

Clearing Up Concerns about our Food Supply

*Who determines what is clean and unclean? An investigative report from
a returning Ephraimite, two-house, maturity perspective*

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As we desire to honor our *Elohim*, we do want to distinguish between that which is clean and that which is unclean. It is clear to us that what He said is food or is not food is true, whether or not we can reason why. Yet, we do not want to enter into error or the addition of fence rules surrounding the *Torah* since we are warned in both the *Tanakh* and the *Brit Chadasha* not to add or take away from what is written. An area of great daily concern is observance of dietary regulations. There are those within the Messianic Movement who support *kashrut*, or the rabbinic directives about food, and those who do not support participation in these distinctively Jewish actions.

During the course of research for this article, it also became apparent that there is no one Jewish standard, due to disagreements between the various factions. We intend to confer honor on those of *Yehudah* who have maintained the *Torah*, yet not enter into their error, anymore than we want to perpetuate the errors of *Ephraim* and traditional Christianity.

Relevant to the observance of these measures, we have also noted what we believe to be misinformation making the rounds among Messianic teachers particularly about our meat supply and how it is handled.

Our desire at this time is to enter the discussion and attempt to briefly explore just where these *kashrut* standards came from, who is providing the consultation or authority to enforce them today, and what compliance to them would look like, for surely our unity is in our Messiah and our desire to please Him. We do not want to see misinformation continue and be a discrediting factor to our teachers nor do we want to see people act in fear and go to extraordinary measures to address concerns that, in fact, are not valid and add to the financial and emotional burdens of many.

We believe that some *kashrut* food practices directly attributable to rabbinic instruction are fear-based (not awe or relationship based) and thus not consistent with Biblical directives, but rather with the fence law efforts. (We are not saying that anyone who follows *kashrut* is automatically operating out of a fear-base, but more so that the original establishment of these guidelines came from a fear-based approach to honoring YHWH.) This appears to us to be an addition to Scripture teaching, which we have been warned in Scripture itself not to do. We have also been instructed repeatedly not to be in fear—the anxiety and fearfulness-of-punishment type of fear. Yet we are to hold Him and His Righteous Teachings in awe and the highest possible regard. We believe these viewpoints have become confused or confounded and need to be clarified. Obedience to what is commanded is to be desired while obedience to fear-based manmade instruction is not.

THREE AREAS OF MISUNDERSTANDING DESCRIBED

The first is the concern that animal parts are mixed into the feed given to animals that are destined to be slaughtered for meat production. This report has caused grave concern among many and made them fearful about purchasing meats from a grocer or butcher. While some people may be able to obtain an alternative to grocery store purchase and make arrangements to grow their own beef or chicken, many others are not able to do so, leaving them with uneasy feelings that they are not fully observing *Torah* and endangering their health.

The second has to do with the methods of slaughter used by the packinghouses and whether or not they are acceptable to one who desires to honor the *Torah* in his diet. The method of slaughtering meat in packaging plants has been presented as inhumane and contributing to unsanitary conditions, i.e., that the federally required practice of stunning the animal prior to slaughter is not done in a *kosher* ritual slaughter because it causes hemorrhaging of blood into the meat as well as the risk of projecting animal hair, brain, flesh or bone fragments into the meat.

The third is the question of the consumption of blood remaining in meat products. It is this concern that leads many to the recommendation to observe *kashrut*, because it has been stated that any blood remaining after slaughter that is inadvertently consumed will be a violation of *Torah* and will cause the individual to develop animalistic or violent behavior due to their disobedience.

1) ANIMAL PARTS FED TO ANIMALS TO BE USED FOR FOOD?

