

Living Biblically Clean in the New Testament



Last time we had an in-depth look at Biblical cleanliness as explained in the Old Testament. Now it's time to see what our Messiah and His followers had to say on the matter...

But He answering, said, "It has been written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of YAHUAH.' " Matthew 4:4

Every Word of Scripture comes from YAHUAH, non-changing and everlasting. The same goes for the laws explaining how we are to keep ourselves clean and set-apart.

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to complete. For truly, I say to you, till the heaven and the earth pass away, one yod or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done. Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commands, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the reign of the heavens; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the reign of the heavens.” Matthew 5:17-19

Messiah came to reinforce the Word and Law of His Father! We are to keep them and teach them to others to be “called great in the reign of the heavens”! If anyone says that the laws, such as those detailing how to keep our bodies clean and set apart, are done away with by the coming or death of our Messiah, they are incorrect and misinformed. He said Himself that the Law has not passed away and will not until the heavens and earth pass away! That clearly has not happened!

And see, a leper came, and bowed before Him, saying, “Master, if You desire, You are able to make me clean.” And stretching out His hand Yahusha touched him, saying, “I desire it. Be cleansed!” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Yahusha said to him, “See, mention it to no one. But go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Mosheh commanded, as a witness to them.” Matthew 8:2-4

Yahusha, after the miracle of cleansing this man of leprosy, instructed him to go to a priest to follow the Torah’s instructions for those who have been unclean! What an amazing example for all of us to also follow Torah’s instructions in similar situations – leprosy or any other injury, sore or other examples of having been unclean.

“This people draw near to Me with their mouth, and respect Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as teachings the commands of men.” Matthew 15:8-9

Messiah’s words here show how strictly He is teaching and enforcing the Torah! Just verbally enforcing Torah is not enough, but we need to keep Torah in action, with all our hearts, rather than “talking big” about following the Father but then not really being obedient in our actions. We should truly try to stick to the laws explaining how to be Biblically clean.

“Not that which goes into the mouth defiles the man, but that which comes out of the mouth, this defiles the man.” Matthew 15:11

I’ve gone over this quote before in one of my previous chapters, but it is worth revisiting it here. Many people these days will say the Messiah was saying that we can eat anything. Some Bible translations even say “And so Jesus made every food clean” at the end of this passage! This is so obviously incorrect if you read the full passage correctly. This has to do with washing hands, not with the food they were eating.

Now, obviously, if the people dining with Messiah had touched something unclean, do done an unclean action like burying an animal, before the meal they would have been expected to clean themselves appropriately beforehand. But the act of washing hands ceremoniously before eating was a manmade tradition kept and enforced by the Pharisees.

Yahusha was merely pointing out that ungodly words coming out of someone's mouth, such as the enforcement of manmade traditions about Torah, would be the thing to make someone unclean rather than a bit of dirt on their hands!

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you tithe the mint and the anise and the cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the Torah: the right-ruling and the compassion and the belief. These need to have been done, without neglecting the others.” Matthew 23:23

The Pharisees and other religious leaders were focused on tithing and manmade traditions rather than on the loving and merciful side of the Torah. They were focused on judgement rather than on the grace of the Father. YAHUAH made so much room for grace in His laws, as He showed by the sacrifice of His Son!

While cleanliness and tithing was so important, the purpose of these laws was not to enrich a religious ruling class, but rather to draw YAHUAH's people closer to Him!

The beginning of the Good News of Yahusha Messiah, the Son of Elohim. As it has been written in the Prophets, “See, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You, a voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of YAHUAH, make His paths straight.’ ” Yoħanan came immersing in the wilderness and proclaiming an immersion of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Yehudāh, and those of Yerushalayim, went out to him and were all immersed by him in the Yardēn River, confessing their sins. And Yoħanan was clothed with camel's hair and a leather girdle around his waist, and eating locusts and wild honey. And he proclaimed, saying, *“After me comes One who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loosen. I indeed did immerse you in water, but He shall immerse you in the Set-apart Spirit. And it came to be in those days that Yahusha came from Natsareth of Galil, and was immersed by Yoħanan in the Yardēn. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit coming down on Him like a dove. And a voice came out of the heavens, “You are My Son, the Beloved, in whom I did delight.”* Mark 1:1-11

Firstly, many people wonder about John's camel hair vest, considering the fact that camels are an unclean animal according to the Torah. I believe that the hair was shorn from the camel, much like wool is shorn from living sheep and therefore was not part of the unclean carcass of the animal.

