has the hoof but chews no cud — both fail.

LEV 11:2–8 · DEUT 14:4–8

2 Water creatures

Has fins and scales

Anything without both is out — that removes all shellfish, crustaceans, and smooth-skinned fish like catfish and eel.

LEV 11:9–12 · DEUT 14:9–10

3 Birds

Not on the forbidden list

Scripture names the forbidden birds — overwhelmingly birds of prey and scavengers. Dove, pigeon, quail and hen were eaten.

LEV 11:13–19 · DEUT 14:11–18

4 Flying insects

Leaping insects are permitted

Winged crawling insects are out — except the leaping kind. The locust family is expressly permitted.

LEV 11:20–23

5 Creeping things

All that creeps is forbidden

Rodents, reptiles, and everything that goes on its belly or on many feet — no exceptions given.

LEV 11:29–31, 41–43

6 Carrion

Found dead? Not food.

The manner of death matters: an animal that dies of itself or is torn by beasts may not be eaten — clean species or not.

LEV 11:39–40 · DEUT 14:21

Many Christians read Mark 7 and Acts 10 as fulfilling these laws; others keep them still. ScriptureFoods documents what Scripture says — how you eat is between you and God.

The list: *clean & welcome.*

Pin this to the refrigerator. Plant foods carry no restriction – the law concerns animals.

MEAT — PASSES BOTH TESTS

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| ☐ Beef & veal | <i>Lev 11:3</i> |
| ☐ Lamb & mutton | <i>Ex 12:5</i> |
| ☐ Goat | <i>Gen 27:9</i> |
| ☐ Venison (deer) | <i>Deut 14:5</i> |
| ☐ Roebuck (gazelle) | <i>Deut 14:5</i> |

FISH — FINS & SCALES

- ☐ Tilapia ("St. Peter's fish")
- ☐ Salmon & trout
- ☐ Sardines & herring
- ☐ Cod, haddock & halibut
- ☐ Sea bass & snapper
- ☐ Tuna & mackerel
- ☐ Modern species judged by the fins-and-scales test —
Scripture names none individually

BIRDS — NOT ON THE LIST

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| ☐ Chicken & hen* | |
| ☐ Dove & pigeon | <i>Lev 12:8</i> |
| ☐ Quail | <i>Ex 16:13</i> |
| ☐ Partridge | <i>1 Sam 26:20</i> |
| ☐ Turkey, duck & goose* | |

GRAINS & STAPLES

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| ☐ Wheat & bread | <i>Deut 8:8</i> |
| ☐ Barley | <i>John 6:9</i> |
| ☐ Millet & spelt | <i>Ezek 4:9</i> |
| ☐ Lentils | <i>Gen 25:34</i> |
| ☐ Beans & pulse | <i>Ezek 4:9; Dan 1:12</i> |

FRUIT & VEGETABLES

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| ☐ Figs, grapes & raisins | |
| ☐ Pomegranates & apples | |
| ☐ Olives & olive oil | |
| ☐ Dates & almonds | |
| ☐ Cucumbers, leeks, onions & garlic | <i>Num 11:5</i> |
| ☐ Melons & gourds | |

DAIRY, HONEY & MORE

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| ☐ Milk, butter & cheese | <i>Gen 18:8; 1 Sam 17:18</i> |
| ☐ Eggs | <i>Luke 11:12</i> |
| ☐ Honey | <i>Prov 24:13</i> |
| ☐ Salt | <i>Lev 2:13</i> |
| ☐ Herbs & spices — mint, cummin, coriander, cinnamon | |
| ☐ Wine & vinegar | <i>Ps 104:15; Ruth 2:14</i> |

*Not named in Scripture. Clean under the 'not on the forbidden list' reading most Christian references apply; Jewish practice additionally requires a received tradition for a bird. · References are examples, not exhaustive.

The list: *set apart*.

Named or covered by the tests of Leviticus 11 – the foods the Law sets aside.