The first concern is readily understandable because it **was** at one time the general practice to use animal parts in feed for other animals. The most commonly recognized concern has to do with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy/BSE or “mad cow disease.” The exact cause for BSE is not known but a likely cause is infectious forms of a type of *prion protein*, found in animals. The protein in the prion is abnormal and initially occurs in the small intestines and tonsils. In later stages of the disease, they are found in the central nervous tissues such as the brain and spinal column. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition FAQ page, **“Since 1990 the USDA has conducted aggressive surveillance of the highest risk cattle going to slaughter in the United States.”** They further state that, **“Since 1989, USDA has banned imports of live ruminants such as cattle, sheep and goats and most products from these animals from countries known to have BSE...In 1997, FDA prohibited, with some exceptions, the use of protein derived from mammalian tissues in animal food intended for cows and other ruminants.”** According to Consumers Union, the exceptions are pigs and horses in sheep and cow feed. They state that they believe the FDA should ban the use of all mammal protein from the feed of all animals intended for human consumption. Consumers Union contends that several studies show the infectious agent can be transmitted through the blood while FDA states that this has been proven not to be the case.

(Some may conclude then, that beef may be made unclean because it is possible that they have been fed pork by products yet chickens will also eat almost anything, and yet to our knowledge, there has never been a rabbinical declaration expressing concerns that this has made chicken unclean.)

We understand that some teachers within the Messianic Movement have been heavily influenced by the alternate health movements that, generally speaking, are distrustful of government standards and statements. While we agree that there is reason to be concerned and recognize that we do not live in a Torah observant land, but in the post-modern Christian era, neither do we believe that every alternate health care provider or researcher is completely free of personal bias or wrongdoing.

As such, we recommend that all sources of information, including governmental and alternate health care providers' and researchers' information, need to be considered carefully before being presented as ultimate truth.

It has now been nearly a decade since the standard against mammalian tissues being fed to animals intended for food was established in the meat industry yet teachers within the Messianic Movement have continued to spread this concern as though it were current. When quoting sources, the sound practice of checking the copyright dates of source material seems to be forgotten. This seems to us to be a prime directive in the avoidance of one aspect of *lashon hara*: the need to substantiate a concern before repeating it. While we understand that there may be unscrupulous people who do what they can to circumvent these laws, to present it as a common concern that can be addressed by purchasing only *kosher*-certified meat is not accurate either.

Concern has been expressed about meat that may be imported and not meet these standards. In the USA, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has the obligation to be certain that the same standards are met for imported food. In Canada, for instance, it is even true that their requirements are more stringent than in America. This has been especially true since BSE was found there. The UK banned feeding of ruminant remains to ruminants in 1988, and in 1996, they banned feeding of all mammal protein to all food animals according to the FDA.

2) KOSHER SLAUGHTER DOES NOT INCLUDE STUNNING?

In the effort to determine what constitutes *kosher* practice, exploration on the internet of kosher certification processes revealed how many different *kosher* certifying agencies there are. Individuals, congregations, associations, and even countries have all established their own *Beit Din Kashrut* organizations. During the course of telephone interviews with several of these resources, it also became clear that there is divergent opinion between these groups as to what constitutes Jewish law compliance. In particular, it is evident that an Orthodox individual or group would not consider slaughter performed under Reform supervision to be actually *kosher*. They may not recognize Conservative Judaism supervision either. Just as Christianity today has many branches and splits, so does Judaism have different branches and splits. It is not possible to assert that there is one acceptable standard that universally meets their criteria. Wikipedia, an online free encyclopedia, provides a reasonable summary of these issues, quoting many Jewish resources in the process and noting which portions of the report have their neutrality disputed.

As a Registered Sanitarian, Bob Klika has been involved for nearly thirty years with the regulation of food safety standards. He trained for the meats industry and holds a BS in Animal Science. He also has extensive experience in milk production, all the way from milking cows, installing and servicing dairy equipment, inspection of dairy and food processing plants for certification and compliance and is now Program Manager for the Interstate Milk Program for the state of Wisconsin.

He is aware that even *kosher* slaughtering can involve a form of stunning the animal; although it may well be that he has observed such a practice under Reformed supervision. In practice, in an interview with a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) Meat Division Training Supervisor, it was stated that small operations may observe the *kosher* ritual without stunning when only a small number of animals are involved, but that the larger meat packing plants consider it too dangerous for all concerned and will stun animals being slaughtered according to *kosher* standards as well.