Next, baptism is an act of cleansing and dedicating oneself to the Most High. We cleanse ourselves in the baptism water, and then allow Messiah and the Ruach to cleanse us in a spiritual way – the baptism of fire and the Holy Spirit! This draws us into the presence of YAHUAH, and pulls us into the path of being set-apart to Him. It is the beginning of our walk with Him.

And the Pharisees and some of the scribes assembled to Him, having come from Yerushalayim. And seeing some of His taught ones eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Yehudim, do not eat unless they wash their hands thoroughly, holding fast the tradition of the elders, and coming from the market-place, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions which they have received and hold fast – the washing of cups and utensils

and copper vessels and couches. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your taught ones not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" And He answering, said to them, "Well did Yeshayahu prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it has been written, 'This people respect Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching as teachings the commands of men.' Forsaking the command of Elohim, you hold fast the tradition of men.

And He said to them, "Well do you set aside the command of Elohim, in order to guard your tradition. For Mosheh said, 'Respect your father and your mother,' and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me, is Qorban (that is, a gift)," ' you no longer let him do any matter at all for his father or his mother, nullifying the Word of Elohim through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such traditions you do." And calling the crowd to Him, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: There is no matter that enters a man from outside which is able to defile him, but it is what comes out of him that defiles the man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"

And when He went from the crowd into a house, His taught ones asked Him concerning the parable. And He said to them, "Are you also without understanding? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside is unable to defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purging all the foods?"

And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil reasonings, adulteries, whorings, murders, thefts, greedy desires, wickednesses, deceit, indecency, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these wicked matters come from within and defile a man."

And rising up from there He went to the borders of Tsor and Tsidon. And entering into a house He wished no one to know it, but it was impossible to be hidden. For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. Now the woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And Yahusha said to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

But she answering, said to Him, "Yes, Master, for even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs." And He said to her, "Because of this word go, the demon has gone out of your daughter." And having come into her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed. And again, going out from the borders of Tsor and Tsidon, He came to the Sea of Galil, through the midst of the borders of Dekapolis. And they brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they begged Him to lay His hand upon him. And taking him away from the crowd, He put His fingers in his ears, and having spit, He touched his tongue. And looking up to the heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, and the binding of his tongue was loosed, and he was speaking plainly. And He ordered them, that they should say it to no one, but the more He ordered them, the more they published it. And they were immeasurably astonished, saying, "He has done all well. He makes even the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." Mark 7:1-37

The first part of this passage is a repeat of the handwashing story from Matthew that we have already looked at. It is made crystal clear in this passage that it really has nothing to do with what the people were eating but rather whether or not they should have ritually washed their hands right before the meal!

Secondly, Yahusha had to deal with an unclean spirit. He does this many times over the gospels. Unclean spirits in a human would obviously made them unclean as well! Nowadays, I'm sure unclean spirits still possess humans, but the lines have been blurred and it isn't as easy to see it anymore.

Personally, I believe that much of the perversions that invade our society stem from these unclean spirits in people – think homosexuality, transgenderism, pornography addictions, etc. These spirits make humans so unclean!

The woman in this passage believed in the Messiah's ability to clean and heal her daughter, even though she was a gentile. Through her absolute faith, Yahusha did indeed help her daughter, He even used her faith as an example to His followers!

"If you love Me, you shall guard My commands." John 14:15

Another one to recap! This statement from our Messiah is so important! His commands are the Torah, because He is the Word made flesh. His Torah includes the instructions on how to be clean, and how to cleanse ourselves when we have been unclean. Following these instructions in our lives, amongst the others, proves with our actions that we love Yahusha!

