

COMMON?—ACTS 10:14

by Avram Yehoshua

The Seed of Abraham

“But Peter said, ‘Not so, Lord! For I have *never* eaten anything *common* or unclean.’”
(Acts 10:14 NKJV)

The Apostle Peter spoke those words to the Holy Spirit after the Spirit had said to him, ‘Rise, Peter! Kill and eat!’ with the Church wrongly making the inference to be to eat the unclean ‘wild beasts’ and ‘creeping things,’ etc., on the sheet that was let down three times from Heaven (Acts 10:12-13, 16). The Voice from Heaven then told Peter, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call *common*’ (Acts 10:15).

We know what unclean refers to. Peter is saying that he never ate any unclean animal, but what did he mean by common? Was he just saying the same thing, but in another way? That’s not unusual in Hebrew writings. It’s called a Hebraism. Or does *common* signify something other than an unclean animal?

Acts 10 contains the monumental story of Peter being used by God to bring the first Gentiles to Messiah Yeshua, which happened eight to ten years *after* the resurrection. Many Christians are surprised to find out how long it was *after* the resurrection that the first Gentile/s came to Jesus, but most Christian theologians teach that it was eight to ten years or longer.¹

Acts 10 is confirmed by Scripture as the first time Gentiles are justified ‘in Messiah Yeshua,’ when Peter, in Acts 11, is scrutinized by the believing Apostles, Elders and Pharisees for going in to a Gentile’s home, etc. As Peter recounted the vision to them they came to realize that this was of God:

“When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”” (Acts 11:18 NKJV)

Also, in Acts 15, which happened in 48 AD² which was 18 years *after* the resurrection, or about eight years after Acts 10, Peter literally speaks of the first Gentiles coming to Messiah *through him*, which obviously meant Cornelius & Co. in Acts 10:

“And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them, ‘Men and

¹ **Acts 10** took place about 40 AD:

39-40 AD: Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), p. 347.

40-44 AD: R. J. Knowling, D.D.; author; W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A., LL.D., editor, *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, vol. two: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 250.

Before 41 AD: I. Howard Marshall, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., author; Professor R.V.G. Tasker, M.A., B.D., general editor, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Acts* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 183.

² **Acts 15** took place in 48 AD, eight or nine years after Acts 10:

48 AD: J. D. Douglas, M.A., B.D., S.T.M., Ph.D., organizing editor, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Part 1 (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), pp. 281-283.

48 AD: Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 25th printing, 1976), pp. 486-488.

49 AD: Geoffrey W. Bromiley, general editor; Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, associate editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Volume Three (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 692.

49 AD: Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 444, note 361.

brethren! You know that *a good while ago* God chose among us, that *by my mouth the Gentiles* should hear the word of the Gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them *by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us*, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” (Acts 15:7-9)

Peter was speaking about Cornelius, who, along with his family and friends, came into the Kingdom of Yeshua through Peter in Acts 10. This is seen in both Peter saying, ‘by *my mouth the Gentiles*’ came to Yeshua, and also, that God poured out the Holy Spirit to those Gentiles just ‘as He did’ to Peter and the others in Acts 2. Peter, as well as the other six Jewish believers with him at the house of Cornelius, were amazed³ that the Lord poured out the Holy Spirit to Cornelius and the other Gentiles with him (Acts 10:44-48). Acts 10 is the first time that Gentiles were justified or Born Again and filled with the Holy Spirit of the Jewish Messiah.

Mosaic Dietary Laws Overturned?

The Pharisaic Church uses the three sheets of Acts 10, ‘Kill and eat,’ and ‘what God has cleansed let no man call unclean (Acts 10:11f.) ‘as proof’ that Christians may eat whatever meat they desire as long as they bless it, but nowhere in the chapter does Peter, or anyone else, eat what God calls unclean animals in the Old Testament (Lev. 11:1-47; Dt. 14:3-21). If someone in Acts 10 had eaten and authorized unclean meats for Christians, the Pharisaic Church would be right. As no one actually eats any unclean meat in this chapter, nor is there any mention of unclean meats by Peter or Cornelius, the Pharisaic Church is very wrong in interpreting Acts 10 as license to eat unclean animals/meats. Those who eat unclean meat sin against their Lord and themselves, acting as false witnesses to other believers and non-believers about the Jewish Messiah.