Nationwide, USDA regulations require a humane slaughter method, which includes one of four optional stun methods. They permit an exception to be made for the purpose of ritual slaughter for *kosher* or Muslim practice but that exception is apparently not often requested, as attested by the above official.

These four acceptable methods are:

- Chemical (Carbon Dioxide)
- Mechanical (captive bolt) various styles of guns—
 - a) plunger that is moved by compressed air and penetrates the skull, instantly destroying the brain and all pain sensation
 - b) plunger that is moved by compressed air and penetrates the skull, injecting compressed air, instantly destroying the brain and all pain sensation
 - c) plunger that is moved by compressed air and impacts the skull, (concussion) instantly destroying the brain and all pain sensation
- Mechanical (gunshot) Bullet
- Electrical (electrical current)

USDA regulations for the handling of animals destined for slaughter are quite detailed and represent concern for humane treatment of the animal as would be consistent with a *Torah*-observant lifestyle. Should there be any question of inappropriate treatment to any individual animal or company practice in general, inspectors have the authority to immediately shut down the plant and then investigate what happened, contrary to other regulatory officials who must first substantiate their request to shut down a plant before doing so.

It is noted in several articles online that USDA hasn't done as well in the assurance of humane treatment as the private regulation officers from McDonald's and Wendy's corporations have done in the past few years. As always, there can be variation in the personal performance of anyone doing a job, whether it be a USDA inspector or a *Kosher* slaughterer/*schochet*. Does this invalidate the credibility of the entire industry?

According to Otto Knoche, owner and operator of Otto's Meats in Luxemburg, Wisconsin, he has cooperated with the *kosher* slaughtering of animals with the local rabbi or *schochet* on many occasions. Our local synagogue is of the Reform Judaism movement. He is well aware of the desirability to remove the blood but this is not a concern limited to *kosher* slaughter. He stated that the removal of the blood is also necessary to preserve the meat in a fresher state. He further stated that the stunning procedure, done correctly, permits the heart to continue pumping so that when the animal is hung it most effectively removes all the blood. In any other situation, such as hunting, the animal is dead and the heart has stopped pumping which would not allow such a thorough expulsion of blood as is accomplished with the stunning and hanging procedure prescribed by the USDA. NOTE: In practice during ritual sacrifice in the Temple, it is known that there were hooks for hanging the animals following slaughter.

Mr. Knoche further commented that a stunning procedure that would cause such damage as described by at least one author—captive penetrating bolt (hide, hair and bone fragments throughout the brain or blood hemorrhaging into the brain)—is counter-productive for the butcher as it would be time-consuming to have to remove such fragments and costly to just eliminate that portion of the meat. When done correctly by an experienced worker, the stunning processes render the animal insensitive to pain, making the process more humane. With the concern about BSE, most plants have discontinued the use of the captive penetrating bolt method of stunning in favor of the other approved methods. The method that injected compressed air into the brain is no longer approved due to this same concern.

He has also experienced a situation with a *schochet* in which the individual came with a dull knife and had such a difficult time in the slaughter effort that he required stitches for the cuts he himself suffered in the process. Would anyone conclude from this that all individuals doing this work should now be under suspicion? We would hope not.

Concern has been expressed by various writers that an animal being slaughtered could be frightened which would cause "fear hormones" to be injected into the flesh, and that this could then be ingested by someone eating that meat. The fear hormone referred to is likely, adrenaline and something most people will remember studying in the "fight or flight" stress situation. We do not believe there is a concern here because cooking will kill any such remaining hormone, although the hormone's presence may make the meat lower in quality, tougher to eat. Here too, it would seem sensible to us that to stun the animal prior to slaughter would avoid more fear and thus prevent concern in this area entirely.

Sarah Vaughn Schmitz, a member of our community, has worked with a local meat packing company, and has also observed that the kosher slaughter process does involve the stunning procedure. A telephone conversation with the local Rabbi who oversees this operation confirmed that they stun after the *schochet* has made his cut, "in order to comply with USDA regulations." Yet it is not clear to this writer how stunning afterward would either have the desired effect to alleviate pain and struggle or maintain kosher status. This company has declined to be named and the Rabbi refused to state under which branch of Judaism it is performed. (This company packs 8 **million** pounds of hamburger weekly along with the other beef cuts provided according to their website.)

