

ROMANS 14 AND THE DIETARY LAWS

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Romans 14 is often cited as a place where the Apostle Paul spoke of the Mosaic dietary laws as not binding on Christians.¹ That ‘Moses’ or ‘the Law’ or the ‘dietary laws’ or ‘unclean meats’ are never once mentioned in the chapter fails to effect the popularity of this false Church doctrine. The issue with Romans 14 isn’t the eating of biblically unclean meat, but the eating of meat ceremonially defiled by it being offered or sacrificed to pagan deities. One group said they could eat it when it was at the market place, while the other group said that it was defiled by its sacrifice to the idols and shouldn’t be eaten, even when sold at the market place.

There are four verses in Romans 14 that are used to support the justification for eating pig and other unclean animals, fish and birds that Leviticus 11 speaks of. The four verses are:

1. Romans 14:2—‘One person has faith that he may eat all things.’
2. Romans 14:14—‘nothing is unclean in itself.’
3. Romans 14:17—‘the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace in the Holy Spirit.’
4. Romans 14:20—‘All things indeed are clean.’

Like the vision of Peter in Acts Ten, these verses, taken by themselves out of context and without proper biblical understanding of some key Greek words are interpreted by Pharisaic Christian theologians to mean that the dietary laws are done away with and Christians can eat whatever animals they want. Placed within its context, however, and with the definition of the Greek words, the verses don’t have anything to do with expunging God’s dietary laws of clean and unclean animals. Nor does Romans 14:5-6 give one the ability “to choose whichever day he wants as his Sabbath.

Although some pagans sacrificed pigs, it wasn’t common, and so this isn’t what the Apostle Paul is addressing. In other words, the animal meat in question is biblically clean.

Romans 14:2—Faith to Eat All Things

The theological theme of Romans 14 is love and forgiveness for both the strong ‘meat eaters’ and the weak in the faith ‘veggie-only’ eaters. At no point does Paul write about clean meat versus unclean meat. At no point does Paul say that unclean meat is now clean and acceptable to eat. He does say:

¹ F. F. Bruce, D.D., F.B.A., The Rev. Canon Leon Morris, M.Sc., M.Th., Ph.D., General Editor, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Romans* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 230, “Some Christians (like Paul himself) had no qualms of conscience about taking any kind of food.” Bruce defines the “weak in faith” as “Not yet mature enough to grasp that all kinds of food are equally kosher (‘fit’)” p. 231. Bruce also writes that, “Jesus, on one occasion, made a pronouncement about food which, as later reflection on it showed, had the effect of abrogating the Jewish food laws: ‘he declared all foods clean’ (Mk. 7:19). Peter, in his noonday vision on the roof of Simon the tanner’s house in Joppa, learned not to count as unclean any person that God has pronounced clean,” p. 234. Also, in his comment on Romans 14:14, Bruce writes, “For Paul all food was kosher,” p. 237.

Harrison, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 1222, “The stronger Christian was the one who believed he could eat all things.” In speaking of Paul, *Wycliffe* states, “He knows that nothing is unclean of itself.”

²One person has faith that he may eat *all things*, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

³The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.' (Romans 14:2-3)

Verse two mentions that one man believes he can 'eat all things' or everything. 'All things' is in contrast with one who only eats veggies, and so Paul isn't speaking about eating pig, but about being able to eat meat that had been sacrificed to a pagan god or goddess, and sold in the market place. Obviously, no Christian is eating this meat at the pagan sacrifice.

Although Paul is only relating what 'one man,' or in this case, a group believes (which would seem to include pig and catfish, etc.), Paul will qualify what 'all things' *means to him*. It's important in trying to understand the Scriptures, that we come to the knowledge of what the author (Author) meant. As we'll see, Paul means that all (clean) meat could be bought from the market place and eaten, even if it had been sacrificed to a pagan god. Verse 20 will reveal this as the Apostle uses the same phrase, 'all things,' there.

