

# Deuteronomy 14:9-10

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-14/deuteronomy-149-10/>

*Moses gives regulations regarding aquatic animals that were acceptable and unacceptable for food. Any fish that has fins and scales is permitted. Any fish that does not have fins and scales is forbidden.*

Having dealt with which of the land animals the Israelites may or may not eat, Moses continued to deal with the matter of diet in regard to water creatures. He gave a general rule that *these you may eat of all that are in water*. Specifically, he told them that *anything that has fins and scales you may eat*. *Fins* are appendages (an external body part) used by fish to swim, maintain position, to move, steer, and stop. *Scales* are small rigid plates that grow out of the fish's skin.

By contrast, Moses explained to the Israelites that *anything that does not have fins and scales you shall not eat* (v. 10). This would include creatures such as shellfish, eels, and sharks since they did not have both fins and scales. So, the people were to regard these water creatures as *unclean*. In fact, [Leviticus 11:10](#) states that such water animals (both freshwater and saltwater) were to be considered *detestable* to Israel. Therefore, they were not to be eaten by God's covenant people.

## **Biblical Text:**

**<sup>9</sup>“These you may eat of all that are in water: anything that has fins and scales you may eat, <sup>10</sup>but anything that does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.**