



DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: - UNCLEAN -

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: UNCLEAN

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Most Jewish rabbinical authorities have determined that ducks, geese, and swans are clean kosher birds. This article will challenge that determination, arguing the case against ducks, geese, and swans being classified as clean kosher birds, and will declare them UNCLEAN.

Most Jewish kosher certification authorities state that in order for a bird to be Scripturally clean and kosher, it must not be a bird of prey (predator) or a carrion eater (scavenger). They have ALSO determined that any bird not listed specifically as an unclean bird in Scripture is to be considered clean. Jewish rabbinical authorities have classified ducks, geese, and swans as clean birds, based on the fact that these birds are not birds of prey (predators) and that they are not carrion eaters (scavengers).

LEVITICUS 11:13-19 & DEUTERONOMY 14:12-18 (HSV):

These you shall not eat: the eagle and the vulture, and the black vulture, and the red kite, and the falcon, and the buzzard after their kinds, and every raven after its kind, and the ostrich, and the nighthawk, and the seagull, and the hawk after their kinds, the little owl, and the great owl, and the white owl, and the pelican, and the carrion vulture, and the fisher owl, and the stork, and the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe, and the bat.

Other translations have a somewhat different listing of unclean birds than the Halleluyah Scriptures version.

The New King James lists the eagle, vulture, buzzard, red kite, falcon, kite, raven, ostrich, short-eared owl, sea gull, hawk, little owl, screech owl, white owl, jackdaw, carrion vulture, fisher owl, stork, heron, hoopoe, and the bat as unclean birds.

The King James lists the eagle, ossifrage, ospray, glede, kite, vulture, raven, owl, night hawk, cuckoo, hawk, little owl, great owl, swan, pelican, gier eagle, cormorant, stork, heron, lapwing, and the bat as unclean birds.

DEUTERONOMY 14:20 (NKJV):

You may eat all clean birds.

Scripture does not specify what clean birds may be eaten; so many Jewish rabbinical authorities have determined that any bird that is not a predatory bird of prey or a carrion-eating scavenger and is not listed specifically as unclean is to be considered a clean kosher bird. The conclusion that all birds not listed among the unclean fowl are assumed to be clean and kosher is erroneous.

Since Scripture merely states that we may eat all clean birds, but does not mention what those clean birds are, a little Scripture investigative study is necessary in determining the identity of clean birds.

Scripture states we are not to eat unclean birds and those *after their kind*. After their kind, in this case, would include after their kind of characteristics and features.

The characteristics and features of clean birds can be determined from the Scripturally known clean birds; namely the dove (turtledove), pigeon, and quail (Leviticus 1:14-17, 12:8, 14:22, 15:14-15; Psalm 105:40; Matthew 3:16, 21:12; Mark 1:10, 11:15; Luke 2:24, 3:22; John 1:32, 2:14-16).

The turtledove and pigeon are clean birds as they were used in sacrifices and only clean birds could be used for sacrifices (Leviticus 1:14-17, 12:8, 14:22, 15:14-15). A dove (the Holy Spirit) descended upon Yeshua (Jesus), illustrating that doves are clean birds (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32). Doves were sold along with oxen and sheep in the Israeli marketplace, further indicating that doves are clean birds (Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:14-16). Quails are clean birds as the Lord provided them to the Hebrews for food after the Hebrew exodus from Egypt (Psalm 105:40).

Clean birds have all of the following characteristics:

- they are foragers and are not birds of prey or scavengers
- they have craws or crops
- they have a gizzard with a double lining which can easily be separated
- they have three front toes with an elongated middle front toe and a hind toe
- they spread three front toes on one side of a perch and their hind toe on the other side
- they bring food to the ground and divide it with their bills, if possible, before eating it (whereas some unclean birds devour food in the air, or press down on food with one foot to the ground and tear it with their bills)

Unclean birds lack one or more of the characteristics of clean birds. The characteristics and features of unclean birds can be determined from the list of unclean birds named in Scripture.

Unclean birds include those that are:

- birds of prey
- carrion-eating scavenger birds
- ratite birds
- web-footed or zygodactyl-footed birds
- waterfowl
- flying mammals (bats)*

*Scripture lists the bat, a winged mammal, with other unclean birds due to its ability to fly.

UNCLEAN CHARACTERISTICS OF DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS

The reason why ducks, geese, and swans are unclean is because they lack some of the characteristics and features of clean birds – they do not have crops, they have different body structures than clean birds do, their body fat is intertwined with their flesh, and they have webbed feet.

BILLS

Ducks, geese, and swans have round-tipped bills. Their bills are used for efficient foraging. As waterfowl their diet includes algae, crawfish, frogs, sea plants, and small fish. Clean birds have beaks that are primarily used for eating grains, insects, and seeds.