Verse three deals with the accusations that the groups accused one another with, and Paul's admonition to both of them. To the one who is eating sacrificial meat to pagan gods, which is basically the only meat that a one could buy, Paul tells them not to despise those who think that they can't eat this meat. To those who think that eating that meat is wrong or sinful, Paul tells them not to judge (condemn) their brethren who think it to be right, thinking themselves purer or holier than them.

Paul addresses the issue of condemnation again in vv. 10-11—only Yeshua can condemn, and these brothers shouldn't condemn one another, but love one another. Paul quotes Scripture from the Prophet Isaiah (45:23) saying that all shall bend the knee before Yeshua. He teaches them to give way to His Way of seeing and forgiving each other.

Paul brings the concept of oneness and judgment down to a practical level in v. 12, saying that we should, in our hearts, not judge to condemn another. If we despise someone in our heart we must deal with it now. This specifically addresses those believers who were condemning and despising their brothers for living in a way that they didn't think they should, whether meat eaters or meat abstainers.

That neither group was sinning, in that one ate the meat and the other wouldn't, we see in that Paul doesn't correct or try to change either group's way of thinking. If one of them had been sinning he would have addressed it. On the contrary, Paul is bringing divine tolerance of things that are not sin.

If either group was sinning by eating something like pig, Paul would have dealt with it. By speaking of a stumbling block in v. 13, after v. 12, which speaks of everyone having to give an account to God, it would seem that Paul is saying that one's attitude can also be a stumbling block. For if someone despises another in his heart then the other will pick up on this, even if no words are spoken. This is a further admonition 'to get right' before the Lord, for all knees shall bow, and no one walks in all the Truth, and Yeshua is the Judge.

Verse five has particulars changing from food to days, but the concept of not judging remains constant. Paul never brings up the Sabbath, so one cannot really insert it here because it's not speaking of the Sabbath, but of fasting. Christian theologian James Denney writes of the verse, 'It is not probable that there is any...reference to the Jewish Sabbath.'²

Be that as it may, Romans 14:5-6 speak of the veggie eaters, who were the weak ones in the faith (v. 2), setting aside (esteeming) certain days to God to fast. That's why they were special days to the 'veggie-

² James Denney, D.D., Author; W. Robertson Nicoll, Editor, M. A., LL. D., *The Expositor's Greek Testament: St. Paul's First Epistle to the Romans*, vol. two (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 702.

only eaters,’ and why Paul speaks of ‘esteeming one day above another (while) another esteems every day alike’ (v. 5). The one who esteemed every day alike didn’t take days to fast and ate food every day, while the veggie only eaters most likely fasted a couple of days every week. That Paul is speaking of fasting is confirmed in the very next verse:

“He who *eats*, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and *he who does not eat*, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.” (Rom. 14:6)

“One person esteems one day above another” (for fasting); “another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.” (Romans 14:5 NKJV)

Romans 14:5-6 has absolutely nothing to do with allowing Christians to choose any day they want ‘to be their Sabbath.’ It also doesn’t allow for the holiness of the 7th day Sabbath to be transferred to any of the other six days of the week.

Interesting to realize is that the word Sabbath, as well as meaning ‘holy rest,’ also means ‘end,’ as in ‘the end of the week.’³ It is the seventh or last day of the seven day week established at Creation by God (Gen. 1:31–2:3). Just from these two perspectives, one cannot have a ‘Christian Sabbath’ on any other day of the week except the day that God ordained—the last day of the week, the seventh day.⁴

Verses 7-8 speak of unity in the Body, despite if one is a veggie-only eater or a meat eater. Paul points to Yeshua as the One who makes us one. Thinking that Paul was speaking of the Sabbath, without ever mentioning it in the whole chapter, is an unjustifiable presumption.⁵ It would be unreasonable to assume that, especially when he’s not told us *why* the Sabbath has been disposed of its *holy* position in God’s Word. Paul would not dismiss such a major biblical institution with only a nebulous reference to it, at that.

