

Deuteronomy 14:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

Analysis

And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase. The pig represents the inverse case - split hooves but no cud-chewing. Like the previous examples, one compliant feature cannot overcome the missing requirement. Both criteria must be present.

Pigs were common food animals throughout the ancient Near East and Mediterranean world. This prohibition created one of the most visible distinctions between Jews and Gentiles, lasting into New Testament times. Jewish refusal to eat pork became cultural marker.

The extension to nor touch their dead carcase adds ceremonial uncleanness beyond dietary restriction. Contact with pig carcasses defiled, requiring purification. This amplified separation between Israel and their pork-eating neighbors.

Jesus later declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19), removing this ceremonial barrier. Peter's vision (Acts 10) demonstrated that the clean/unclean distinction no longer applied in the New Covenant, opening gospel access to all nations without dietary prerequisites.

Historical Context

Pork was staple protein throughout the ancient world. Israel's abstention from this widely available meat source set them apart conspicuously from surrounding cultures. This distinction continued through the intertestamental period and into New Testament times.

The Maccabean martyrs chose death rather than eat pork when Seleucid rulers attempted to force abandonment of kosher laws, demonstrating how central this prohibition became to Jewish identity.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why did God choose pork as one of the primary forbidden foods?
2. How did dietary laws create visible boundary between Jews and Gentiles?
3. What theological significance does Jesus' declaration that all foods are clean carry?
4. How does Peter's vision demonstrate the expansion of gospel access to all nations?
5. What does the removal of dietary restrictions teach about the nature of New Covenant holiness?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| וְאֵת | הַ חֲזִיר | כִּי | מִפְּרִי | פֶּרֶס ה | הוא | לֹא א |
| H853 | And the swine | H3588 | because it divideth | the hoof | H1931 | H3808 |
| | H2386 | | H6536 | H6541 | | |
| | גֶּחִי ה | טִמֵּא | ה וּא | לָכֵן | מִבְּשָׂרָם | לֹא א |
| | yet cheweth not the cud | it is unclean | H1931 | H0 | of their flesh | H3808 |
| | H1625 | H2931 | | | H1320 | |
| | תֹּאכֶּ לֹ | וּבְנִבְלָתָם | לֹא א | תִּגְעוּ: | | |
| | unto you ye shall not eat | their dead carcase | H3808 | nor touch | | |
| | H398 | H5038 | | H5060 | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 66:17 (Parallel theme): They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 66:3 (Parallel theme): He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

Isaiah 65:4 (Parallel theme): Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels;

2 Peter 2:22 (Parallel theme): But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.