LAND ANIMALS — FAILS A TEST

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| ☐ Pork — bacon, ham, sausage | <i>Lev 11:7</i> |
| ☐ Camel | <i>Lev 11:4</i> |
| ☐ Hare & rabbit | <i>Lev 11:6</i> |
| ☐ Coney (rock hyrax) | <i>Lev 11:5</i> |
| ☐ Horse & donkey | |

WATER — NO FINS OR SCALES

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| ☐ Shrimp & prawns | <i>Lev 11:10</i> |
| ☐ Crab & lobster | |
| ☐ Oysters, mussels & clams | |
| ☐ Squid & octopus | |
| ☐ Catfish & eel | |
| ☐ Shark & sturgeon | |

BIRDS — NAMED FORBIDDEN

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| ☐ Eagle & vulture | <i>Lev 11:13–14</i> |
| ☐ Raven | <i>Lev 11:15</i> |
| ☐ Owl & hawk | <i>Lev 11:16–17</i> |
| ☐ Stork & heron | <i>Lev 11:19</i> |
| ☐ Bat | <i>Lev 11:19</i> |

CREeping THINGS

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ☐ Mouse & rat | <i>Lev 11:29</i> |
| ☐ Snails | <i>Lev 11:30, 41–42</i> |
| ☐ Reptiles — lizard, snake, tortoise | |
| ☐ Frogs & amphibians | |

THE SURPRISING EXCEPTION

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| ☐ Locusts & grasshoppers — expressly permitted | <i>Lev 11:22</i> |
|---|------------------|

John the Baptist's wilderness diet — “locusts and wild honey” (Matthew 3:4) — was fully lawful.

● Clean — welcome at the table ● Unclean — set apart by the Law ● Plants — no restriction given

Shop like *the promised land*.

“A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey.”

DEUTERONOMY 8:8



Wheat



Barley



Grapes



Figs



Pomegranate



Olive



Date honey

One week, one cart — the starter shopping list

PANTRY & GRAINS

- ☐ Whole wheat flour
- ☐ Barley (pearl or flakes)
- ☐ Red lentils
- ☐ Chickpeas or broad beans
- ☐ Olive oil, extra virgin
- ☐ Honey
- ☐ Sea salt
- ☐ Red wine vinegar

FRESH

- ☐ Figs (fresh or dried)
- ☐ Grapes or raisins
- ☐ 1 pomegranate
- ☐ Dates
- ☐ Cucumbers
- ☐ Leeks & onions
- ☐ Garlic
- ☐ Fresh mint, parsley & dill

PROTEINS & DAIRY

- ☐ Lamb (shoulder or leg)
- ☐ Whole fish with scales — tilapia, trout or sea bass
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Plain yogurt or curds (labneh)
- ☐ Feta or goat cheese
- ☐ Almonds & walnuts

The pattern to notice: everything on this list can be bought around the edges of a modern grocery store — produce, proteins, dairy — plus a small pantry basket. The biblical table is mostly plants, olive oil and bread, with meat as the feast, not the default.

Seven recipes, *verse by verse*.

1 • Esau's Red Lentil Stew

SERVES 4

35 MIN

GENESIS 25

"Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles..." — GENESIS 25:34

INGREDIENTS

2 cups red lentils

1 large onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp cumin

6 cups water

Salt to taste

Fresh parsley

METHOD

1. Soften the onion and garlic in olive oil over medium heat, about 8 minutes.
2. Stir in cumin, then lentils and water. Simmer uncovered 25 minutes until the stew turns its famous rusty red.
3. Season with salt, finish with parsley and a ribbon of olive oil. Serve with flatbread — the exact meal a birthright was sold for.

2 • Ruth's Barley Flatbread

MAKES 8

30 MIN + REST

RUTH 2

"...and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed..." — RUTH 2:14

INGREDIENTS

2 cups barley flour

1 cup wheat flour

1 tsp salt

2 tbsp olive oil

$\frac{3}{4}$ –1 cup warm water

METHOD

1. Mix flours and salt; work in oil and enough water for a soft dough. Rest 20 minutes under a cloth.
2. Divide into 8 balls, roll thin.
3. Cook on a dry, hot skillet about 90 seconds per side until blistered and spotted. Barley was the harvest Ruth gleaned — the grain of the humble and the faithful.