Also, the Pharisaic Church uses what the Apostle Paul said to further support their heretical theology. They err because they only take into account one of the two qualifiers in order for food to be sanctified to our bodies. Paul said, ‘for it is sanctified by *the word of God and* prayer’ (1st Timothy 4:5). In other words, the two qualifiers for eating any meat are prayer *and* the Word of God—not just prayer.⁴ The Pharisaic Church is wrong, but because of their traditional understanding of the passage, and their stance against Mosaic Law, they cannot see the proper and simple biblical interpretation of the text.

Be that as it may, Peter, the chief Apostle, was used by the Lord to extend salvation and the hand of fellowship to those first Gentiles in Acts 10, but it didn’t come without some reproof by the Jewish believers when he returned to Jerusalem. If Cornelius, though, hadn’t been the first Gentile to come into the Kingdom of Yeshua, those Jewish believers wouldn’t have been upset with Peter.

Cornelius, though, wasn’t just any pagan Gentile. Realize that all the Gentiles were pagans, worshipping gods and goddesses, except for those like Cornelius who had come alongside the Jewish God, His people Israel (Cornelius gave alms to the needy and poor of Israel; Acts 10:4), and had faith in Him. There were also other Gentiles who had even (wrongly) converted to Judaism (cf. Acts 13:16, 26, 42-43, 47-48).⁵

Cornelius had long ago given up his pagan ways and had been worshipping the God of Israel for some time (Acts 10:1-2). What this means, in light of Peter eating with him (Acts 11:1-3), is that Cornelius didn’t serve Peter bacon or shrimp, etc., but was only eating biblically clean meats. Cornelius had been

³ In Acts 10:45 it says that they were astonished! (HCSB, KJV, NET (greatly astonished!), NKJV, NIV, NRSV)

⁴ Read more about this in [Law 102](#) and [Romans 14 and the Dietary Laws](#).

⁵ For why a Gentile can never be a Jew, see [Is the Gentile Now a Jew?](#)

going to the synagogue, most likely, for years, and had learned many of the ways of Yahveh (Mosaic Law; Torah). This is seen in Acts 15:21, when James ‘matter of factly’ speaks of new Gentile believers continuing to go to the synagogues on the 7th day Sabbath to learn Mosaic Law, something he had seen Gentile believers doing since the time of Cornelius, eight years earlier.

The Meaning of the Vision

During the Vision and ensuing conversation with the Lord, Peter spoke of *never* having eaten anything *common* or unclean (Acts 10:14; cf.11:8). The Pharisaic Church teaches that Jesus made ‘all foods clean,’ basing their heretical theology upon their anti-Mosaic Law position and a poor English translation of Mark 7:17, but if that was so, why was Peter, at least eight years *after* the resurrection, saying he had never eaten anything unclean? If Jesus had made unclean meats clean Peter would have already have had many bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches, with plenty of mayonnaise. Mark 7:17 states:

“because it goeth not into his heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the *draught*? This he said, making all meats clean.” (Mark 7:19 ASV)

“For it doesn’t go into his heart but into the stomach and is *eliminated*.” (As a result, He made all foods clean.)” (Mark 7:19 HCSB)

“For it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and then goes out into the *sewer*.” (This means all foods are clean.)” (Mark 7:19 NET)

“For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his *body*.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”)” (Mark 7:19 NIV)

“since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the *sewer*?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.)” (Mark 7:19 NRSV)

“Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, *purging* all meats?” (Mark 7:19 KJV)

Note that only the KJV does not speak of Jesus cleansing or making all foods clean because it’s not in the Textus Receptus, the Greek New Testament that the KJV is based on. The other English texts don’t have it either, but they have added to what the KJV speaks of in saying ‘purging all meats,’ for even they don’t have Greek words for, ‘Thus he declared.’

