

International Institute of Islamic Studies
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Prohibition of Pork (Rational or Religious)

Author

Dr. Khālid Naṣr

Dean of International Institute for Islamic Studies

Translated by

'Aḥmad Khālid



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Ash-Shāṭibiy said, "The well-learned jurist, at the pinnacle of expertise, is the one who guides people to the moderate and customary practices suitable for the majority, not directing them to adopt extreme views or lean towards permissiveness. The evidence for the validity of this is that it is the straight path laid out by Sharia. The legislator's intention for the accountable individual is to carry the burden with moderation, without excess or deficiency. If one deviates from this in issuing legal opinions, they deviate from the legislator's intent. Therefore, diverging from the moderate school of thought is criticized by the well-learned scholars."

Abstract:

The pig is a mammal with hooves, characterized by a solid and muscular body, a relatively large head in proportion to its body, and a snout used for digging the ground in search of worms.

There are various domesticated pig species, but there are also wild boars, which are predatory animals.

Due to the lack of sweat glands, pigs need to cool themselves with water, mud, or slush.

The ruling on pigs in previous religious laws:

In Judaism, pigs are prohibited and considered impure, similar to the prohibition of camels, hares (resembling wild rabbits), and rabbits. These, along with certain birds and fish, are deemed impure and forbidden to be eaten or touched because contact with them leads to impurity.

It is mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy: "Do not eat anything detestable. These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud. However, of those that chew the cud or that have a divided hoof but do not chew the cud, you may not eat the camel, the rabbit, or the hyrax. Although they chew the cud, they do not have a divided hoof; they are ceremonially unclean for you. The pig is also unclean; although it has a divided hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses."

In Christianity, there is no explicit text altering the prohibition on pork, and the fundamental principle in Christianity lies in following

what is stated in the Old Testament: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." (Matthew)

In the Gospel of Mark, it is mentioned that demons sought permission from Jesus to enter the bodies of pigs, and he granted it: "All the demons begged him, 'Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.' He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs." (Mark)

Nevertheless, Christians hold on to a general statement in the Gospel of Matthew: "What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them." They interpret this as a permissibility of all types of food and drink, with the prohibition being related to what a person utters, such as cursing, lying, deception, and slander.

Moreover, Christians have expanded in raising and domesticating pigs as a form of distinction from followers of other religions. Pigs have become, along with the cross, a representation of Christianity in its various forms, with few exceptions.

The truth is that this statement is unrelated to the prohibition or permissibility of pork; it was made in response to the criticism of the Jews when they questioned why the disciples of Jesus did not wash their hands before eating. Jesus' intention in this statement was to emphasize that moral impurity is far more significant than physical impurity. Below is the complete context of this situation:

"At that time, some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 'Why do your disciples break the tradition

of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat bread!' Jesus replied, 'And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and 'Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.' But you say: Whoever says to their father or mother, 'only sacrificial animal that you benefit from me,' they are not to honor their father or mother. Thus, you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: These people will approach me with their mouths and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me improperly; their teachings are merely human-made.

Then, Jesus called the crowd to him and said, 'Listen and understand. What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.'... Peter replied, 'Explain the parable to us.' Jesus said, 'Are you still so dull? Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then to the exit? But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.'"

Some Christians argue against the prohibition of pork based on the following verses in the New Testament: "The next day as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour. He became very hungry and desired to eat. But while they prepared a meal, he fell into a trance and saw heaven

opened, and a vessel like a great sheet, tied at the four corners, descending to him, and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth and wild beasts and reptiles and birds of the air. Then a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." Peter said, "Not at all, Lord. For I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." The voice spoke to him a second time: "What God has cleansed, do not call common." This happened three times. And again, the vessel was taken up into heaven." (Acts)

Undoubtedly, Peter is not the legislator in Christianity; the legislator is Jesus Christ. Therefore, these verses are not necessarily considered part of Christian legislation, and perhaps what is mentioned in them is specific to Peter alone. It doesn't make sense for all animals, including wild beasts, reptiles and birds of the air, to be declared permissible for human consumption. If eating all these animals were genuinely allowed, Jesus would have explicitly clarified that point.

As for Islam, the prohibition of pork is explicitly stated in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. The Quranic verses include:

Allāh, the Exalted, said: "He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine..." [Al-Baqarah 2:173]

Similar prohibitions are found in Surah Al-Mā'idah, Surah Al-'An'ām, and Surah An-Naḥl.