Romans 14:14—Nothing is Unclean in Itself

In Romans 14:14, most English translations have Paul writing that ‘nothing is *unclean* in itself,’ and many Christians point to this verse and say that God’s Mosaic dietary laws are obviously done away with. It would seem that way in English, but the Greek word for biblically *unclean* animals is not found once in the verse (nor anywhere else in Romans 14). A sample English text, with the Greek word, is:

“I know and am fully convinced by the Lord Jesus Christ, that nothing is unclean (*koinon κοινόν*) in itself, but to him who considers anything to be unclean (*koinon κοινόν*), to him it is unclean (*koinon κοινόν*).”

Three times the Greek adjective *koinon* is translated as *unclean* in many English Bibles, **but *koinon* never means ‘unclean’** in terms of biblically unclean animals. *Koinon* applies to **clean** animals that have be-

³ R. L. Harris, editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), n.p. “The basic thrust of the verb is, when transitive, ‘to sever, put an end to,’ and when intransitive, ‘to desist, to come to an end.’ This may possibly indicate that the Sabbath is the day which ‘puts a stop to’ the week’s work...The translation ‘to cease, desist’ can be illustrated in the following verses: ‘Day and night shall not cease’ (Gen. 8:22); ‘The seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation’ (Jer. 31:36); ‘So these three men *ceased* to answer Job’ (32:1).”

⁴ Ibid. ‘Something of the importance of this institution can be gauged by observing that of the ten commandments the fourth commandment is treated more extensively than any of the others.’ In other words, the Sabbath commandment has 95 words to it, while the other nine combined only have 218. The fourth commandment has 30% of the words, while the other nine have 70% (and this counts v. 2 as part of the Ten Commandments).

⁵ Presumption—an act or instance of taking something to be true or adopting a particular attitude toward something, esp. at the start of a chain of argument or action.

come *ceremonially defiled*.⁶ This is precisely what the Apostle Paul has been dealing with in Romans 14—the issue of alleged ceremonially common or defiled (clean) animals because they had been sacrificed to a pagan god. The meat eaters rightly thought they could eat it, but the veggie-only eaters thought the meat was defiled, had become *koinon*; ‘common,’ due to the animals being sacrificed to idols, and they wouldn’t eat it.

This phrase *ceremonially defiled* should be used in v. 14 (three times) if the translators had done their job right, but no doubt due to their theological bias against Mosaic Law, they grievously err and cause Christians to sin, teaching that the Apostle Paul is telling them they can eat biblically *unclean* animals. The proper interpretation for Romans 14:14 is this:

“I know and am fully convinced by the Lord Jesus Christ that nothing is ceremonially defiled (*common–koinon*) in itself, but to him who considers anything to be ceremonially defiled (*common–koinon*), to him it is ceremonially defiled (*common–koinon*).”

The veggie-only eaters believed the meat eaters were defiled, even though the sacrificial meat they were eating was biblical clean and *had been bought at the meat market*, not at the site of the sacrifice to the god. Meat was primarily gotten from the over-abundance of what was left of pagan sacrifices, which were then sold to the vendors in the meat market. Eminent Christian scholar F. F. Bruce saw that those weak in the faith referred to those who thought the meat at the market place was defiled or ‘unclean’ by it having come from a pagan sacrifice. Therefore, it was unacceptable for them to eat:

“The buying of butcher-meat in a pagan city presented some Christians with a problem of conscience. Much of the meat sold in the market came from animals which had been sacrificed to a pagan deity. The deity received his token portion; the rest of the carcass would be sold by the temple authorities to the retail merchants. Among resident Christians there would be some with a robust conscience who knew that the meat was neither better nor worse for its association with a pagan deity and who were quite happy to eat it; others were not so happy, feeling that somehow the meat had been ‘infected’ by its idolatrous association.”⁷

Paul uses the principle that ‘the earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it’ (1st Cor. 10:25f., which was written a few years before Romans) to say that it was alright to eat that meat. This is how he dealt with the issue at Corinth a couple of years earlier,⁸ concerning meats offered to idols and then brought to the market for common consumption.⁹ Of course this doesn’t mean that the Christian meat eaters in Rome were taking part in an idolatrous sacrifice, but as Bruce brings out, the pagan priest would ‘bless’ the animals in the name of his god, sacrifice it, give some to the god and his idolators, and the rest was sold in the market. Paul allows for Christians to eat this meat.¹⁰

Koinon can be translated into English with other words, one of which is ‘common,’ as in common ground, or common (profane) vs. holy, and some even say it pertains to Levitical unclean animals,¹¹ but the Greek

⁶ Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (third edition, 2001), p. 552: κοινός (Accordance Bible Software). There are other meanings for *koinon*, but this is the meaning that applies to Romans 14.