Peter reveals that Jesus never said nor meant that ‘now’ all unclean meats were clean. If Messiah Yeshua had said that, the Jews would have picked up stones to kill him for coming against Mosaic Law, but that didn’t happen, and also, if Yeshua had made all foods clean then Peter would have eaten pig 10 years earlier *with the Lord*, and the vision in Acts 10 *would not have baffled him*. Scripture clearly states, though, that Peter *didn’t* understand the *meaning* of the vision:

“Now while Peter was *greatly perplexed* as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon’s house, appeared at the gate.” (Acts 10:17)

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon says that the Greek word translated as *greatly perplexed* means ‘*to be entirely at a loss, to be in perplexity*.’⁶ Peter didn’t know what the vision *meant*, but the Pharisaic Church

⁶ Joseph Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), n.p. διαπορέω.

Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of*

is quick to say that Peter just couldn't understand how God could make the pig, and all other Old Testament unclean animals and creepy crawling things, clean. In other words that's why Peter was perplexed about the vision. He hadn't come into 'the full revelation of the cross,' which to the Pharisaic Church means that Mosaic Law had been done away with.⁷ Peter, the Church says, was just too caught up in being a Jew and didn't realize that all the Old Testament laws had been negated 'in Christ.' He didn't realize that Christ had set him free from all those legalistic laws (which Paul calls holy; Rom. 7:12).

When the *meaning* of the vision becomes clear to Peter, though, the Church's interpretation is clearly seen as false because the vision doesn't have anything to do with animals, clean or unclean. It has to do with Gentiles being unclean:

“Then Peter said to them, ‘You know how *unlawful* it is for a *Jewish* man to keep company with, or go to one of another nation, but *God has (just) shown me* that I should not call *any man common or unclean.*” (Acts 10:28)

There's absolutely nothing about the pig or any other unclean animal, fish or bird being clean, or that Peter could eat shrimp, lobster and catfish and other unclean creatures. No, the vision was just that—it was a vision. Like Pharaoh's dream of the seven wonderfully plump and wholesome cows *being eaten* by seven of the most scraggly looking deformed cows Pharaoh had ever seen,⁸ the vision of Peter was not meant to be taken literally, as the Pharisaic Church teaches. It was a vision that needed to be interpreted—as Joseph did for Pharaoh and all his court, and as Peter does for us in verse 28. The Church's interpretation, that Christians are free from the Mosaic dietary laws, is false and very detrimental to one's health. As I shared with one Pharisaic Christian, who questioned me about eating pig and salvation, I said,

‘You won't go to Hell because you eat pig, but you might get to Heaven faster.’

God's laws and rules are meant for our blessing and protection on this Earth. The biblical concept of keeping Mosaic Law is always questioned by Pharisaic Christians who say, ‘Will I go to Hell if I eat pork chops or shrimp?’ They don't understand that anything can be placed into that slot. For instance:

Will I go to Hell if I don't tithe?

Will I go to Hell if I steal a bobby-pin?

Will I go to Hell if I tell a lie?

Certainly we should tithe and not tell a lie or steal, but God is forgiving. The issue isn't salvation, but obedience to God and His way of walking out our faith in His Son. *Obedience* to God and His will for us is a major part of what it means to biblically believe in Jesus and follow Him. Yeshua said it best when He said, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46) The Apostle John made it even clearer, 60 years *after* the resurrection, stating:

“He who says he abides in Him *ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*” (1John 2:6 NKJV)

Jesus never ate ham nor anything unclean, and Hebrews says that Yeshua is the *same*, yesterday, *today* and forever (Heb. 13:8). The question isn't ‘will I go to Hell if I eat pig,’ but is it sin to eat pig? Does God want Christians to keep the Mosaic dietary laws? With the Pharisaic Church teaching that Mosaic Law was done away with at the cross, most Christians feel secure in breaking God's Word at that point, but

the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (third edition, 2001), p. 235: διαπορέω. (Accordance Bible Software). To ‘be greatly perplexed’ and to ‘be at a loss.’

⁷ For why it wasn't Mosaic Law that was nailed to the cross, as the Church wrongly teaches, ask for the PDF, *What was Nailed to the Cross? Col. 2:14.*

⁸ Gen. 41:1-4, 14-32f.

God shows us, through Peter's words in Acts 10, of having never eaten unclean meat, that the Pharisaic Church is wrong about Mark 7:19, etc.

