

Deuteronomy 12:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

Analysis

Clarification: 'Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.' The comparison to game animals (roebuck/gazelle and hart/deer) clarifies that non-sacrificial meat is like hunting—ritually neutral. Leviticus 11:1-47 lists clean/unclean animals for consumption, but this verse addresses ritual cleanness/uncleanness of persons, not animals. A ritually unclean person (e.g., recently touched corpse, had emission) couldn't eat sacrificial meat (Leviticus 7:20-21) but could eat regular meat. This prevents ritual law from becoming overly burdensome while maintaining sacredness of worship.

Historical Context

Game animals, being wild, weren't brought for sacrifice (only domesticated animals: cattle, sheep, goats). Eating them never involved ritual. This secular category of eating applies to non-sacrificial slaughter of domestic animals when distant from sanctuary. The distinction between ritual purity for worship versus daily life allowed normal activity to continue. Later Pharisaic tradition blurred these lines, creating extensive purity regulations Jesus critiqued (Mark 7:1-23).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do we maintain appropriate distinction between worship (requiring special holiness) and daily life (common grace)?
2. What dangers arise when ritual requirements for worship expand to govern all daily activities?
3. How does Jesus's teaching on purity (Mark 7) clarify the heart versus external distinctions?

Interlinear Text

כֶּן	וְאֵל	וְאֵת	הַצִּבִּי	אֵת	יֹאכְלֶנּוּ:	כְּאֵשׁ	רֶאֱרָא	יֹאכְלֶנּוּ:
H3651	H354	H853	H6643	H853	H398	H398	H834	H389
	and the hart		Even as the roebuck		is eaten			

יֹאכְלֶנּוּ:	יַחַד	וְהָטָה	וְרָא	הַטְּמֵא	יֹאכְלֶנּוּ:
H398	H3162	H2889		H2931	H398
is eaten	of them alike	and the clean		them the unclean	is eaten

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