From the Sunnah, there is a narration in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāriy, following Al-Bukhāriy's chain of transmission: From Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh (may Allāh be pleased with him) who reported that he heard the Prophet Muḥammad) prayers and peace be upon him) said

during the Year of the Conquest (Fath) while in Mecca: **"Indeed, Allāh and His Messenger have forbidden the sale of wine, dead animals, pork, and idols."**

Furthermore, the consensus of the Muslim community (Ummah) affirms the prohibition of pork. Scholars like Ibn Al-Mundhir, Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Qudāmah, An-Nawawiy, Al-Qurṭubiy, and others have transmitted this consensus.

The underlying cause behind the prohibition of pork:

The Quranic text that prohibits the consumption of pork labels it as "impure" (Arabic: رجس). This is found in the Saying of Allāh, the Exalted: "Say, (O Prophet,) 'I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to eat except dean animal, running blood, swine—which is impure...'"

This term, linguistically, signifies something repugnant, encompassing factors related to nature, reason, and religious law.

For example, dead animal combines the three factors of repugnance because dead animal is disliked by sound nature and reason, and it is the same in religious law. Wine combines two factors of repugnance: reason and religious law. However, gambling combines only one factor: religious law.

The term "impure" is used in various contexts in the Qur'ān, including idols, punishment, doubt, curse, temptation, whisper, and prohibited things.

The term may also refer to the filthy unclean thing as mentioned in the Ḥadīth concerning purification with pebbles when the Prophet said: "This is impure," referring to droppings.

Therefore, describing the pig as impure could be because it is filthy and unclean, or it could be because it is forbidden. According to the first perspective, it is prohibited because it is impure, and according to the second perspective, it is impure because it is prohibited.

Scholars have varied in their opinions regarding the underlying cause behind the prohibition of pork after agreeing that it is considered repugnant from a religious standpoint, worship-based reasoning. The following are some explanations provided by scholars on this matter:

First: Some scholars argue that the reason for the prohibition is the physical physical impurity of the pig. This impurity is considered real, not moral, similar to the impurity associated with idols and disbelievers. Ibn Ḥajar stated, "The majority of scholars stated that the underlying cause for prohibiting the sale of dead animals, wine, and pork is impurity."

In *Bustān al-'Aḥbār* [Orchard of Scholars], the author stated: "The underlying cause for prohibiting the sale of pork and dead animals is impurity according to the majority of scholars."

Ibn 'Aābidīn stated, "The underlying cause is the impurity of its essence, as mentioned in *Al-Hidāyah*."

In *Al-Hidāyah* [The Guidance], the author stated, "What the pig touches/licks is impure because it is physically impure."

In *Al-Baḥr ar-Rā'iq* [The Serene Sea], the author state, "The compiler's statement 'Except for the skin of pigs and humans' means that any tanned skin is religiously permissible to use except for pig's skin because pigs are physically impure..."

In Al-Muhadhdhib [The Refiner], the author stated, "The pig is impure because it is worse than a dog; killing it is recommended without any harm, and its prohibition is explicitly stated. Therefore, if the dog is impure, the pig is more deserving to be impure."

In An-Najm al-Wahhāj [The Glowing Star], the author stated, "The compiler said: 'The pig resembles the dog because it is a physically impure animal.'"

However, have the jurists unanimously agreed on the physical impurity of the pig?

The answer is that the jurists have not unanimously agreed on the physical impurity of the pig. The reason for this lack of consensus is the absence of clear-cut evidence on this matter. Instead, there is implicit evidence based on the interpretation of the term "impure" (رجس) and analogy with the dog. An-Nawawiy expressed this in Al-Majmū' [The Collective]: "Ibn Al-Mundhir transmitted in the book of Al-'Ijmā' [The Consensus] the unanimous agreement of scholars on the impurity of the pig. This is the strongest evidence when consensus is established. However, Mālik's school considers the pig to be pure as long as it is alive."

Therefore, scholars have differed regarding the physical impurity of the pig, and their opinions have varied as follows:

1. The majority, including the Ḥanafiy, Shāfi'iyy, and Ḥanbaliyy (and it is the view of some Mālikiyy), argue that the pig is physically impure, including all its parts, even the saliva, whether it is alive or dead.