Ben Witherington rightly states that the Gentile was considered unclean by the Jews because of his worship of the pagan gods and goddesses, and only secondarily, by the unclean animals that he ate. He states:

“Jews believed that the *chief source of Gentile impurity* was their contact with ‘the defilement of idols,’ not their contact with non-kosher food.”⁹

In other words, the worship of pagan gods and goddesses made the Gentiles unclean in a much more profound way than their eating of unclean animals.¹⁰

Some Christians think that it was only Jewish tradition that Peter spoke of when he said it was *unlawful* for him, as a Jew,¹¹ ‘to keep company with, or go to one of another nation’ (people; Acts 10:28). The basis for what Peter said is from God, who told Israel to stay away from the pagan Gentiles because they would become a snare to the Jew, taking him away from the God of Israel.¹²

When Peter sees the vision, with the Voice from Heaven telling him to, ‘Kill and eat!’, Peter is dumbfounded and wonders what the vision meant. The sheet was let down three times and then taken back up into Heaven (Acts 10:16), and while Peter tried to figure it out, the Holy Spirit said to him:

“Behold! **Three men** are seeking you. Arise, therefore, go down and go with them, *doubting nothing, for I have sent them!*” (Acts 10:19-20)

Three men and three times the sheet with all the unclean animals, snakes and birds, etc., was let down. Three *Gentile* men. Three men that if God the Holy Spirit hadn't spoken to Peter *to go with them*, ‘doubting nothing!’, Peter *would never* have gone with them. The *meaning* of the vision is crystal clear—God was making a way for the Gentiles to come into the Kingdom of Messiah Yeshua, using Peter, the chief Apostle, as His bridge to cross over to them to, extending salvation to the Gentile. This way, when the Apostle Paul would come to Jerusalem a few years later, praising Yeshua for all the *Gentiles* that had come into the Kingdom through him,¹³ no one in Jerusalem gave it a second thought because God had already made a way for the unclean Gentile to enter the Kingdom through Peter.

Peter's Use of Common

“But Peter said, ‘Not so, Lord! For I have *never* eaten anything *common* or unclean.’ And a Voice spoke to him again the second time, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call *common*.’” (Acts 10:14-15; cf. 11:8-9)

The Greek word for *common*, in both verses, is κοινὸν (*koinon*), which in this case means ‘that which is ceremonially impure.’¹⁴ It has other meanings, like ‘common ground,’ etc., but ceremonial impurity or de-

⁹ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 462.

¹⁰ For more on Gentile worship and how it effected the new Gentile believer, and the biblical understanding of Acts 15:20-21, see [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#).

¹¹ Eight to ten years *after* the resurrection Peter still considered himself a Jewish man.

¹² Jews were not to associate with Gentiles, but to be a *separate* people, holy to Yahveh: Ex. 23:32-33; 34:12, 15; Lev. 20:22-26; Dt. 7:3-11; 23:6; Josh. 23:1-15; Ezra 9:1-10:44; Neh. 13:1-3, 23-28.

¹³ Acts 15:12; cf. 13:1f.; 14:1ff.

¹⁴ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 552: κοινός (Accordance Bible Software). ‘Of mutual interest, communal, common...pertaining to being of little value because of being common, ordinary, profane...specifically, of that which is ceremonially impure’ (defiled) ‘*nothing is unclean of itself*, Rom. 14:14a...I

filement is what Peter is speaking of. We know that God and Peter were speaking Hebrew, and so, one of *koinon's* Hebrew equivalents is חל (hol). It means that which is,

‘profane,¹⁵ *common*...anything non-holy, i.e. in distinguishing between the holy and the common.’¹⁶

What Peter meant, if he used *hol*, was that he had never eaten any clean meat which had become defiled or defective *according to Mosaic Law*. This meant he wouldn’t eat a biblically clean animal which had died naturally of old age, or disease, or which had been killed by another animal. God spoke of this to ancient Israel, saying,

“You must not eat anything that *dies of itself*. You may give it to the stranger who is within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you are a *holy* people to Yahveh your God!” (Dt. 14:21; cf. Ex. 22:31; Lev. 7:24; 17:15; 21:8; 22:8, 18-25; Dt. 15:21-22; Malachi 1:6-8; 1st Peter 1:13-17)

