

## **IA2. Not Arguing, Judging, or Causing a Brother to Stumble Over Prohibited Foods.**

*We are not to cause a brother to stumble over prohibited foods.*

This precept is derived from His Word (blessed is He):

### **Key New Testament Scriptures**

#### Romans 14:1-4

*Now as for a person whose trust is weak, welcome him- but not to get into arguments over opinions. One person has the trust that will allow him to eat anything, while another whose trust is weak eats only vegetables. The one who eats anything must not look down on the one who abstains; and the abstainer must not pass judgment on the one who eats anything, because God has accepted him- who are you to pass judgment on someone else's servant? It is before his own master that he will stand or fall; and the fact is that he will stand, because the Lord is able to make him stand.*

#### Romans 14: 20-21

*Don't tear down God's work for the sake of food. True enough, all things are clean; but it is wrong for anybody by his eating to cause someone to fall away. What is good is not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.*

#### 1 Corinthians 8: 4-13

*So, as for eating food sacrificed to idols, we "know" that, as you say, "An idol has no real existence in the world, and there is only one God." For even if there are so-called "gods," either in heaven or on earth- as in fact there are "gods" and "lords" galore- yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things come and for whom we exist; and one Lord, Yeshua the Messiah, through whom were created all things and through whom we have our being. But not everyone has this knowledge. Moreover, some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat food which has been sacrificed to them, they think of it as really affected by the idol; and their consciences, being weak, are thus defiled. Now food will not improve our relationship with God- we will be neither poorer if we abstain nor richer if we eat. However watch out that your mastery of the situation does not become a stumbling block to the weak. You have this "knowledge"; but suppose someone with a weak conscience sees you sitting, eating a meal in the temple of an idol. Won't he be built up wrongly to eat this food which has been sacrificed to idols? Thus by your "knowledge" this weak person is destroyed, this brother for whom the Messiah died; and so, when you sin against the brothers by wounding their conscience when it is weak, you are sinning against the Messiah! To sum up, if food will be a snare for my brother, I will never eat meat again, lest I cause my brother to sin.*

### **Additional New Testament Scriptures**

Romans 14:15

Revelation 2:20

## **New Testament Scriptures that Apply to the Food Laws Broadly**

Acts 10:9-16, 15:19-20, 21:25

### **Related New Testament Mitzvot**

IA01 Gentiles Abstaining from What Has Been Sacrificed to Idols, from Fornication, from what is Strangled, and from Blood.

IA03 Not Prohibiting Foods that God Allows

VA03 Not Eating Meat Sacrificed to Idols

### **Supportive Tanakh Scriptures**

Genesis 9:3-4

*Every moving thing that lives will be food for you; just as I gave you green plants before, so now I give you everything- only flesh with its life, which is its blood, you are not to eat.*

Genesis 32:25(24)-33(32)

*.. and Ya'akov was left alone. Then some man wrestled with him until daybreak. When he saw that he did not defeat Ya'akov, he struck Ya'akov's hip socket, so that his hip was dislocated while wrestling with him. The man said, "Let me go, because it's daybreak." But Ya'akov replied, "I won't let you go unless you bless me." The man asked, "What is your name?" and he answered, "Ya'akov." Then the man said, "From now on, you will no longer be called Ya'akov, but Isra'el; because you have shown your strength to both God and men and have prevailed." Ya'akov asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he answered, "Why are you asking about my name?" and blessed him there. Ya'akov called the place P'ni-El [face of God], "Because I have seen God face to face, yet my life is spared." As the sun rose upon him he went on past P'ni-El, limping at the hip. This is why, to this day, the people of Isra'el do not eat the thigh muscle that passes along the hip socket- because the man struck Ya'akov's hip at its socket.*

Leviticus 3:16-17

*The cohen will make them go up in smoke on the altar; it is food, an offering made by fire to be a fragrant aroma; all the fat belongs to ADONAI. It is to be a permanent regulation through all your generations wherever you live that you will eat neither fat nor blood.*

Leviticus 7:22-27

*ADONAI said to Moshe, "Say to the people of Isra'el, 'You are not to eat the fat of bulls, sheep or goats. The fat of animals that die of themselves or are killed by wild animals may be used for any other purpose, but under no circumstances are you to eat it. For whoever eats the fat of animals of the kind used in presenting an offering made by fire to ADONAI will be cut off from his people. You are not to eat any kind of blood, whether from birds or animals, in any of your homes. Whoever eats any blood will be cut off from his people.*