2. The Mālikiyy school's dominant view and the view of Al-

'Awzā'iy argue that the pig is considered pure, as the default for living beings is purity. They base their opinion on linguistic considerations. In Ad-Dusūqiy's Ḥāshiyah [Ad-Dusūqiy's Commentary], it is mentioned, "The pure (The alive) and (the) here is inclusive; that is, every living being, whether marine or terrestrial, even if born in a filthy place, or a dog or a pig." They hold a similar opinion regarding the donkey and the wolf, considering them pure but prohibiting their consumption.

3. The third view is attributed to Dawūd ibn 'Aliy that the impurity of the pig is limited to its flesh only [i.e., pork], excluding its fat from prohibition. According to this view, it is not physically impure, as understood from the apparent meaning of the Quranic verses. It is mentioned in Al-Ḥāwiy [The Container], "For the flesh of the pig, there are two interpretations: one is that the prohibition is limited to the flesh, excluding fat, according the explicit meaning of the Quranic verses. This is the opinion of Dawūd..." Similar views are reported by the author of Maṭālib 'Uliy an-Nuhā [Aims of Mindful People], and Al-'Alūsīy in his Tafsīr. However, Ibn Ḥazm (may Allāh have mercy on him), who was well-versed in Dawūd's school, did not report this view from him. Instead, he reported the consensus on the prohibition of all parts of the pig.

These are the most important opinions regarding the impurity of the pig, and I would like to provide some comments on them:

1. All scholars, whether those who asserted the physical impurity of the pig or not, unanimously agree on the prohibition of its consumption [i.e., pork] due to the explicit textual evidence from the

Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

2. The Mālikiys, who did not assert the physical impurity of the pig, limited this to the case of its living state. However, after its death, it is considered impure because it becomes carrion, similar to the donkey and the wolf. Since there is no way to slaughter and eat these animals, the same applies to the pig. It becomes impure carrion after its death, whether slaughtered or not.

3. The claim that there is a consensus on the physical impurity of the pig is refuted by the opinions of the Mālikiys and Al-'Awzā'iy. They argue that the evidence of physical impurity based on the term "رجس" (impurity) is subject to interpretation and not immune to debate. This is because Allāh Almighty used the same description "impure" to describe things, some of which are physically pure, as stated in the Qur'ān: "Intoxicants, gambling, idols, and drawing lots for decisions are all impure [i.e., evil] of Satan's handiwork." [Al-Mā'idah: 90]. One cannot claim, for example, that gambling and idols are physically impure. When idols are broken and transformed to stones, they become even permissible for use according to the majority of scholars.

Similarly, the analogy between the pig and the dog, for both of which are deemed unusable, may be debatable. Insects, for instance, are not utilized, yet they are physically pure. Therefore, as An-Nawawiy stated after discussing the various opinions, "We do not have clear-cut evidence for the impurity of the pig."

Second: Some scholars argue that the reason for the prohibition is that the pig is an animal that has undergone transformation. Therefore,

it is not permissible to consume the flesh of an animal that has incurred the punishment of Allah.

Undoubtedly, this reasoning is considered very weak according to reason and religious law. From a reasonable standpoint, pigs have existed for millions of years, predating the creation of all humans, including Jews and others. From a religious standpoint, in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) reported that when someone asked the Prophet Muḥammad (prayers and peace be upon him) about the nature of monkeys and pigs, saying, "Allāh's Messenger, what about those monkeys and pigs which suffered transformation?" Thereupon Allah's Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: "Verily, Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, did not destroy a people or did not torment a people, and let their race grow. Monkeys and pigs had been even before that (when the deniers of truth were tormented and suffered transformation.)"

There are also narrations discussing camels being associated with devils, and Satan being worse than transformation. For instance:

Al-Barā' ibn 'Aāzib (may Allāh be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) was asked about praying in the resting places of camels, and he said, "**Do not pray at places where the camels kneel down because they are the places of devils, and pray in the fold of sheep because they are the places of blessing.**"

In another narration by 'Abdullāh ibn Mughaffal al-Muzaniy, the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said, "**Perform prayer in the sheep's resting-places and do not perform prayer in the**

camels' resting-places, for they were created from the devils."

Another narration mentions, "They [i.e., camels] are created from demons. Do not you notice their eyes and agility when they flee?"

According to this apparent interpretation, camels originate from fire and demons. However, none of the scholars claim that consuming camel meat is prohibited, because it is permissible to eat according to the explicit text of the Qur'ān.