See also [Common—Acts 10:14](#), for how God uses “common” in the Old Testament in relation to clean animals.

⁷ Bruce, *Romans*, p. 235.

⁸ First Corinthians was written about 52 AD and Romans was written about 54 AD.

⁹ 1st Cor. 10:26, 28; cf. Ex. 9:29; Ps. 24:1 for where Paul first used the concept.

¹⁰ Of course, if Christians ate the meat *at the time of the sacrifice* they would have been taking part in the actual ceremony of idolatry, which would make them idolators. Paul condemned that (1st Cor. 10:14-22).

¹¹ Joseph Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph

word is not used for that in the Septuagint, and the meaning which best suits Paul's context is obviously ceremonial defilement because this is what the passage is about, while biblically, *common* is also a biblical term for clean meat that is profaned by death or disease.¹² This isn't the case in Rome, but Paul aligns *common* (or better yet, *ceremonially defiled*) for it. Paul isn't speaking about unclean animals, but clean animals sacrificed that had become defiled or common in the eyes of the veggie-only eaters.

The word that is translated as unclean, three times in Romans 14:14, *is not the word for unclean animals* in Leviticus 11 or Deuteronomy 14. It should be translated as *ceremonially defiled or common*. The veggie eaters thought that all the meat sacrificed in the name of pagan gods wasn't fit to place in the temple of God (their bodies). Paul didn't agree with them, but told the meat eaters not to judge the veggie eaters for their weak 'veggie-only eating' faith (Romans 14:2-4). The issue in Romans 14 is one of *ceremonial defilement*. It's not about unclean animals now being acceptable to those 'strong in the faith.' Romans 14 has nothing to do with *unclean* animals being declared clean nor any day being able to be one's Sabbath.

The Greek word for biblically *unclean* animals is ἀκαθαρτος *ahkah'thartos*, but Paul *never* uses it in all of Romans 14. Therefore, Paul is not speaking of nullifying the Mosaic Law's dietary laws regarding unclean animals (e.g. Lev. 11; Dt. 14). However, Paul will use the Greek word for *clean* that is used for biblically clean animals. In a moment we'll see how he brings this out in verse 20, but first...

Romans 14:17—'the Kingdom of God is Not Eating and Drinking

We know from Acts 21:20 that there were literally tens of thousands of Jewish Christians *and they were all zealous for the Law of Moses*. This only makes good biblical sense because one of the specific reasons why God gave the New Covenant to Israel was so Mosaic Law could be placed upon the hearts and minds of Christians (Jer. 31:31-34), which the writer of Hebrews twice affirms (Heb. 8:10; 10:16).¹³

5657. 'Common...ordinary, belonging to the generality...levitically *unclean* (in classical Greek *bebēlos*, which see...Mark 7:2, 5; Rom. 14:14; Heb. 10:29; Rev. 21:27; common people.' The verb means 'to make (levitically) *unclean*, render unhallowed, defile, profane.' To make levitically unclean speaks of ceremonial defilement, whether of animals or humans.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor, Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, Associate Editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 751. "In the OT *common* as opposed to *holy*...is 'common bread' (1st Sam. 21:4; NEB 'ordinary bread'), i.e., other than the showbread or bread of the Presence." In other words, the Bread in His Presence was holy, not common/ordinary bread. In its ordinary use, the Greek word for common can be 'common food,' which was any food, meat or otherwise, that wasn't holy (dedicated to God), and so, was eaten by the Jewish people.

Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* חָלָל (Accordance Bible Software), n.p. The Hebrew word used for common in 1st Sam. 21:4 is חָלָל (*hol*). It means that which is, 'profane, *common*...anything non-holy, i.e. in distinguishing between the holy and the common.' (Profane: relating or devoted to that which is not sacred...secular rather than religious.) Also, in the New Testament the standard Greek word for 'common' is 'koinos, from the verb *koino*, indicating what is public, general, universal, as contrasted with 'idios,' which pertains to that which is peculiar, individual, not shared with others.'

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

¹² See also [Common—Acts 10:14](#), for how God uses "common" in the Old Testament in relation to clean animals.

¹³ The Hebrew word for Law in Jeremiah 31:33 is תּוֹרָה (Torah), which is the specific word for Mosaic Law. Some read 'law' in English and say it's (just) the Ten Commandments, but Torah refers to all Mosaic Law. See [Mosaic](#)

If we take Romans 14:15 and apply it to those Christians who eat pig, in front of us who don't, then they should realize that they shouldn't flaunt their pig eating in front of us, if they truly love us because it grieves us. In First Corinthians Paul says that if his eating meat is *offensive* to another he won't eat any meat, so as not to be a stumbling block to that person (1st Cor. 8:13). In Romans 14:21 he says that if our eating or drinking make a brother stumble then we shouldn't do it. How many 'Grace only people' would not eat pork chops or bacon in front of those who won't because it offends them? Not many, I'm sorry to say. They don't walk in *that* kind of Grace:

'For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food, him for whom Christ died.' (Rom. 14:15)

'for the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.' (Rom. 14:17)

Many 'Grace-only people' use v. 17 to nullify the dietary laws, but the context of Romans 14 has nothing to do with God's dietary laws, and neither does v. 17. It has to do with offending our brother by not considering his feelings in things of conscience. None of the biblically unclean meats of the air, the land and the sea (Lev. 11; Dt. 14) are ever mentioned, let alone declared as acceptable. Moses is not brought up once and neither is the Law. Paul is not talking about clean versus unclean meats or that unclean meats are now clean, but here in v. 17 he is redirecting our focus to eternal things, and not temporal things. Of course, no one in the Church would interpret v. 17 to mean that because the Kingdom of God is not about food or drink, that they shouldn't eat food or drink anymore. Proper interpretation of Scripture is important as what we believe we walk out.

In Romans 14:18-19, Paul again returns to his theme of love and unity. He writes of not squabbling over minor personal issues, but to love one another. This cannot be used by those who eat pig, shrimp and catfish to silence those who don't, as the dietary laws of God show us what is *sinful* to eat:

"For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men. Therefore, let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." (Romans 14:18-19)

In Romans 14:20 Paul qualifies just what animals are acceptable and also closes the argument that 'all meats are defiled' with his ingenious use of the Greek word for biblically clean meats:

'Don't destroy the Work of God for the sake of food. *All things* indeed are clean (καθαρά *kathara*), but evil to the man who by eating, *causes one to stumble*.' (Rom. 14:20)

In other words, it's alright for the meat eaters to eat their meat which had been sacrificed to idols, but don't 'rub it in the face of a veggie only eater. To both the meat eaters and the veggie eaters, Paul said that 'all things' (the sacrificial clean meats) are clean. The word he uses for *clean* is the Greek word used for clean animals in the Septuagint concerning the Mosaic Dietary laws (Lev. 11; Deut. 14). This is a definitive way of laying to rest the issue of ceremonial defilement (i.e. *common* in Hebrew thought), for the meats in question were biblically clean according to Mosaic Law (or Paul would have said so). The meat eaters are not *defiled* for eating clean meat that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul is not declaring that all unclean meats are now clean, but what the veggie eaters, in their weak faith called 'common' or 'defiled' is biblically *acceptable* for the meat eaters to eat. They must not however, flaunt their understanding in the face of the veggie-only people.