After gaining awareness of the procedures used for handling the animals and the meat, Mrs. Vaughn Schmitz no longer has felt comfortable eating venison obtained in Wisconsin's perennial favorite sport of deer hunting, since it is clear that a field kill would not lend itself to rapid draining of the blood as is the case in the plant, and she is not certain just how such meat has been handled in the process, as she would be of meat prepared in the plant.

Brian Pagel, a member of our community and a hunter, has observed that it is possible that an animal caught in a snare, which in effect strangles it, would meet the standard for being unclean, in that its death occurred prior to the hunter finding it. Thus, the blood would have had to be absorbed into the meat entirely as there is no bleeding-out option for a strangled animal. Normally, hunters who use snares are interested in using the hide of the animal, not consuming the meat, however.

Since it is clearly true of any animal hunted for food, as opposed to going into a meat-slaughtering plant, it would seem that animals hunted in centuries past would not be completely "clean" of any trace of blood. How would the common person have been able to obtain an animal fit for consumption in those times before the rabbis asserted their view of what was necessary to be certain that there be not even a trace of blood?

According to a telephone interview with an unnamed Rabbi in the *Kosher Supervisors of America/KSA*, although they only officially certify bread and flour products, “any animal hunted and not slaughtered according to the ritual procedure would never have been and is not now considered to be suitable food.” This is the same individual who asserted that a Reform supervised *kosher* slaughter would not be considered *kosher* by an Orthodox Jew. In a telephone conversation with Rabbi Eytan Grinnell of *Kosher Supervision of Wisconsin*, both of these statements were confirmed, however Rabbi Grinnell also graciously volunteered that in a case of life and death, preservation of life would override the kosher requirements.

It may have been possible to slaughter ***domesticated*** animals in this fashion, but we remain convinced that it would be unlikely for a wild gazelle to cooperate. We do not believe these ritual slaughter requirements could be entirely Scriptural. Witness: Esau as a hunter who brought in wild game for meal preparation or David hiding in the wilderness in need of food. Would our Elohim have indicated as clean animals such as deer and gazelle, if catching and killing them would render them unclean?

Once the slaughter itself has been accomplished, *kashrut* requires very specific actions in regard to the removal of any possible trace of blood through the immersion of the meat in salt solutions, and specifically a *kosher* salt, which is larger in crystal structure than ordinary table salt. We know that salt is a part of every covenant sacrifice but do not see that this would clearly be the same thing as a food preparation process when sacrifice is not involved, nor that soaking in salt water would be the same thing as putting salt with the offering. We wonder if perhaps the need for preservation, which can be accomplished through salting, was a prelude to the idea of kashering? While it preserves the meat, it is not a Biblical command and there are other ways of preserving meat today.

These regulations that require one to soak meat in salt water appear to us to be an addition to Biblical mandates, demonstrating a lack of understanding of the actual meaning of prohibition of the consumption of blood and a form of fear-based behavior.

As briefly noted earlier, we see a difference between behavior that is based on the awe and respect we have for our *Elohim* as opposed to the fear of punishment that leads to legalistic observance. In other words, relationship needs to be the basis for our actions, rather than specific ritualistic performance. As we take into consideration the quality of the relationship, we find that fear based behavior is not a part of a healthy or mature relationship, but rather a performance based issue where the performance is more important than the person.

In English, both types of response are identified with the same word, fear, but they are quite different in context. It also appears to us that relationship with our Messiah is rather a prominent part of what *Ephraim* brings to the table as part of the Restoration of all things.

This takes us to the third concern:

3) WHAT IS THE INTENT OF THE PROHIBITION AGAINST THE CONSUMPTION OF BLOOD?

We believe there has been a misunderstanding that has resulted in an erroneous interpretation of the Scripture pertaining to the admonition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk. It has been taken by many as a commandment to not mix meat and dairy products; however, we believe the admonition referred to an occult practice of the time that was to be avoided. In the same way, the present call to soak meat in salt water, for *kashering*, reflects another misunderstanding. We believe that over-scrupulousness and misunderstanding has led some to fear-based decisions and recommendations for food handling as found in the *kashrut* process.