We believe that the previous narrations are a type of simile, not real, as per the school of our esteemed Ḥanafiy scholars (may Allāh grant them mercy and contentment). The well-versed scholar Ibn 'Aābidīn (may Allāh have mercy on him) said, "It seems that the meaning of 'camels were created from the devils' is that they were created with qualities resembling them in fleeing and causing harm."

Al-Munāwiy stated, "Ibn Jarīr said: Its meaning is that camels were created with the nature resembling devils, and when a camel flees, its fleeing is due to a devil is pursuing it and causing it to flee."

Ibn Ḥibbān commented, "If prohibiting prayer in the resting places of camels were due to their creation from devils, then it would also be impermissible to pray on a camel. [*Translator note:* However, praying on a camel is permissible.] It is impossible for prayer to be prohibited in places where a devil might be present, yet it is allowed to pray on the devil himself." Allāh Almighty stated in the clear verses of the Qur'ān: "And Allāh has created from water every living creature..." [An-Nūr 24:45]. Satan is created from fire while camels, like other animals, are created from water as beings among creatures.

Third: Some scholars argue that the reason of prohibition is that

the pig is an animal that consumes excrement and droppings, due to its unwholesome diet, consisting of filth, rotten things, and worms, including its own droppings, which in turn makes it jallālah [*Translator's note: jallālah means an animal consuming excrement and droppings*].

However, this reasoning is baseless due to two factors:

1. The consensus on the prohibition of jallālah is not agreed upon among jurists. The Ḥanbaliys argued that consuming jallālah is forbidden, and some Shāfi'iyys agree with them. On the other hand, the Ḥanafiys and some Shāfi'iyys argue that it is disliked.

2. Scholars also do not unanimously agree on the definition of jallālah. While the Ḥanbaliys define it as an animal that predominantly feeds on impurities, regardless of whether the effects appear in its taste or smell, the majority of jurists, including the esteemed Ḥanafiys and Shāfi'iyys, argue that an animal is not considered jallālah until the effects of consuming impurities are evident in its meat and smell.

As-Sarakhsiy stated, "Regarding the animals that sometimes consume rotten things and non-rotten things in a way that does not manifest any effect in its meat, then there is no harm in consuming it."

Al-Nawawiy commented, "The correct opinion held by the majority is that the abundance [of impurities] is not considered. The consideration is based on the smell and impurity. If the smell of impurity is found in its sweat or elsewhere, it is jallālah; otherwise, it is not."

However, the correct view aligns with the opinion of the esteemed Ḥanafiys because these impurities, even if consumed by the animal,

undergo digestion and absorption into other elements such as meat, blood, milk, and others. Impurities are purified through this process, as is the case with alcohol when it transforms into vinegar. Therefore, for an animal to be considered prohibited *jallālah*, the impurities must be visibly and tangibly apparent in its meat and smell. The pig, although deemed unclean, impurities are not sensed in its meat.

Fourth: Some scholars argue that the reason for prohibiting pig is its classification as a member of the "fanged animals," a category of animals that includes those with canines. The Prophet Muḥammad (prayers and peace be upon him) forbade the consumption of any fanged animal, as narrated in the ḥadīth of Jābir and reported by 'Aḥmad and At-Tirmidhiy.

Proponents of this view rely on definitions of the "fanged animal" found in various sources, including books on animals by Ad-Damīriy. According to him, the pig shares characteristics of both domesticated and wild animals. It is wild because it possesses canines for tearing flesh and consumes rotten things. It is domesticated because it has hooves and consumes both herbage and forage. Ad-Damīriy stated, "It is said that nothing of the fanged and tailed animals is as powerful as the pig in terms of its canines. It can strike with its canines against the swordsman and the spearman, severing any bone or nerve it encounters in their bodies. Its canines may even grow so long that they meet each other."

Despite what Ad-Damīriy and others mentioned about the categorization of pigs as fanged animals, we do not consider it a valid reason for prohibition. This is due to the following:

1. Jurists did not unanimously agree on the prohibition of predatory animals, whether domesticated like dogs or wild like lions and wolves. Some Mālikiy scholars opposed the majority opinion, stating that it is disliked rather than prohibited. They based their argument on the Quranic verse: "Say, (O Prophet,) "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to eat except carrion, running blood, swine—which is impure." [Al-'An'ām 6:145].

Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabiyy, after discussing the context and the timing of the revelation of this verse (Meccan or Medinan), said, "If we consider that its context relates to the day of 'Arafah, the prohibition in it only encompasses what it mentions. I incline towards this view." Commenting on the ḥadīth that talks about predatory fanged animal, Ibn al-'Arabiyy said, "It is possible that the prohibition implies both prohibition and dislike, depending on the different situations of predatory animals in terms of their behavior. Consider dogs, cats, and hyenas; they are all predatory animals. However, cats and some dogs are sometimes tamed. The ḥadīth narrated from Jābir also mentions that the hyena is considered game animal [i.e., its meat is permissible to consume], and its expiation when caught while being on 'Iḥrām is a ram."

Al-Qurṭubiy stated, "Multiple narrations were reported from Mālik regarding the flesh of predatory animals, donkeys, and mules. In some narrations, he stated that it is prohibited due to the Prophet's prohibition, and this is the correct view according to his statement in Al-Muwaṭṭā' [The Eased]. However, in other narrations, he stated that it is disliked. This is understood from what is recorded in Al-

Mudawwanah [The Notebook], considering the explicit meaning of the Quranic verse, and due to the reports from Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, and 'Aā'ishah indicating the permissibility of consuming their flesh. This also aligns with the opinion of Al-'Awzā'iy." It is also the view of Ash-Sha'biy. Al-Qurṭubiy further stated, "Judge Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabiy alluded to this view in his book Al-Qabas [The Excerpt] contrasting what he mentions in his book Al-'Aḥkām [The Rulings]. He said, 'It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbās that this verse is one of the last revealed, so the Baghdadi scholars among us said: Everything else is permissible except what is mentioned in it, but it is disliked to eat predatory animals.'"

2. The majority of scholars who asserted the prohibition of predatory animals did not unanimously agree on all such animals.

For instance, the Imams Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan (may Allāh have mercy on them) permitted the consumption of hyenas and foxes. They based their view on Jābir's narration about the expiation for killing hyena for the one who is on the state of 'Iḥrām and Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās eating hyena meat.

The Shāfi'īys allowed the consumption of squirrels, fennec foxes, and sables because of their weak fangs. According to one narration in their school, animals like the jackal, the mongoose, the beech marten and the wild cat are all considered permissible to consume.

The Ḥanbaliys concurred with the permissibility of eating hyenas, foxes, and wildcats in one narration, stating their permissibility.

3. A predatory animal is one that hunts others for sustenance. Such animals need prey to survive, and without it, they cannot

survive. This characteristic is not applicable to pigs, as they have a varied diet, consuming rotten things, leftovers, grass, droppings and other items. These are things that are not consumed by predatory animals.

Predatory animals are those that prey on other animals and consume them forcibly, as defined in *An-Niyāyah* [The End] and *Al-Qāmūs* [The Lexicon]. Not every animal with fangs is considered a predatory animal. Many animals possess fangs but use them for purposes other than hunting and predation.

Fifth: Some scholars argue that the reason for prohibiting pork is due to its impurity, as it is associated with various diseases and is susceptible to parasites. Among the well-known diseases that pork meat can cause are trichinosis, brucellosis, and cysticercosis. Additionally, pork can harbor significant concentrations of tapeworms in its digestive system and has been implicated in the spread of a type of influenza named after it.

Numerous scientific studies have explored the diseases that eating pork or even raising and being in close proximity to pigs may cause. However, the question arises: Does the potential for carrying the disease or the possibility of its transmission from pigs to humans qualify as a valid reason for its prohibition?

Our perspective is that while we acknowledge the potential for diseases associated with consuming the meat of this animal or raising it, this potentiality does not serve as a valid reason for its prohibition. This is due to the following reasons:

1. Some of the diseases that may result from eating pork are also

possible from eating other meats that are not prohibited. For example, brucellosis or Mediterranean fever, caused by eating pork, can also be caused by drinking unpasteurized milk and eating goat and sheep meat at times. However, no one claims that goat and sheep are prohibited.

Similarly, tapeworms, present in pork, are also found in beef and certain fish, and no one claims their prohibition.

2. The expected harm from pig parasites can be avoided by cooking the meat properly at certain temperatures (145 Fahrenheit, 63 Celsius) or freezing it for seven days, which kills these worms and parasites.

