

## ~HARE (87)

[Hebrew, *'ar-ne'veth*]

- A gnawing animal of the Leporidae family, closely related to but larger than the **rabbit**. It differs from the latter in that its young are usually not born in an underground burrow, are active at birth, fully furred, and have open eyes.
- The **hare** is known by its divided lip, long ears, cocked tail, and its long hind limbs and feet, so useful for a speedy escape from its enemies. The fastest **hares** are said to attain a speed of as much as 70 kilometers/hour (43 miles/hour).
- The average length of the animals, of which there are numerous varieties, is about 0.6 meters (2 feet). Their usual coloration is grayish or brownish.
- The **hare** was prohibited as food under the Law given through Moses and is referred to as a chewer of the cud.
- Only this is what you must not eat among the chewers of the cud and the splitters of the hoof, the camel, because it is a chewer of the cud but is no splitter of the hoof. It is unclean for you. (**Leviticus 11:4**)
- Also the **hare**, because it is a chewer of the cud but it does not have the hoof split. It is unclean for you. (**Leviticus 11:6**)
- Only this sort you must not eat out of those that chew the cud or that split the hoof, cloven, the camel and the **hare** and the rock badger, because they are chewers of the cud but do not split the hoof. They are unclean for you. (**Deuteronomy 14:7**)
- **Hares** and rabbits, of course, do not have a multi-chambered or multi-parted stomach and do not regurgitate their food for rechewing, which characteristics are associated with the scientific classification of ruminants or cud chewers.
- Nevertheless, although the **Hebrew** term here used for chewing literally means bringing up, the modern scientific classification was not the basis for what the Israelites in Moses day understood cud chewing to be.

- Hence, there is no foundation for judging the accuracy of the Bible statement by the restricted, relatively recent conception of what constitutes a cud-chewing animal, as done by many critics.
- In the past, commentators with faith in the inspiration of the Bible record saw no error in the statement of the Law. Observed **The Imperial Bible-Dictionary**
- It is obvious that the hare does in repose chew over and over the food which it has some time taken, and this action has always been popularly considered a chewing of the cud.
- Even our poet Cowper, a careful noticer of natural phenomena, who has recorded his observations on the three hares which he had domesticated, affirms that they chewed the cud all day till evening.[Edited by P. Fairbairn, London, 1874, Vol. I, p. 700]
- Scientific observation of **hares** and **rabbits** in more recent years, however, indicates that even more than seeming cud chewing is involved. Writes; **François Bourlière** [The Natural History of Mammals, 1964, p. 41]:
- The habit of refection, or passing the food twice through the intestine instead of only once, seems to be a common phenomenon in the **rabbits** and **hares**.
- Domestic **rabbits** usually eat and swallow without chewing their night droppings, which form in the morning as much as half the total contents of the stomach.
- In the wild **rabbit** refection takes place twice daily, and the same habit is reported for the European hare. It is believed that this habit provides the animals with large amounts of B vitamins produced by bacteria in the food within the large intestine.
- On the same point, the work **Mammals of the World** [by E. P. Walker, 1964, Vol. II, p. 647] notes: This may be similar to chewing the cud in ruminant mammals.

**See Also CUD**