All things refers to the context of Romans 14:2 where Paul began the teaching by saying the exact phrase *all things* (which is actually just one word in Greek, *panta*). *All things* signifies the veggie attitude toward

all meats, not specifically the unclean meats of Lev. 11 and Dt. 14. They didn't eat any meat; clean or unclean. Paul is acting as a mediator between two groups of Christians—the meat eaters (v. 3), who despise the veggie eaters because they are weak in their faith for not eating (clean) meat sacrificed to idols, and the veggie eaters, who think themselves superior and condemn the meat eaters for eating 'defiled' (clean) meat (v. 3).

As for those who think that Romans 14 nullifies the Mosaic dietary law, there is,

1. no place in the New Testament that can be seen as a 'second witness' to lead us to understand that 'all things' includes biblically unclean meats or,
2. that a Christian can break the Mosaic Dietary laws 'because they are no more' or,
3. even a second witness that *explains* that the Mosaic Dietary laws are 'done away with.'¹⁴

Moving on, Romans 14:21 speaks again of considering one's brother more than one's self: 'It's not good to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.'

This is Paul's conceptual theme for Romans 14, of loving one another and giving way to the other in matters of conscience. This verse should be taken to heart by 'Grace people' who eat pig in front of us who know it to be sin, but try and convince us, without much success, that their understanding of eating pig is part of God's New Covenant. When we don't come over to their side they usually flaunt their 'liberty' in front of us, instead of humbling themselves to walk in Yeshua's love toward us and not eat it in our presence. This is sin for them. They are not loving us and this is the underlying concept of what Paul is speaking about in Romans 14. We, though, must forgive them and love them, in His precious name.

In v. 22 Paul again speaks to the meat eaters that their liberty doesn't give them the right to strut about in front of the veggie eaters. That Paul would lump both the eating of meat and the drinking of wine together (v. 21), not having even mentioned wine before (except by inference; *drinking*, v. 17), again reveals that the chapter is not dealing with biblically unclean meats, but with meat that a particular Gentile group in Rome considered 'defiled' because of their understanding that animals sacrificed to pagan gods defiled the meat. Romans 14 is not talking about the intrinsic nature of the meat in relation to the Mosaic dietary laws.

In the closing sentence it seems that Paul is dealing with the meat eating crowd:

'But he who *doubts* is condemned if he eats because his eating is not from faith. And whatever is not from faith is sin' (Rom. 14:23).

Neither Paul, nor the meat eaters, though, have to bring the veggie people out of their personal belief system. It doesn't effect their salvation. Let them eat veggies! Don't force them to eat meat!

Conclusion

The issue in Romans 14 is of one group of Christians who think they can eat meat offered to idols that was sold in the market versus another group who thought the meat was defiled, and so, didn't eat any meat. It's not about biblically clean meat versus unclean meat, or the ability for a christian to eat any meat

¹⁴ See [Law 102](#) for the sections dealing with Jesus 'declaring all foods clean,' Peter's vision and 1st Tim. 4:4-5, to understand that what Christianity upholds as justification for eating pig and other unclean meats is not biblical. Christian interpretation of the three 'food' texts of Jesus, Peter and Paul speak just the opposite when biblically understood. See also [The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers After the Resurrection](#) as this complements [Law 102](#) by revealing that the Feasts were being celebrated by all Christians many years *after* the resurrection, when Christianity tells us that "they were done away with" at the Cross.

he wants.

If Romans 14 had something to do with biblically *unclean* meat being eaten by the meat eaters, the veggie eaters wouldn't have been eating only veggies, they would have been eating biblically clean meat, too, and *Paul would have made reference to the biblical difference in the meats* (clean versus unclean). There is no biblical support to think that biblically unclean meats are being validated in this chapter, specifically at verse 14.

Paul settled the issue by saying that the meat in question wasn't defiled and therefore, could be eaten. Yet, if one thought that it was defiled then he shouldn't eat it, and the others shouldn't argue with him and try and dissuade him/them, or to flaunt their understanding in their face. It wasn't sin for the veggie-only eaters to abstain from meat, but it is sin to use vv. 5-6 to allow one to have their own Sabbath on a different day than the 7th day. It's also sin for a Christian to use Romans 14 to justify their eating of unclean animals.¹⁵

¹⁵ Revised on Saturday, October 1, 2022.