3 • Galilee Breakfast Fish

SERVES 2

20 MIN

JOHN 21

“As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.” — JOHN 21:9

INGREDIENTS

2 whole tilapia or trout, cleaned

3 tbsp olive oil

2 cloves garlic, sliced

1 lemon*

Fresh dill and mint

Salt

METHOD

1. Slash the fish twice per side; rub with oil, salt and garlic.

2. Grill or roast at high heat 8–10 minutes per side until the skin chars and the flesh flakes.

3. Shower with herbs. Eat beside bread, ideally outdoors — it is a breakfast with precedent.

*Lemons aren't named in Scripture — skip for strict authenticity.

4 • Daniel's Pulse Bowl

SERVES 2

25 MIN

DANIEL 1

“Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.” — DANIEL 1:12

INGREDIENTS

1 cup cooked chickpeas

1 cup cooked lentils

2 cucumbers, diced

1 small red onion

Seeds of ½ pomegranate

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp vinegar

Mint, parsley, salt

METHOD

1. Toss legumes, cucumber and onion with oil, vinegar and salt.

2. Fold in herbs; crown with pomegranate.

3. Ten days of this left Daniel's company “fairer and fatter in flesh” than the king's table did (Daniel 1:15). One bowl is a good start.

5 • Abigail's Fig & Raisin Cakes

MAKES 12

25 MIN

1 SAMUEL 25

“...an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs...” — 1 SAMUEL 25:18

INGREDIENTS

2 cups dried figs

1 cup raisins

1 cup almonds or walnuts

1 tbsp honey

½ tsp cinnamon

Pinch of salt

METHOD

1. Pulse figs, raisins and nuts in a processor (or chop and pound) to a coarse, sticky paste.
2. Work in honey, cinnamon and salt.
3. Press into small rounds and chill. This was travel food and peace-offering both — Abigail carried two hundred of them to David.

6 • Passover-Style Herbed Lamb

SERVES 6

2½ HRS

EXODUS 12

“And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs...” — EXODUS 12:8

INGREDIENTS

3 lb lamb shoulder

4 tbsp olive oil

6 cloves garlic

2 tsp salt

Fresh rosemary & mint

Bitter greens — endive, chicory,
arugula

METHOD

1. Rub the lamb with oil, crushed garlic, salt and herbs; rest an hour.
2. Roast uncovered at 325°F (160°C) about 2 hours, to deep brown and tender.
3. Rest 15 minutes; serve over the bitter greens with flatbread. The founding meal of a nation, eaten “with your shoes on your feet.”

7 • Curds & Honey Morning Bowl

SERVES 1

5 MIN

ISAIAH 7

“Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” — ISAIAH 7:15

INGREDIENTS

1 cup thick yogurt or labneh

1 tbsp honey

2 figs or 3 dates, torn

Handful of almonds

Pinch of cinnamon

METHOD

1. Spoon the curds into a bowl.
2. Ribbon the honey over; scatter fruit, nuts and cinnamon.
3. The prophesied breakfast of the promised child — ready before your coffee.

Your first week, gently: pick two dinners from these recipes, make the morning bowl your breakfast twice, and swap one snack for figs, dates or almonds. Read the verse before you cook it. That's it — no counting, no rules beyond the Book's own. Next Saturday's email brings the following week's recipe and list.

WANT THE FULL PICTURE?

Every food in this guide has its own page at scripturefoods.com — every verse it appears in, how often, its Hebrew name, and whether the Law calls it clean. Search anything: *shrimp, fig, lamb, locust...*

Eat as it was *written.*

Frequencies and quotations in this guide come from the King James Version; clean and unclean classifications follow Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. This guide documents scripture and history — it is not medical or pastoral advice.

FROM THE SAME MAKERS

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