"...as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give everlasting life to all whom You have given Him. And this is everlasting life, that they should know You, the only true Elohim, and Yahusha Messiah whom You have sent." John 17:2-3

The Most High gave His Son all authority over His people. The authority to heal, raise from the dead and forgive sins. Through the Messiah, we can know the Father. And through our love and obedience we keep the Law they have given us.

Now there was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a captain of what was called the Italian Regiment, dedicated, and fearing Elohim with all his household, doing many kind deeds to the people, and praying to Elohim always. He clearly saw in a vision, about the ninth hour of the day, a messenger of Elohim coming to him, and saying to him, "Cornelius!" And looking intently at him, and becoming afraid, he said, "What is it, master?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your kind deeds have come up for a remembrance before Elohim.

"And now send men to Yapho, and send for Shim'on who is also called Kēpha. He is staying with Shim'on, a leather-tanner, whose house is by the sea." And when the messenger who spoke to him went away, Cornelius called two of his household servants, and a dedicated soldier from among those who waited on him continually. And having explained to them all, he sent them to Yapho.

And on the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Kēpha went up on the house-top to pray, about the sixth hour. And he became hungry and wished to eat. But while they were preparing, he fell into a trance, and he saw the heaven opened and

a certain vessel like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth, in which were all kinds of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping creatures, and the birds of the heaven. And a voice came to him, "Rise up, Kēpha, slay and eat."

But Kēpha said, "Not at all, Master! Because I have never eaten whatever is common or unclean."

And a voice came to him again the second time, "What Elohim has cleansed you do not consider common."

And this took place three times, and the vessel was taken back to the heaven. And while Kēpha was doubting within himself about what the vision might mean, look, the men who had been sent from Cornelius, having asked for the house of Shim'on, stood at the gate, and calling out, they enquired whether Shim'on, also known as Kēpha, was staying there.

And as Kēpha was thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "See, three men seek you. But rise up, go down and go with them, not doubting at all, for I have sent them."

So Kēpha went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Look, I am the one you seek. Why have you come?"

And they said, "Cornelius the captain, a righteous man and one who fears Elohim and well-spoken of by the entire nation of the Yehudim, was instructed by a set-apart messenger to send for you to his house, and to hear words from you."

So inviting them in, he housed them. And on the next day Kēpha went away with them, and some brothers from Yapho went with him. And the following day they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relatives and close friends. And it came to be, that when Kēpha entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and bowed before him.

But Kēpha raised him up, saying, "Stand up, I myself am also a man."

And talking with him, he went in and found many who had come together. And he said to them, **"You know that a Yehudi man is not allowed to associate with, or go to one of another race. But Elohim has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.** That is why I came without hesitation when I was sent for. So I ask, why have you sent for me?"

And Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour. And at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and see, a man stood before me in shining garments, and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your kind deeds were remembered before Elohim. Now send to Yapho and call Shim'on here, who is also called Kēpha. He is staying in the house of Shim'on, a leather-tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he shall speak to you.' So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. And now, we are all present before Elohim, to hear all that you have been commanded by Elohim.

And opening his mouth, Kēpha said, **"Truly I see that Elohim shows no partiality, but in every nation, he who fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.** He sent the word to the children of Yisra'el, bringing the Good News: peace through Yahusha Messiah! He is Master of all. You know what word came to be throughout all

Yehudah, beginning from Galil after the immersion which Yohanan proclaimed:” how Elohim did anoint Yahusha of Natsareth with the Set-apart Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for Elohim was with Him. And we are witnesses of all He did, both in the country of the Yehudim and in Yerushalayim, whom they even killed by hanging on a timber. Elohim raised up this One on the third day, and let Him be seen,” not to all the people, but to witnesses, those having been chosen before by Elohim – to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He commanded us to proclaim to the people, and to witness that it is He who was appointed by Elohim to be Judge of the living and the dead. To this One all the prophets bear witness, that through His Name, everyone believing in Him does receive forgiveness of sins.”

While Kēpha was still speaking these words, the Set-apart Spirit fell upon all those hearing the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Kēpha, because the gift of the Set-apart Spirit had been poured out on the nations also, for they were hearing them speaking with tongues and extolling Elohim. Then Kēpha answered, “Is anyone able to forbid water, that these should not be immersed who have received the Set-apart Spirit – even as also we?”

