

# Deuteronomy 14:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat.

## Analysis

**And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat.** God provides the classification principle - clean animals must have both split hooves and chew the cud. Both criteria must be met; possessing only one is insufficient.

The dual requirement teaches that external and internal characteristics both matter for ceremonial cleanliness. Split hooves represent outward walk; chewing the cud represents inward digestion and meditation. Spiritually, this pictures that true holiness involves both external conduct and internal character.

Reformed theology sees here a principle applicable to Christian life - genuine faith manifests in both doctrine (internal truth) and practice (external behavior). Neither alone suffices; both must characterize the believer.

These physical characteristics served as simple, observable criteria enabling Israelites to quickly determine which wild animals they could eat when hunting or traveling. God's law was practical and clear, not requiring specialized knowledge to apply.

## Historical Context

---

This classification system distinguished Israel from surrounding peoples who ate pork, horses, camels, and other animals forbidden under kosher law. These dietary differences created visible, daily markers of Israel's distinct covenant identity.

Modern science notes that some forbidden animals carried higher disease risk in ancient conditions without refrigeration, though the primary purpose was ceremonial and symbolic rather than health-related.

## Related Passages

---

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

---

1. What spiritual principles do the two requirements (split hoof and chewing cud) illustrate?
2. How does this dual criterion teach that external behavior and internal character must align?
3. What New Testament principles about genuine faith parallel this Old Testament illustration?
4. Why is it important that God's laws were clear and practically observable?
5. How did dietary distinctions reinforce Israel's separate covenant identity?

## Interlinear Text

וְכֹל	בְּבָהָמָה	שָׁת	מִפְּרָס	וְת	פְּרָס	וְת	עַת	וְשָׁשָׁן	שָׁע	וְשָׁת
H3605	<b>And every beast</b>	<b>that parteth</b>	<b>claws</b>		<b>the cleft</b>		<b>and cleaveth</b>		<b>into two</b>	
	H929	H6536	H6541		H8156		H8157		H8147	
מַעַל	ת	פְּרָס	וְת	בְּבָהָמָה	ה	אַתָּה	תְּאַכְּלֹן			
<b>claws</b>	<b>and cheweth</b>	<b>the cud</b>	<b>And every beast</b>			H853	<b>that ye shall eat</b>			
H6541	H5927	H1625	H929				H398			

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org