

I Can't, I'm Unclean

Rabbi Yehudah ben Shomeyr

Specifically to Igbo Congregations Scattered Abroad, but applicable to all Torah obedient believers. The reason I am writing this is due to the fact in the past week I have had numerous questions from leaders and congregants regarding the issue of uncleanness:

I am astounded by the majority of people, even among those who call themselves Bible Scholars, Pastors and Rabbis who seem to think there is something wrong with or something bad about being unclean; as if it were some sort of embarrassing grave sin. **BOTTOM LINE, POINT BLANK; UNCLEANNESS IS NOT A SIN**, it is a normal, natural state of being every human being finds themselves in on occasion either due to illness, sexual intercourse, seminal emissions or menstrual cycles. Hear me loud and clear, **BEING UNCLEAN IS NOT A SIN**; it's natural.

Uncleanness is not always a gross or disgusting thing. Sexual intercourse between married couples is a very beautiful thing yet it leaves one in a state of being unclean. For the uncleanness of intercourse of bodily emissions all it meant in Times of the Tabernacle and Temple is that you could not participate in worship at the Tabernacle and or Temple. Guess what? Most of us do not live in Jerusalem and there is not standing and operational Temple there. And in case there is any confusion let me clear things up and state that your church or synagogue is not the Temple and it is one's personal and private business if they have had intercourse or a seminal emission the night before or are menstruating and thus after a shower one may and should attend services at church or synagogue if they can. One may not use this as an excuse not to attend services. Sadly I have heard of those making this lame and uneducated excuse.

The laws of uncleanness were given in the context of an ancient and desert life that did not have the modern conveniences of soap, showers and feminine hygiene products. The Torah tells us to go out in the wilderness dig a hole, defecate and cover it up, does that mean I'm going to do that living in a modern neighborhood!? NO! Absolutely not! I have indoor plumbing and a toilet that sanitarily takes care of my waste. Now if I were camping I certainly would obey that Torah command, because that was the context it was given in! Come one folks use the intelligence GOD gave you.

The reason in ancient times women during their menstrual cycle were to seclude and separate themselves from the rest of the family is due to the fact that they did not have modern conveniences and feminine hygiene products and GOD was concerned with blood and other pathogens that could be transmitted from being in contact with such bodily fluids; not because menstruation is a sinful state. Actually the Rabbis say a woman is closest to GOD when she is menstruating.

The reason GOD commanded a man after intercourse or a seminal emission or a woman finished with her monthly cycle to immerse in water and wait till evening was to cleanse oneself from of the residue of the bodily fluids and to ensure that there is no latent reoccurrence of the emission and to ensure not ill symptoms or reaction due to the bodily fluid presented itself. It was to ensure cleanness.

The reason in ancient Biblical times people with skin ailments, aka "leprosy" were to live apart from the populace and announce their state of uncleanness, if they for whatever reason had to be among the people, was because GOD did not want a deadly epidemic and decimation of a people to occur due to the transmission of diseases to which there was no cure. The reason they had to show themselves to the priest if the leper suspected they had been healed was because the priests at that time acted as doctors too and could determine if one indeed had been cured and thus declaring them clean and not contagious and able to live safely among

the people again. It was not because they were in a sinful state and needed to be annulled. We do almost the same thing today when people have a contagious illness, they stay home and away from other people until they are better. They do not go to work, church, synagogue or school so as not to make anyone else sick.

Today we have soap, baths, showers and specific hygienical products for cleanliness and thus the ritual mikvah (baptism) has become a spiritually symbolic gesture of the removal of spiritual and not literal uncleanness.

Yeshua the Messiah Himself was at some points unclean! Yes, it's true and thus this proves that being unclean is not a sin but a natural and eventual state of being for every human being because for Yeshua to be Messiah he had to be sinless as we know He was. Recall when the woman with the issue of blood came up to him in the crowd and touched Him, this automatically made Yeshua unclean and then immediately He went to a Synagogue attendant and or leaders house whose residence was near or even a part of the synagogue itself and was in the presence of a dead girl whom He raised from the dead making Him further unclean. So if Yeshua went to a synagogue in an unclean state and there was a dead girl near or in the synagogue that he raised from the dead, then there is no reason why one in an unclean state due to intercourse or menstruation cannot attend services at church or synagogue.

Folks it is of the utmost and vital importance that one read and interprets the Commandments in its historical and cultural context and make adaptations in such a way so that it can be properly kept in our modern day and culture. We are not Orthodox Jews who reject Yeshua and so do not completely go by their Halacha, we are Natsarim and go by what Yeshua and his Apostles and their Disciples said.

Shalom,

-R. Yehudah "Tochukwu" ben Shomeyr