3. Many ancient and contemporary societies primarily consume pork, yet we do not see widespread epidemics or settled diseases afflicting them. When comparing the average lifespans of these societies to others where pork is prohibited, we find that the average lifespans are similar or even favor those who consume pork.

4. The high fat content in pork is not a valid argument for its prohibition, as fat itself is not prohibited, as long as the animal producing it is ḥalāl.

Fat is considered one of the things that Allāh mad permissible, as long as the animal producing it is ḥalāl. The prohibition on Jews mentioned in the following verse was a punishment, "For those who are Jewish, We forbade every animal with undivided hoofs and the fat of oxen and sheep except what is joined to their backs." [Al-'An'ām 6:146]. Al-Qurtūbiy stated: "This prohibition for the Jews is an imposed hardship and a punishment."

There is no disagreement among scholars regarding the permissibility of consuming the fat of Muslim-slaughtered animals. It is allowed based on the general statement of Allāh: "Say, [O Prophet,] "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to eat..." The same is supported by the food practices of the Prophet and his companions. Scholars only differ regarding the meat of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) regarding the permissibility of consuming what the Torah made prohibited for them. The majority of scholars, including the Ḥanafiyys, one Mālikiy narration, Shāfi'iyy, and Ḥanbaliyy, maintain that it takes the ruling of the default permissibility. Only some Mālikiyy such as 'Ashhab, Ibn al-Qāsim and 'Aṣḥabḥ contradicted this. Ibn Ḥabīb stated, "Whatever is forbidden upon them (the People of the Book) and its prohibition mentioned in our scripture, then it is not permissible for us among their slaughtered animals. However, if we are not aware of its prohibition except from their statements and opinions, it is not prohibited upon us among their sacrificial animals."

Sixth: Some scholars argue that the reason for the prohibition of pork is the inherent promiscuity and intense desire for lust associated with pigs, which could have a negative impact on those who consume it.

Imām al-Fakhr ar-Rāziy, in his interpretation of the relevant verse of Surah al-Mā'idah, draws a comparison between the reason for the prohibition of pork and the permissibility of consuming sheep: "The pig is characterized by intense desire and a strong inclination towards

lust. Its consumption is forbidden for humans to prevent them from adapting to such characteristics. As for the sheep, it is an animal characterized by extreme harmlessness, as if it is devoid of traits. Therefore, consuming its meat does not result in the adoption of foreign characteristics incompatible with human nature."

Ad-Damīriy also alluded to the lustful nature of pigs, stating: "This type [pig] is described with intense desire, to the extent that the male rides the female while she is wandering, and she may cover miles with him on her back."

The connection between consumed food and acquired characteristics is a matter that some scholars consider as a reason or wisdom in explaining the prohibitions related to certain types of food. For example, Ibn Taymiyyah links the requirement of performing ablution (wuḍūʿ) after consuming camel meat to the belief that camels were created from devils. He states, "He [i.e., the Prophet (PBUH)] commanded to perform ablution due to the effect caused by devils. Eating its meat inherits a devilish power that can be removed by following the Prophet's command to perform ablution after eating it." In another context, he mentions, "Whoever performs ablution after eating its meat is protected from what affects addicts for consuming it without performing ablution, such as the nomads' grudges and hardness of the heart..."

Similarly, Aṭ-Ṭūfiy aṣ-Ṣarṣariy quotes some reports from sages in his book *Al-'Intiṣārāt al-'Islāmiyyah* [Islamic Victories], stating, "Some sages said: Four peoples increased their consumption of four

types of animals, and they inherited corresponding traits. The Turks consumed horse meat, inheriting strength and harshness. The Arabs consumed camel meat, inheriting animosity and generosity. The Abyssinians consumed monkey meat, inheriting disdain. The Christians consumed pig meat, inheriting impurity and lack of jealousy."

Ibn 'Aāshūr considered the influence of the forbidden items on one's disposition as wisdom and reason for prohibition. This is evident when he discussed the prohibition of consuming blood, stating: "The wisdom behind the prohibition of blood is that drinking it leads to harshness in human nature, making one coarse and akin to a predatory animal, which contradicts the purpose of the Sharia."