The Lord also speaks to Israel about not eating (a biblically clean) animal which had been *torn apart* (killed) by wild animals, and again, what had died naturally, in these passages as well:

“And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat *torn by beasts* in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.” (Exodus 22:31 NKJV)

“Whatever *dies naturally or is torn by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I am the LORD.” (Lev. 22:8 NKJV, cf. Ezk. 4:12-15, esp. v. 14 where Ezekiel tells the Lord that he never defiled himself by eating anything the ‘died of itself or was torn by beasts;’ and Ezk. 44:31)

The understanding here of animals, obviously, is of biblically clean animals that died naturally (of old age or disease) or had been killed and torn apart by wild beasts. Yet, the Lord also made allowances for these animals that had died naturally or which had been killed by wild animals, to be eaten by an Israeli or the ‘stranger’ living in Israel.¹⁷ The person needed to wash his clothes and bathe:

“And every person *who eats what died naturally or what was torn by beasts*, whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.” (Leviticus 17:15 NKJV)

Another meaning of *hol* speaks of a clean animal that had one limb longer than the others, or was lame, or was missing an eye, etc. Although God didn’t want this biblically clean animal to be sacrificed on the bronze Altar of Sacrifice to Him because it wasn’t fit for sacrifice at the Tabernacle or the Temple, it could be eaten by an Israeli slaughtering it at home. Deuteronomy 15:21-23 states:

“But if there is a *defect* in it, if it is *lame* or *blind* or has any serious *defect*, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God. You may eat it within your gates; the unclean (ceremonially unclean person) and the clean person alike may eat it; as if it were a gazelle or a deer. Only you shall not eat its blood—you shall pour it on the ground like water.”

Realizing that *common* (Greek: *koinon*) speaks of ceremonial defilement, and in a Jewish context means meat from a biblically clean animal that had died of old age, disease, or had been torn apart by animals, or

have never eaten anything common or unclean (1st Macc 1:62) Acts 10:14.’

¹⁵ Profane: relating or devoted to that which is not sacred...secular rather than religious.

¹⁶ חָלָל, (*Halal*), R. L. Harris, editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), n.p.

¹⁷ This is a special ‘stranger,’ one that has attached himself to Israel, and so, is part of Israel.

was defective in some way, reveals what Peter was speaking about. Peter had never eaten anything biblically unclean, 8-10 years *after* the resurrection, nor had he eaten anything which had been either ceremonially unfit to eat or had died on its own or been ravaged by wild beasts.

Another Hebrew word that Peter could have used for *common*, which is similar to *hol*, is פָּגוּל (*pigul*).¹⁸ It means biblically clean meat that had been sacrificed to Yahveh that had become *ceremonially unclean* because it was not to be eaten on or after the third day. Consequently, it was ‘too long after a sacrifice.’¹⁹ God speaks of this in Leviticus:

“And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall *not* be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him—it shall be an *abomination* (*pigul*) to him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear guilt.” (Lev. 7:18 NKJV)

“And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an *abomination* (*pigul*). It shall not be accepted.” (Lev. 19:7 NKJV; NIV impure; NASB offensive, etc.)

The Hebrew word *pigul* literally means, ‘a foul thing, refuse,’²⁰ something that literally stinks,²¹ and refers to biblically clean sacrificial meat that’s eaten on the third day or thereafter.²² The *Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* calls it an ‘abomination,’ saying it’s sacrificial meat from ‘a sacrifice which has become unclean because it has been kept too long (until the third day).’²³ It’s obviously biblically clean meat that was sacrificed to Yahveh, but had not been eaten in its allotted time.

From both of these Hebrew words it’s clear to see that the Apostle Peter was still keeping both the Mosaic

¹⁸ פָּגוּל (*Pigul*) is actually the Hebrew word found for Peter’s use of *common*, in two Hebrew editions of the New Testament:

Franz Delitzsch, תורה וברית החדשה *The Hebrew-English New Covenant* (Powder Springs, GA, USA: Hope of Israel Publications).

תורה וברית החדשה (Torah, Prophets, Writings and The New Covenant) (Jerusalem: The Bible Society of Israel, 1991).