And he commanded them to be immersed in the Name of Yahusha Messiah. Then they asked him to remain a few days. Acts 10:1-48

Another passage that I must revisit for this section on cleanliness – this applies specifically to clean and unclean meats.

Many people use Peter’s vision as an excuse to eat pork, rabbit and other unclean meats. It can certainly look like Peter was told by the Most High to eat unclean meat if you take the vision out of context!

Rather than make that mistake go back and read the passage again right to the end!

Note Peter’s statement that he has never eaten unclean meat, indeed, even after Yahusha’s death. Even he might’ve thought the Father was referring to food. But later it is revealed that the vision was about the gentiles being made clean through their faith and obedience and that Peter was free to eat with them! Nothing at all to do with what we should and shouldn’t eat. (Emphasis my own.)

And having heard this, they were silent, and praised Elohim, saying, “Then Elohim has indeed also given to the nation’s repentance to life.” Acts 11:18

YAHUAH, through His Son, reached out to the gentiles, the nations outside of Yashar’al and gave them a way to Himself, through faith in Messiah and obedience to the Torah – including keeping ourselves clean and set-apart – we are called out of the figurative Babylon that is the sinful nations that we are in, into Yashar’al, into His chosen people.

And the Scripture was filled which says, “Abraham believed Elohim, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.” And He called him, “he who loves Elohim.” James 2:23

Abraham had faith, as well as obedient actions – this is what makes us righteous.

“As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance, instead, as the One who called you is set-apart, so you also should become set-apart in

all behaviour, because it has been written, "Be set-apart, for I am set-apart." 1 Peter 1:14-16

The sins of our former lives made us unclean in YAHUAH's sight, but choosing righteousness, obedience and faith, choosing to make ourselves clean when we have become unclean, this is how we keep ourselves set-apart for our heavenly Father.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a set-apart nation, a people for a possession, that you should proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light, who once were not a people, but now the people of Elohim; who had not obtained compassion, but now obtained compassion. 1 Peter 2:9-10

Peter affirms who we are in Messiah – YAHUAH's chosen people, set-apart. How do we remain set-apart? By keeping Torah!

Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 1 John 3:4

Sin is indeed lawlessness, living with an absence of the law. Sin also makes us unclean, drawing us away from the Father.

By this you know the Spirit of Elohim: Every spirit that confesses that Yahusha Messiah has come in the flesh is of Elohim, and every spirit that does not confess that Yahusha Messiah has come in the flesh is not of Elohim. And this is the spirit of the anti-messiah which you heard is coming, and now is already in the world. 1 John 5:2-3

If anyone tells us that Yahusha did not teach Torah, or that He did away with the Law of the Old Testament, that person is acting in an anti-messiah (antichrist) spirit. As the apostle John wrote those words, he said that such spirits were already at work. How much more so are they at work right now?

The antimessiah spirit comes with half-truths and hidden deceptions, just as the serpent came to Eve in the Garden. Full lies would be far too obvious for those who are sincere in their love of the Most High. But including some truth in the lie, or omitting certain things, taking Scripture out of context, watering down the Word, this is what can draw even sincere believers away!

This is why we should immerse ourselves in the Word, and pray continually that YAHUAH uses His Ruach to reveal His truth to us in all things, especially in things that are lukewarm and semi-true in nature.

The Most High's Ruach will always confess Yahusha as Messiah, as well as the Torah of YAHUAH.

Here is the endurance of the set-apart ones, here are those guarding the commands of Elohim and the belief of Yahusha. Revelation 14:12

This passage sums it all up. We endure to the end of our lives by keeping Torah and having faith in Yahusha. The Father gives us the strength for this endurance, and gives us His instructions and His Ruach to help us remain set-apart.

Is it hard? Yes! Very much so in the time we're living in. But He makes it possible in His loving-commitment. He never says it will be easy, in fact Yahusha tells us we will be prosecuted because of it, just as He was. But our Abba is faithful to help us, to

strengthen us and lift us up, to teach us how to remain set-apart to Him in all things, to draw us ever closer to Him.