Our opinion is that the prohibition against the consumption of blood is most likely referring to the ritualistic, occult practice of intentionally consuming the blood of a sacrificed animal or human being in order to obtain its life force. This sort of ritual would be quite clearly occult, involving the use of a chalice or some ritual container for the blood, as well as a ceremonial sacrificial knife and a specific ritual procedure.

While we completely agree that Scripture affirms that life is in the blood, we do not understand this to mean that a person who consumes minute portions of blood from an animal prepared normally as for a meal would be in any danger of development of animalistic behavior. It is the ritual belief that this is possible that would lead to the type of emotionally- or psychologically-hypnotic effect that would produce such a response. It could well be that such a belief is also a surrendering to demonic forces that then obtain permission to exert their influence in that person's life.

Barb Klika has a Master's Degree in Clinical, Marriage and Family Social work and has been working with ritual abuse survivors for more than 15 years. She is well acquainted with the sort of blood rituals that purport to offer such power or the life force of the deceased to the consumer. Such blood rituals are also often used to establish ownership of the individual, confirm an unholy marriage or alliance and are a perversion of the atonement our Messiah provided for us.

This type of consumption of blood is well defined and would not innocently be practiced. It is a far cry from the normal preparation of foods and does involve spiritistic belief, demonization and psychological manipulation.

We further state that we do not believe that fear of such an occurrence of development of animalistic behavior is in accordance with a *Torah* lifestyle, inasmuch as it leads to fear and the assumption that the evil one has more authority than he does, in fact, have. To assert that manmade practices must be carried out to assure the acceptability to YHWH of meat products, which meet common sense and the industry's standards further, promotes fear and uncertainty among believers.

We do not have a blind faith that everything done in the food industry is always exactly as it should be, yet, beyond common-sense precautions in food handling, we see that many people today have little choice or control over the source of their groceries. We also do not intend to go down the slippery slope of saying that the conditions of today invalidate YHWH's commands. Far be it from us to do so! Yet in actual practice, according to a number of sources, even the most "religious" *kosher* observer will actually be somewhere on a continuum of observance; perhaps more stringent in food prepared at home but much less so when in public, for example.

The *kosher* expectations can be a benefit as good hygiene practices are definitely within our Father's commands, yet taken beyond His commands, they can also lead to unnecessary expense and concern about the quality of food. Although we desire the highest standards in everything we eat, in actual practice this is often nearly impossible to do. Should this lead to apprehension that they are not keeping *Torah*? We do not think that is YHWH's intent.

BEIT DIN KASHRUT ORGANIZATIONS AND PRACTICES

As we desire to honor our *Elohim*, and His Chosen People, we do want to walk in His ways and delight in His will for us. We recognize that *Yehudah*/Jews are but one of the many tribes of Israel that make up His Chosen People. Israel, also known as *Ephraim*, is as much an *am segulah*/treasured possession as the tribe of *Yehudah* and Scripture clearly states many times that the two, along with the companions who have joined themselves to the tribes of Israel, will be joined together as One New Man. It is clear from many sources that Ephraim was scattered among the nations and did not esteem their heritage, allowing themselves to become assimilated with Gentiles. Therefore, in all likelihood, only YHWH Himself knows which of those who self-identify as Gentiles might in fact, also have Israelite ancestry. In order to be joined together, each portion brings something.

If it were all about following *Yehudah's* practices exclusively, would not the image be more of a merger, or a subsuming of one branch into the other, rather than a joining of the two? It is also clear that our Father allowed this separation (I Kings 12: 24) and two distinct branches to grow independently. In Leviticus 26: 44, He clearly stated that He would not loathe us so as to destroy us entirely and break His covenant with us, because He is still our *Elohim*, despite our exile. I take this as one of the most encouraging promises to "gentiles" I have found.

