> *Leviticus 11:9–12 (NIV)*
> *9 “Of all the creatures living in the water of the seas and the streams you may eat any that have fins and scales.*
> *10 But all creatures in the seas or streams that do not have fins and scales whether among all the swarming things or among all the other living creatures in the water you are to regard as unclean.*
> *11 And since you are to regard them as unclean, you must not eat their meat; you must regard their carcasses as unclean.*
> *12 Anything living in the water that does not have fins and scales is to be regarded as unclean by you.”*

Under the Mosaic Law, dietary restrictions were part of God’s way of setting the people of Israel apart from the surrounding nations (see Leviticus 20:25–26). Clean and unclean animals symbolized purity and impurity teaching Israel how to discern between what was acceptable and unacceptable before God.

Fish with both fins and scales were considered clean because these physical traits enabled effective movement and protection. Spiritually, these features symbolize essential virtues of the

believer: readiness and righteousness.

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1. Fins: Symbol of Readiness and Direction

Fins enable fish to move swiftly, change direction, and navigate difficult currents. Spiritually, they represent mobility and purpose the believer’s readiness to live and move according to God’s will.

> *Ephesians 6:15 (NIV)*
> *“...and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.”*

In Paul’s description of the armor of God, spiritual readiness is pictured as footwear equipping believers to move forward, share the gospel, and stand firm. A Christian without “fins” is stagnant and aimless, much like a fish unable to swim.

We are not called to spiritual laziness or passivity but to mission and movement. The gospel calls us to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Without spiritual fins, we are unequipped for this calling.

2. Scales: Symbol of Protection and Righteousness

Scales protect fish from injury, parasites, and predators. In a spiritual sense, they represent the righteousness and covering of God, shielding believers from attacks by the enemy.

> *Ephesians 6:14–17 (NIV)*
> *14 “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place…*
> *16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.*
> *17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*

Without spiritual “scales” the righteousness of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21) we are exposed to the enemy’s deception, condemnation, and temptation.

> *Job 41:13–17 (NIV), describing the Leviathan (a powerful,*

> *armor-like creature), further illustrates this idea:*
>
> *13 “Who can strip off its outer coat?*
> *Who can penetrate its double coat of armor?*
> *14 Who dares open the doors of its mouth,*
> *ringed with fearsome teeth?*
> *15 Its back has rows of shields*
> *tightly sealed together;*
> *16 each is so close to the next*
> *that no air can pass between.*
> *17 They are joined fast to one another;*
> *they cling together and cannot be parted.”*

Just as Leviathan’s scales cannot be penetrated, so too must the believer be fully clothed in the impenetrable righteousness of Christ.

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3. The New Covenant Fulfillment

While Christians are no longer under Old Testament dietary laws (Romans 14:14, Colossians 2:16–17), these regulations still carry spiritual symbolism. The dietary laws pointed forward to moral and spiritual purity fulfilled in Christ, who cleanses us from sin

and calls us to live holy lives.

> *Romans 14:17 (NIV)*
> *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit...”*

The prohibition on eating fish without fins and scales is no longer a binding legal requirement, but it remains a powerful metaphor for Christian living. It reminds us to pursue a life of spiritual discipline, moral integrity, and gospel readiness.

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4. The Final Separation

Jesus uses the imagery of fishing to describe the coming judgment:

> *Matthew 13:47–49 (NIV)*
> *47 “Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.*

> *48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.*
> *49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous.”*

On the last day, God will separate the righteous from the wicked just as fishermen sort good fish from bad. Let us not be like the “unclean fish” that are cast away.

Be Spiritually Clean

Though we’re no longer under the ceremonial laws of Leviticus, the principles remain true:

- Have fins: Walk in purpose, readiness, and mission.
- Have scales: Clothe yourself with the righteousness of Christ and protect your spiritual life.

> *Romans 13:12 (NIV)*
> *“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.”*

Let us not live as spiritually unclean or unprepared believers. Let us be strong, purposeful, and protected ready for the day we are drawn into the final net of God’s kingdom.

Shalom.

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