Many scholars draw evidence from a ḥadīth that suggests the relationship between consumable items and the dispositions of the consumer. Imām Al-Bukhāriy, through his chain of transmission from Abī Hurayrah (may Allāh be pleased with him), reported that the Prophet Muḥammad (prayers and peace be upon him) said: "The head (or summit) of disbelief lies towards the east and the pride and arrogance lie in people who possess horses and camels who are also coarse - the Bedouins. Tranquility lies in people who possess sheep."

It is worth noting the weakness in the reasoning here, as the ḥadīth does not explicitly link eating with these characteristics. Instead, it refers to two groups: the Bedouins and the urban dwellers. Each of the two groups has its behaviors. No blame if the Bedouins consume sheep meat, or the urban dwellers consume camel meat. This will not

change the characteristics of each group as the characteristics are associated with the place of residence and profession not the type of food. The ḥadīth refers to company and interaction rather than food.

Even so, the ḥadīth is indicative of a contrary understanding to those who used it as evidence for the relationship between what is consumed and one's disposition. Although the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) linked the camels with pride and showing off, he did not consider this a reason for prohibiting their meat. If disposition were influenced by the consumed food, the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) would have prohibited camel meat. However, performing ablution after consuming it is a point of disagreement.

Our perspective is that the relationship between the consumable items and the dispositions of the consumers, while significant, is not necessary and cannot be considered an underlying cause for its reluctance. This is due to the following reasons:

1. Humans are naturally consumers of meat, a fundamental part of their diet since ancient times, and for some populations, it serves as a primary food source. In the United States, for example, an individual consumes over 120 kilograms of meat annually, while in Australia, the average is over 110 kilograms per person each year. Similarly, in New Zealand, Argentina, Austria, the Bahamas, and Luxembourg, an individual consumes over 100 kilograms of meat annually. Despite this significant quantity, there is no evidence that the behavior of these populations has become more aggressive compared to other societies where the average meat consumption is much lower, like Nigeria,

Ethiopia, and Rwanda, where people consume less than ten kilograms per year. Interestingly, these societies, despite their lower meat consumption, exhibit more ferocity and brutality in their conflicts. If meat consumption had a direct impact on disposition, one might expect that higher meat consumption would turn individuals into predatory beasts, which doesn't align with the observed realities.

2. Not everyone who eats pork is characterized by the trait of promiscuity. While it may be present in some pork consumers, it is not found in others. For example, Christians in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia consume pork without being associated with this trait. They largely resemble Islamic communities in observing social norms. The mentioned promiscuity is a result of social behavior attributed to various factors. Societies where promiscuity, in its religious sense, is prevalent did not exhibit this characteristic throughout history. There was a gradual development in this cultural aspect over time, even though they consumed pork consistently. If eating pork inherently led to promiscuity, there would not be variations in this behavior among pork consumers.

3. The pig is characterized by other traits that do not seem to affect the consuming populations. For instance, pigs are considered unclean animals that live in dirty areas. However, we do not observe these traits influencing societies that consume pork. In fact, some of these societies are more sanitary than others that abstain from pork consumption. Additionally, pigs are prolific breeders, but we do not see this reflected uniformly across all consumers.

4. The prohibition of pork for this reason implies that someone who frequently eats fish possesses ease in learning swimming and increased physical activity; however, this is not the case. Similarly, it is not required that someone who eats fox meat⁽¹⁾ is characterized by cunning and deceit; the reality may differ. Eating lamb does not necessarily make someone modest, and consuming venison does not guarantee agility. Eating poultry does not inherently instill submission and surrender. These assumptions do not align with reality.

After presenting what some scholars have mentioned regarding the underlying cause for the prohibition of pork, we would like to state that, in our view, the reason behind the prohibition of this animal is religious. Even if certain rational aspects may occasionally become apparent, they should not be the basis for the prohibition. Thus, we must deal with the prohibition as a test from Allāh - the Exalted - to evaluate the obedience of His servants in abstaining from consuming this type of animal.

After all, Allāh knows best.

Dr. Khālid Naṣr

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(1) Jurists differed on the ruling of consuming fox meat. The Ḥanafiyys and Ḥanbalies, according to the dominant view, argue that it is prohibited for being predatory. The Shāfi'iyyis, Ṭāwūs, Qatādah, Al-Layth, Suyān ibn 'Uyaynah and a Ḥanbaliyy's narration argue that it is permissible, while the Mālikiiys argue that it is disliked.

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Author
Dr. Khālid Naṣr
Dean of International Institute for Islamic Studies

Translated by
'Aḥmad Khālid



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