There is value in what we both bring from our heritage and we need to learn how to walk in this new thing He is doing. Yet, exactly how to do so remains very clear in some areas and very unclear in others. We are concerned about a sort of "honeymoon with Judaism" response that people new to Hebraic understanding may come into. In such a situation, as they come into knowledge of Torah they embrace every aspect of Judaism without evaluation. There has also been an exodus of sorts, from evangelical Christian through Messianic practice all the way back to the "fold" of Judaism, even to the point of denying Y'shua as Messiah. May it never be for us! We hope to avoid such a polarizing response in our own lives and to encourage others to diligently examine the Scriptures to do the same. We choose not to honor—or dishonor—something just because it is Jewish. We remain grateful that our Mighty One is twelve parts mercy and one part justice; that he who is a true "Jew" is one inwardly, the circumcision of the heart that our Abba alone may fully recognize and know in us.

As the *kashrut* standards were explored for this article, it became clear to us that these questions fall under the category of *Halakha* and that there is not one standard but many, as there are many individuals, congregations or groups who have established their own understanding of what constitutes *kosher*.

Quote From Wikipedia -- the online encyclopedia:

Halakha is the collective corpus of Jewish religious law, including biblical law and later Talmudic and rabbinic law as well as customs and traditions. Like the religious laws in many other cultures, Judaism classically draws no distinction in its laws between religious and non-religious life. Hence, Halakah guides not only religious practices and beliefs, but numerous aspects of day to day life... Historically, Halakha served many Jewish communities as an enforceable avenue of civil and religious law. In the modern era, Jewish citizens may be bound to Halakha only by their voluntary consent. In Israel, though, certain areas of Israeli family and personal status law are governed by rabbinic interpretations of Halakha. Reflecting the diversity of Jewish communities, somewhat different approaches to Halakha are found among Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, and Sefardi Jews. Among Ashkenazi Jews, disagreements over Halakha, and over whether Jews should continue to follow Halakha, have played a pivotal role in the emergence of Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist streams of Judaism.

Halakha is shaped and contested by a variety of rabbis (and other Jews), rather than one sole "official voice", so different individuals and communities may well have different answers to Halakhic questions. Controversies lend rabbinic literature much of its creative and intellectual appeal. With few exceptions, controversies are not settled through authoritative structures because Judaism lacks a single judicial hierarchy or appellate review process for Halakha. Instead, Jews interested in observing Halakha may choose to follow specific rabbis or affiliate with a more tightly structured community.

There is no formal peer-review process for the entire Jewish community in general, since the Jewish community has no one central body that speaks for all of Judaism. However, within certain Jewish communities formal organized bodies exist: each division of dynasty of Orthodox Hasidic Judaism has their own rebbe, who is their ultimate decisor of Jewish law. Within Modern Orthodox Judaism, there is no one committee or leader, but Modern Orthodox rabbis generally agree with the views set by consensus by the leaders of the Rabbinical Council of America. Within Conservative Judaism, the Rabbinical Assembly has an official Committee on Jewish Law and Standards.

End of quote: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halakha> 9/9/06

Despite the impression that nothing has changed within Judaism as it has within the Christian church, the truth appears to be that many changes have occurred along the way. To go into a synagogue today would not bring one into a "museum" if you will, of an exact picture of ancient practice. Practices have changed, including the understanding and teaching of *kashrut*.

We were unable to find a Messianic *Beit Din Kashrut* organization, and even if there were such an organization, which segment of Messianic Believers would it represent? Predictably, some of these organizations or individuals have a better reputation than others. Many countries that have a substantial Jewish population have their own *Beit Din Kashrut organizations* and standards. Some are cooperative with other groups; some are not. As noted above, Orthodox Judaism would not recognize Reform Judaism supervision as meeting the *kosher* requirements, for example.

The demand for *kosher* foods has been growing in many places around the world. There is speculation as to the reason for this but one viewpoint is that people's concern for the quality of food handling prompts them to select *kosher* products which they think have had more exacting monitoring for quality. This may or may not be true. Some speculate that the growth of Islam accounts for the growing demand because the practices are similar to *kosher* requirements. Several sources observed that becoming certified to be a supplier of *kosher* food could easily cost thousands of dollars, more so in meat processing than other areas, thus necessitating the increased cost of *kosher* food from 30 -100% higher than non-*kosher*-certified. Others stated that the *kosher* observances required were simply good practice and that there is no good reason for *kosher* food to be any higher in price.

