

תַּזְרִיעַ

Tazria

(conceived seed)

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 12:1-13:59

Outside the Camp

Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 13:46

All the days wherein the plague is in him he shall be unclean; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone; outside the camp shall his dwelling be.

There are several different reasons listed in the Torah that a person can become unclean (tamei). In some cases the person is supposed to be moved outside the camp. We will look at this more closely shortly. This word “camp” here is the Hebrew word מַחֲנֶה – “machenah,” which means “an encampment of people.” This is especially applied to the army of Israel. And since the army of Israel is the army of the Living Elohim, He will only dwell in the midst of that army if they are clean. Anyone of the army who is not clean is to be moved outside the camp.

This is not to say that being unclean is a sin, per se. Rather, it is dealing with being in a state of ritual uncleanliness. To be clean is to be in a state of being able to be in the presence of YHWH our Elohim. We see this illustrated in the following passage.

Shemot (Exodus) 19:10-11, 15

10 And YHWH said to Moshe, “Go to the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments,

11 and be ready on the third day; for the third day YHWH will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.”

15 And he said to the people, “Be ready on the third day; do not come near a woman.”

Notice that one of the ways in which a person can become unclean (tamei) is engaging in a sexual act. Part of the reason that this makes a person unclean is that when a man releases his seed, there are many more seed that are present than are actually causing life. In a very real sense there is death present because of this. It is this contact with death that makes a person unclean. This is also true during a woman’s monthly cycle. When a woman releases an egg and it is not fertilized by the seed of a

man, then the egg dies and the woman becomes unclean by virtue of this death. This is one way in which a person becomes unclean and while the person is unclean they are to be outside the camp.

In the passage just above, YHWH specifies that all His people were to refrain from sexual contact so that they would all be clean when He came down to visit them. Specifically, YHWH tells the men, that each man was to stay away from his wife so that all would be included in this visitation. The men represent the army of the Living Elohim.

In the passage from this week's Torah portion we find that those who are infected with some kind of infection that is visible on the surface of the skin is to be examined by the kohen (priest). If the kohen rules that the infection is leprosy (tzara'at), then that person is to dwell outside the camp until such time as the tzara'at is healed and the person is ruled as clean.

Notice in this next passage specifically who YHWH states is to be placed outside the camp.

B'midbar (Numbers) 5:2-3

2 "Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that has an issue, and whosoever is unclean by the dead;

3 both male and female shall you put out, outside the camp shall you put them; that they defile not their camp, in the midst whereof I dwell."

YHWH specifies that those who have tzara'at (leprosy) or one who has an issue; i.e., a running sore, or who have come into contact with a dead person, are to stay outside the camp of Israel until such time as they become clean again.

B'midbar (Numbers) 19:20

But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of YHWH; the water for impurity has not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.

Being unclean is not a sin! However, if one refuses to go through the cleansing process according to the Torah commandment using the ashes of the red heifer, then it does become a sin, a sin which causes one to be cut off from Israel. While being unclean is not a sin, refusing to become clean is a sin.

Now let us take careful note of what Moshe did because of Israel's uncleanness.

Shemot (Exodus) 33:7

Now Moshe used to take the tent and to pitch it outside the camp, afar off from the camp; and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came to pass, that every one that sought YHWH went out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp.

There seems to be at least a couple of reasons why this was done. The primary reason was because YHWH spoke to Moshe concerning this, that He would not dwell in the midst of Israel because of their stubbornness of heart, lest He destroy the people.

But also, since the tent of meeting was set up outside the camp, this gave access to everyone who was a member of Israel, both the clean and the unclean.

Furthermore, this had great prophetic significance as to the work of Mashiach later on.

Ivrim (Hebrews) 13:12-13

12 Therefore Yeshua also, that He might sanctify the people through His own Blood, suffered outside the gate.

13 Let us therefore go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

We know from Scripture that Yeshua lived His whole earthly life without sin. But as the great Physician He came into contact with many people who were unclean. He was not afraid to touch these people in order to heal them. It is not sinful to be unclean. But when one does become unclean, then he needs to do what is prescribed in Torah to be cleansed. We are admonished to go out to where He is that we might be a part of His people.

Qorintyah Bet (2nd Corinthians) 6:17

Therefore

“Come out from among them, and be separate,” says YHWH,

“And touch no unclean thing;

And I will receive you,”

Shaul quotes YHWH speaking through Moshe to the people concerning Korah and that which belonged to him. The idea here is that we are to stay away from those things that are plainly against YHWH and His ways. These things defile His people. If we truly desire to be accepted by YHWH, then we need to stay away from those things that defile us.

Ephesians 5:5

For this you know for sure, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Mashiach and Elohim.

The passage raises a question in our minds that if being unclean is not a sin, then why can no unclean person inherit the kingdom of Mashiach? This goes back to the passage we quoted above.

B'midbar (Numbers) 19:20

But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of YHWH; the water for impurity has not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.

Notice that the person who refuses to purify himself will be cut off from Israel. If a person is cut off from Israel, then he cannot inherit the kingdom of Israel. But this brings us to a very important question. How can one purify himself today since we do not have a mishkan or a temple and as a result do not have access to the ashes of the red heifer?

Titus 2:14

who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works.

We do not have the capacity to purify ourselves to the extent needed. However, all praise to Yeshua our Mashiach as He has provided the means to purify us: His own Blood.

Ya'akov (James) 4:8

Draw near to Elohim, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded.

What we can do, however, is that we can determine within us to have a singleness of heart and mind in serving YHWH our Elohim through Yeshua our Mashiach.

Ivrim (Hebrews) 9:13-14

13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify to the cleanness of the flesh:

14 how much more shall the Blood of Mashiach, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?

If the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of the red heifer could cleanse us, then how much more is the Blood of Mashiach able to cleanse us? But not just on the outside, but rather much more on the inside in our consciences, that we may serve Him in newness of life.

Kepha Aleph (1st Peter) 1:22

Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth to unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently.

Through the Blood of Mashiach Yeshua He purifies our hearts and minds in His truth, that we might walk in its fullness. Therefore, as Scripture admonishes us, let us go to Mashiach outside the camp, that we might be cleansed by His Blood!

Shabbat Shalom

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