CROPS - DO NOT HAVE

In a bird's digestive system, the crop is an expanded, muscular pouch near the gullet or throat. It is a part of the digestive tract, essentially an enlarged part of the esophagus. The crop is used to temporarily store and pre-digest food.¹ Ducks, geese, and swans do not possess a crop, do not chew their food, and swallow their food whole.

Clean birds possess a crop in which consumed food is first stored and special secretions then aid in slowly breaking down and digesting the food. Softened food from a clean bird's crop is used as crop milk to feed new hatchlings. Duck, geese, and swan hatchlings do not feed on crop milk, as clean bird hatchlings do.

LEVITICUS 1:14-16 (NKJV):

If the burnt sacrifice of his offering to YHWH (the Lord) is of birds, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons. The priest shall bring it to the altar, wring off its head, and burn it on the altar; its blood shall be drained out at the side of the altar. And he shall REMOVE ITS CROP with its feathers and cast it beside the altar...

A prerequisite for a clean bird is that it must possess a crop. The crop was to be removed by a priest during a burnt sacrifice offering. Ducks, geese, and swans do not possess crops and therefore they could not have been offered as clean birds for sacrifice.

FAT CONTENT

Ducks, geese, and swans have a high concentration of body fat intertwined throughout their flesh that helps keep them afloat in water and warm in cold weather climates.

LEVITICUS 3:17 (NKJV):

This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor blood.

Due to the dispersion of fat contained within the flesh of ducks, geese, and swans, it is not possible to eat their flesh without consuming their fat.

Clean birds do not have body fat intertwined in their flesh. The fat of clean birds is confined primarily to their skin. To avoid eating the fat of clean birds, one only needs to remove the skin and discard it.

WATERFOWL CHARACTERISTICS

Ducks, geese, and swans float and glide upon water and they 'waddle' when they walk on land, as their legs are set on the sides and toward the rear of their body. They submerge themselves in water to search for and eat food. Clean birds are land-based birds, not waterfowl.

WEBBED FEET

Ducks, geese, and swans use their webbed feet as paddles for swimming and for diving when submerging in water to search for food.

Clean birds do not have webbed feet.

THE PELICAN AND SEAGULL – TYPES OF UNCLEAN WATERFOWL

The pelican and the seagull are listed in Scripture among the unclean birds. The pelican and seagull possess webbed feet, as do ducks, geese, and swans. The pelican is a bird that glides upon the water and has a high percentage of body fat intertwined within its flesh to keep it buoyant in water, as do ducks, geese, and swans. The pelican is a similar kind of unclean bird that ducks, geese, and swans are.

Jewish rabbinical authority is NOT the final authority on determining clean and unclean birds. Rabbinical authorities rejected Messiah. They should not be considered infallible on the topic of kosher certification or determining clean and unclean creatures.

Rabbinical kosher-certifying authorities err on classifying clean birds in the following ways:

They classify ducks, geese, and swans as clean and kosher, because they are not specifically listed as unclean birds in Scripture. Ducks, geese, and swans do not have crops as clean birds do.

Ducks, geese, and swans, as waterfowl, spend much of their time afloat, gliding upon the waters, having been designed to do so with a high concentration of body fat intertwined in their flesh that keeps them buoyant and insulates them from frigid waters in cold temperatures.

Rabbinical authorities disregard or overlook the fact that ducks, geese, and swans have fat that is intertwined within their flesh, making it impossible to eat these birds without consuming their greasy body fat, and that they have webbed-feet like the unclean pelican and seagull.

Kosher-conscious believers should avoid eating duck, geese, swans, and their eggs. Duck and goose pate is a spread that is commonly sold in tin cans. Foie gras is a luxury food product of duck or goose in which their liver has been fattened by force-feeding them corn through a feeding tube.

CLEAN BIRDS HAVE BEAKS AND DO NOT HAVE BILLS.

CLEAN BIRDS HAVE CROPS THAT HELP THEM TO DIGEST FOOD.

CLEAN BIRDS' FAT CONTENT IS CONCENTRATED AND CONFINED

PRIMARILY IN THEIR SKIN, NOT INTERTWINED IN THEIR FLESH.

CLEAN BIRDS DO NOT GLIDE UPON WATERS.

CLEAN BIRDS DO NOT WADDLE WHEN THEY WALK.

CLEAN BIRDS DO NOT SUBMERGE THEMSELVES IN WATER TO SEARCH FOR AND EAT FOOD.

CLEAN BIRDS DO NOT HAVE WEBBED FEET.

¹ 'Crop,' Wikipedia, < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crop_%28anatomy%29 >.