

Exodus 22:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.

Analysis

And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.

'Holy men' (אֲנַשִּׁים קָדְשָׁה, anshei-qodesh)—set apart people. Holiness affects diet: don't eat torn flesh (תְּרֵפָה, terefah, carrion). Why? It's impure—animals killed by predators likely have blood still in them, violating clean eating laws. 'Cast to dogs'—what's unfit for holy people is fit for animals. The principle: holiness extends to all life areas, including meals. Leviticus 11 expands dietary laws. Peter's vision (Acts 10:9-16) declares all foods clean—ceremonial laws fulfilled in Christ. But principle remains: holiness affects practical choices. 'Whether you eat or drink, do all for God's glory' (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Historical Context

Terefah (torn flesh) laws protected Israel from improperly slaughtered animals. In Christ, dietary laws are fulfilled (Mark 7:19, Acts 10:15), but the principle of holiness affecting daily choices continues.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do dietary restrictions teach the principle that holiness affects all life areas?
2. Although Christians aren't bound by Old Testament food laws, how does 1 Corinthians 10:31 apply the holiness principle?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתֶּן	לֵדֶשׁ	לִתְהִיא	בָּשָׂדֶה
H376	And ye shall be holy	H1961	any flesh
	H6944	H0	in the field
בָּשָׂרֶת	לֹא	תֹאכַל	לְבָנָם
that is torn of beasts	H3808	unto me neither shall ye eat	it to the dogs
	H2966	H398	H3611
אַתְּ			תַּשְׁלַכְתָּ
H853			ye shall cast

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 4:14 (Parallel theme): Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth.

Leviticus 19:2 (Holy): Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.

Acts 15:20 (Parallel theme): But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Deuteronomy 14:21 (Holy): Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

Ezekiel 44:31 (Parallel theme): The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

Leviticus 22:8 (Parallel theme): That which dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I am the LORD.

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