It is hard, but trust in Him, He makes all things possible.

And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, "Babel the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, and a haunt for every unclean and hated bird, because all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her whoring, and the sovereigns of the earth have committed whoring with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her riotous living." And I heard another voice from the heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues." Revelation 18:2-4

This is what "set-apart" means, in its purest definition. To set ourselves apart from the sin and filth of this world, and remain pure for our Father who loves us, and has the power over life and death!

But now, having been set free from sin, and having become servants of Elohim, you have your fruit resulting in set-apartness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the favourable gift of Elohim is everlasting life in Messiah Yahusha our Master. Romans 6:22-23

I call upon you, therefore, brothers, through the compassion of Elohim, to present your bodies a living offering – set-apart, well-pleasing to Elohim – your reasonable worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you prove what is that good and well-pleasing and perfect desire of Elohim. For I say, through the favour which has been given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he should think, but to think soberly, as Elohim has given to each a measure of belief. Romans 12:1-3

Our bodies do not belong to us, but to the Father who created us. Therefore, we should look after our bodies like the precious vessels they are, keeping them Biblically clean and set-apart to Him.

Sha'ul had such a good point when he wrote that we should not conform to the ways of this world, YAHUAH says in the Scripture that we are not to act like the pagans or even worship Him in the ways they worship their false elohim. We should keep Torah, remain upright, set-apart and righteous in our faith.

Blessed be the Elohim and Father of our Master Yahusha Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Messiah, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be set-apart and blameless before Him, in love, Ephesians 1:3-4

YAHUAH chose us. Let me say that again. YAHUAH chose us! The very Creator of the heavens and earth chose you who are reading this, He chose me.

As unfathomable as that is, it is a fact.

And to show Him my ultimate thanks for creating me, choosing me and pulling me out of my sin and ignorance, for showing me His truth, His Torah, the deceptions of this world; for setting me apart in His sight...

To show Him my thanks, I chose a few years ago, I choose today and every day, to try to keep myself set-apart for Him!

And now, let's talk about remaining clean and set-apart in this time of great deception.

It is so difficult right now to keep Torah and stay clean. Aside from keeping clean from the usual things, as mentioned in the Old Testament, like after being sick, having injuries, after intercourse or during and after menstruation, there is the question of dealing with all the hidden filth and toxins that we have to contend with in these modern times.

So-called "food" on the shelves of our stores have hidden unclean elements that we need to be aware, pork is hidden under many clever labels, in so many products – food, candy, medicines, etc.

Along with that, there are all sorts of unclean, dangerous and carcinogenic (cancer causing) chemicals in foods, body products, household items and even our air and drinking water! These should not be entering into our bodies.

Then we have all the sinful and dirty content on media and social media that even children are being exposed to; and the graphic and explicit content being delivered in certain schools.

We have New Age, paganism and Satanism being applauded, false religions being held up and churches promoting unclean living.

Keeping ourselves Biblically clean and set-apart, "a peculiar people", has never been more difficult than it is now, but that doesn't mean it's impossible!

It is up to us now as YAHUAH's remnant to learn what Scripture says about how we should live; to learn about what is and isn't healthy in our world and our immediate environments. We need to pray for wisdom and allow the Ruach to guide us day to day.

We need to try our best to keep Torah, to have faith, to keep ourselves clean, to remain set-apart; to stay out of Babylon... And rely on the grace from Messiah and the Most High to hold us up wherever we fall short.

The Torah says everything we need to know about how to make ourselves clean, and explains all the things that can make us unclean. Yahusha our Master and Messiah upholds these instructions, showing us examples of staying set-apart. He also sent us the Helper, the Ruach haKadosh, to give us discernment and wisdom to deal with modern issues and situations. We are none of us perfect but with all of that help and guidance and for the sake of His love for us we can only try our humanly best on our part!

In conclusion, although hasatan and a world of lies, deception and uncleanness will throw everything at us to get us away from the narrow path that YAHUAH would have us walk; we have Him on our side. And He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world. We have only to endure and remain faithful, to do our best in a fallen world, and He will meet us where we are at. His strength is made perfect in our weakness, and He will be glorified in the end!