Leviticus 11:1-47

(entire chapter)

#### Leviticus 17:10-14

*When someone from the community of Isra'el or one of the foreigners living with you eats any kind of blood, I will set myself against that person who eats blood and cut him off from his people. For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for yourselves; for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life. This is why I told the people of Isra'el, 'None of you is to eat blood, nor is any foreigner living with you to eat blood. When someone from the community of Isra'el or one of the foreigners living with you hunts and catches game, whether animal or bird that may be eaten, he is to pour out its blood and cover it with earth. For the life of every creature- its blood is its life. Therefore I said to the people of Isra'el, You are not to eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it will be cut off.*

#### Leviticus 19:26

*Do not eat anything with blood. Do not practice divination or fortune-telling.*

#### Leviticus 20:24-26

*But to you I have said, "You will inherit their land; I will give it to you as a possession, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am ADONAI your God, who has set you apart from other peoples. Therefore you are to distinguish between clean and unclean animals and between clean and unclean birds; do not make yourselves detestable with an animal, bird or reptile that I have set apart for you to regard as unclean. Rather, you people are to be holy for me; because I, ADONAI, am holy; and I have set you apart from the other peoples, so that you can belong to me."*

#### Deuteronomy 12:15-16

*However, you may slaughter and eat meat wherever you live and whenever you want, in keeping with the degree to which ADONAI your God has blessed you. The unclean and the clean may eat it, as if it were gazelle or deer. But don't eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water.*

#### Deuteronomy 12:21-24

*If the place which ADONAI your God chooses to place his name is too far away from you; then you are to slaughter animals from your cattle or sheep, which ADONAI has given you; and eat on your own property, as much as you want. Eat it as you would gazelle or deer; the unclean and clean alike may eat it. Just take care not to eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you are not to eat the life with the meat. Don't eat it, but pour it out on the ground like water.*

#### Deuteronomy 14:11-20

*You may eat any clean bird; but these you are not to eat: eagles, vultures, ospreys, kites, any kind of buzzard, any kind of raven, ostriches, screech-owls, seagulls, any kind of hawk, little owls, great owls, horned owls, pelicans, barn owls, cormorants, storks, any kind of heron, hoopoes and bats. All winged swarming creatures are unclean for you; they are not to be eaten; but all clean flying creatures you may eat.*

## **Comment**

The Scriptures that support this *Mitzvah* have caused some consternation among both Messianic and Rabbinical Jews because it appears to some that Sha'ul (Paul) is saying that the biblically commanded food laws are no longer important. Their mistake is that, while some of what Paul says in (for example) Romans 14:20 applies to Jews, he is not addressing Jews; he is addressing Gentiles who are not living as part of a Jewish community and are not called to do so. He is not, therefore, changing anything of the *Torah* because other than the edibles prohibited to Gentiles in Acts 15:28-29, God's commandments regarding prohibited foods were never meant for the Gentile Nations; they were meant for the Israelites (and I believe also for the *K'rov Yisrael* Gentiles living among them) as one of the ways of making Israel noticeably different than the surrounding heathen nations.

Why then is Paul having to instruct the Gentiles to whom he is speaking that they must not look down on those who either eat or abstain from the foods prohibited to the Israelites? It is because Gentiles were being wrongly taught by Jewish missionaries (sometimes referred to as "Judaizers") that Gentiles must keep all the commandments of *Torah* in the same way as Jews in order to be saved. The Gentiles whom Sha'ul was correcting were those who were disrespecting one another according to whether they ate or abstained from the edibles prohibited to the Israelites. That notwithstanding, some of what *Sha'ul* said to the Gentiles applies to those of us who are Jews as well, because, while it is wrong for Jews to violate the biblical food laws, it is also wrong for us to look down on and disrespect those who do. Galatians 6:1 calls us to correct one another "in a spirit of humility." – not in a spirit of disrespect.

**Note:** This *Mitzvah* does not address prohibited foods that are solely rabbinical such as animals not slaughtered according to rabbinical standards, unkosher cuts of meat, and foods that contain both meat and dairy.

## **Related Mitzvot in Volumes 1 & 2**

- K1 Creatures We Are Allowed to Eat and Forbidden to Eat
- K3 Eating Fat, Meat from Strangled Animals, or Food Polluted by Idols
- K4 Eating Blood
- K5 Eating the Sinew of the Thigh