

Why Are the Dietary Laws Important?

All mitzvot are important to Jews but the dietary laws are also important due to the fact that they are followed daily, with every meal. There are a few reasons why they are important:

- Jews get the mitzvot from the Torah. The Torah includes how the Almighty want them to live. The Torah therefore shows Jews what they should and should not eat so that their daily focus is on the Almighty.
- Within Genesis there is the story of creation which is important to Jews because it shows them how they should treat animals. He Almighty gives Adam and Eve (and the human race) dominion over the animals. This means they need to care for the animals and not use and abuse them. Therefore, Jews might follow the food laws to make sure that animals are killed in the way which causes least suffering to animals and the dietary laws may help in doing this.
- The dietary laws are a perfect example of the Jews keeping their side of the covenant (agreement) with the Almighty. Kashrut show that the Jews are willing to follow the mitzvot in order to keep His rules and show that they are His chosen people. It is a daily reminder of this.

Do all Jews think the dietary laws are important?

The dietary laws are very important to Orthodox Jews who will follow the rules as strictly as possible. Orthodox Jews will ensure that they have all kosher foods at all times and may be more likely to plan ahead if they go away somewhere which will have less kosher foods. They will also be more likely to have a kitchen which has two of everything in order to follow kashrut fully. However, reform Jews may be more flexible on this. They may interpret the dietary laws to be outdated and impractical to keep in the modern world. Therefore, some reform Jews may follow some of the rules when it is convenient to do so, but may be more flexible while on holiday for example. It is very much a matter of personal choice regarding the importance of the dietary food laws to reform Jews.