CONCLUSION

In summary, we would like to add these comments to the conversation in our Messianic Movement in the interest of correcting falsehoods, examining the actual Scriptural directive for its intent and releasing many people from fear-based concern about their food consumption. We continue to advocate adherence to the Levitical guidelines as to what is clean and unclean and in no way intend to convey a “too casual” approach to our obedience in this area, while at the same time refusing to enter into manmade, fear-based added restrictions. We may never fully understand His intentions for us in this matter until His return. May we not be found to be contentious or judgmental in our partial understanding and efforts to hear and obey.

The three main concerns initially researched led to the understanding that there is no single authoritative source on *kashrut*. This is another area in which various sects within Judaism remain at odds with one another. No Messianic *Beit Din Kashrut* was located at this time. Since there is variance among Messianic groups as to whether or not *kashrut* is necessary, it seems unlikely that there would be a single authoritative source within Messianic circles in the foreseeable future either.

We believe that fear about animals being fed their own kind no longer has a basis in fact, for food subject to USDA/FDA regulations. As with any law, there may always be violations but to assume that violations are the rule rather than the exception does not appear reasonable to us. We are to honor the law of the land as we observe *Torah*. To continue to assert this as a danger is a form of poor scholarship at best, and *lashon hara* at worst.

We do not believe that the fact that an animal may have been stunned as part of the slaughter process automatically renders it unclean or dangerous to our health. In fact, when done properly it improves the freshness of the meat and prevents fear and pain for the animal, as well as possible physical harm to the worker. Furthermore, it is advantageous in many ways for the stunning to be done properly and is clearly unproductive for supplier, as well as the consumer, to do it improperly. If such conditions as required by Orthodox *kosher* slaughter regulations were Scriptural, no personally-hunted wild game would ever have been, or be liable to be, considered a food source. To us, this appears unlikely to be the case.

We do not believe it is necessary to be overly scrupulous about the removal of blood from an animal prepared for meals, nor that animalistic behavior would result from the ingestion of trace amounts of blood. We do believe that those who participate in ritual sacrifice of animals or human beings would be aware that they were doing so and would be consciously seeking such acquisition of life-force powers, opening themselves to all manner of psychological, emotional and demonic manifestations.

We submit these findings with a prayer that they will contribute to our over all efforts to return to the ancient paths of our *Elohim*, free of the pagan and fear-based elements that have plagued both Judaism and Christianity for so long. We recognize that only the feet of *Maschiach* on the Mount of Olives is likely to set all things in order and long for that day. Even so, come quickly!

RESOURCES

Online: Found in August and September 2006

USDA Slaughter requirements and training manual information

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/LSIT_HumaneHandling.pdf

US Food and Drug Administration — Commonly Asked Questions About BSE in Products Regulated by the FDA

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/bsefaq.html>

Consumers Union – Questions and Answers on Proposed FDA Regulations on Animal Feed, September 4, 2006

<http://www.consumersunion.org/food/q&aaprn798.htm>

Wikipedia – Kashrut

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashrut>

This site has many related links that are quite informative.

Wikipedia – Halakha

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halakha> 9/9/06

Wilder, James PhD. Et al, The Life Model: Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You

Shore, Allen N. M.D., April 2003, Affect Dysregulation and Disorders of the Self/Affect Regulation and the Repair of the Self

Siegel, Daniel M.D., The Developing Mind

Telephone Interviews:

Kosher Supervision of America—an unnamed Rabbi

Kosher Supervision of Wisconsin—Rabbi Eytan Grinnell

Plant Manager of local packing plant: declined to be identified

Rabbi supervisor of above plant: declined to be identified

Otto's Meats, Luxemburg, Wisconsin—Otto Knoche, owner and operator

Personal and Professional Experiences of:

Robert D. Klika

Barbara L. Klika

Sarah Vaughn Schmitz

Brian Pagel