¹⁹ פָּגוּל (*Pigul*), *Hebrew to English Dictionary and Index to the NIV Old Testament* (derived from the Zondervan NIV Exhaustive Concordance), Accordance Bible Software, paragraph 7110.

²⁰ פָּגוּל (*Pigul*), Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Abridged (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 17587. ‘foul thing, refuse, but only as term. techn. of unclean sacrificial flesh; it is פָּגוּל (*pigul*) if eaten on third day.’

²¹ פָּגוּל (*Pigul*), *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* at <http://biblehub.com/hebrew/6292.htm>.

²² Brown, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, paragraph 17587. A second meaning of the word is a ‘technical term for sacrificial flesh from an unclean animal.’ There is no Scripture that speaks of it being biblically unclean meat.

²³ פָּגוּל (*Pigul*), Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), pp. 909-910. They see *pigul* as possibly being unclean meat, citing ‘Ezk. 4:14’ and speaking of the ‘abominable broth’ mentioned in Is. 65:4 (and clean meat that) has been kept until the third day, but there’s no biblical evidence to specifically support that *pigul* also speaks of biblically unclean meat, especially from Ezekiel, who would never have eaten any unclean meat:

“So I said, ‘Ah, Lord Yahveh! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth until now. I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable (*pigul*) flesh ever come into my mouth.’” (Ezekiel 4:14)

“Who sit among the graves, And spend the night in the tombs; Who eat swine’s flesh, And the broth of abominable things (*pigul*) is in their vessels.” (Isaiah 65:4 NKJV) Here, ‘the broth’ is most likely biblically clean meat that was sacrificed more than two days ago.

dietary laws of clean and unclean animals, and also, the Mosaic laws that speak of not eating biblically clean animals which God considered unfit for eating because the period of time after the sacrifice to eat it had ended, or more likely, Peter was saying that he had never eaten any biblically clean animal that had been torn apart by other animals or had died of old age or disease.²⁴ Either way it's obvious that the Apostle Peter, 8-10 years *after* the resurrection, was keeping Mosaic Law—it had not been 'done away with at the cross,' as the Church wrongly teaches. This has serious ramifications for every Christian who thinks that eating biblically unclean animals is 'alright with Jesus.' It also means that every Christian should be keeping all Mosaic Law that applies to him (1st Cor. 7:19; 1st John 2:6; Rev. 14:12).

Conclusion

Scripture declares that Cornelius was the first Gentile to believe in the Lord Yeshua and be Born Again and filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 10 has absolutely nothing to do with an alleged nullification of the Mosaic dietary laws: This is seen in:

1. Acts 10:9f., where God presents a vision of unclean animals to Peter, symbolizing the three unclean Gentiles whom Cornelius had sent to Peter, and in,
2. Acts 10:15, where the Lord said, what God has cleansed don't call common (defiled), which referred to the three men specifically, and Cornelius & Co. and Gentiles in general, and,
3. Acts 10:19-20, where the Holy Spirit tells Peter to go with the three (Gentile) men, 'doubting nothing,' for the Spirit had sent the men (each Gentile man pictured or symbolized in one of the sheets that was let down three times (Acts 10:7, 16), and in,
4. Acts 10:28, where Peter speaks of it being *unlawful* for him, a Jew, to keep company with, or go into the home of a Gentile, and in,
5. Acts 10:34-35, where Peter speaks of *now* 'realizing' that God wasn't partial to only the Jewish people, but that any Gentile who feared the God of Israel, etc., was acceptable to Him, and in,
6. Acts 10:44-48, where Peter and his Jewish believing friends were amazed that the Holy Spirit was poured out *upon the Gentiles*, just as it had been upon them in Acts Two, and Peter ordered them to be baptized in water, and in,
7. Acts 11:18, where those believing Jews who had thought Peter had sinned, in going to the house of a Gentile and eating with him, began to praise God when they heard that the Gentiles in Cornelius' home had been filled with the Holy Spirit, just as it was in Acts Two, and they said that God was (now; just now; eight to ten years *after* the resurrection) granting repentance unto life through the Jewish Messiah to the Gentiles, and in,
8. Acts 15:7-9, where Peter speaks of the Gentiles coming to the Lord through him, and of the Holy Spirit being poured out upon them, just as the Spirit of God had been given to them in Acts Two (cf. Acts 14:27; 15:3-4, 12, 14-17).

The vision of Acts 10 was meant to help Peter to see that the Gentile wasn't 'off-limits' to Jewish believers, but that God was wanting to reach out to the Gentiles through them. The vision clearly has nothing to

²⁴ The reason for thinking that Peter was saying he had never eaten an animal torn apart by other animals or that died of old age or disease vs sacrificial meat that had passed its time of eating is because in Peter's day the priests in the Temple would have made sure that no one would have eaten sacrificial meat that was older than two days.

do with the repeal or the doing away with of the Mosaic dietary laws, as the Pharisaic Church falsely teaches.

Peter, speaking of not having eaten anything common (a biblically clean animal torn apart by wild animals or which had died of old age or disease), nor any biblically unclean animal, eight to ten years *after* the resurrection, reveals that the chief Apostle, as well as *all the believing Jews, including Paul*,²⁵ still kept all the laws of Moses that applied to them. This means that every Christian should, too, if they want to more accurately follow their Jewish Savior and His Way of living out their lives, because the believing Gentiles *are part of* the Kingdom of Yeshua, who rules over the House of Israel, which includes Gentiles (Romans 11:11f.; Eph. 2:11f.). Yeshua said,

“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep, but a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd and I know My sheep (the Jewish people who believe in Yeshua), and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. *And other sheep* (the Gentile believers) I have which are not of this Fold. Them, also, I must bring, and *they will hear My voice*, and there will be *one Flock* and one Shepherd.” (John 10:11-16)

If there is one Flock with one Shepherd, there is also one Law to guide them both, as our Lord’s half brother clearly inferred, and the Apostle John literally encourages us to walk in:

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, *speaks evil of the Law and judges the Law*, but if you *judge the Law*, you are not a *doer* of the Law, but a judge.” (James 4:10-11)

“He who says he abides in Him *ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*” (1st John 2:6)

“And the Dragon was enraged with the Woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, *who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*” (Revelation 12:17)

In ending, here are some other places where we see the word *common* in Scripture:

“that you may distinguish between holy and unholy (*לֹא־חַל* *hol*; profane, common; anything not holy), and between unclean and clean,” (Leviticus 10:10 NKJV)

“And the High Priest answered David and said, ‘There is no *common* (*לֹא־חַל* *hol*; profane, common; not holy) bread on hand, but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women.’” (1st Samuel 21:4)

“Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with *defiled* (*κοινὸν koinon*; common, defiled, ‘unclean’), that is, with *unwashed hands*, they found fault... Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, ‘Why do Your disciples not walk according to the *Tradition of the Elders*, but eat bread with *unwashed* (common/defiled/unclean) hands?’” (Mark 7:2, 5)²⁶

²⁵ Acts 21:20-24; cf. Acts 1:1-3, where Luke expressly states that during the 40 days when Yeshua was seen alive from the dead by the Apostles, He taught them about His Kingdom. If Mosaic Law had been done away with at the cross, the Apostles would have known about it and would have proclaimed it in Acts and elsewhere.

“I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean (κοινὸν *koinon*; common, *ceremonially defiled*, ‘unclean,’ but not in the biblical sense of it being an unclean animal) of itself, but to him who considers anything to be unclean (κοινὸν *koinon*; common, *ceremonially defiled*, unclean, but not in the biblical sense of it being an unclean animal), to him it is unclean (κοινὸν *koinon*; common, *ceremonially defiled*, unclean, but not in the biblical sense of it being an unclean meat).” (Romans 14:14)²⁷

“But there shall by no means enter it anything that *defiles* (*koinon*; common, defiled, not holy), or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” (Revelation 21:27 NKJV)²⁸

²⁶ The Tradition of the Elders, also called the Oral Law, is known today as the Talmud.

²⁷ For more on this understanding in relation to unclean meats and what Paul is addressing in [Romans 14 and the Dietary Laws](#), Paul is *not* saying we can eat unclean meat.

²⁸ This article was finished on 18 February 2015 and last revised on Friday, January 22, 2021.