

Galatians: Explaining the End to Cooties

The other night I introduced a “bomb-shell” by bringing up women’s monthly cycles, and the Torah’s instructions that women are to be treated as unclean until their cycle is over. What I wanted to do was to get everyone to think about how very complex the numerous Torah-clean-unclean rules are, and how very real they were in Paul’s time. Even today Torah observant believers in Yahoshua the Messiah are confused about how to apply the Torah’s clean-unclean rules. The clean-unclean rules of Torah are complex enough, but then some people insist that we are to also add all of the Oral Traditions on top of these as well. They want to make it even more complex by adding to the Torah those customary Dos-and-Don’ts coming down from the hundreds of differing Jewish communities that have existed throughout history. What a mess!

Can you imagine the heated debates over these “defilement” issues? You cannot touch this, and if you do then you must to do this, and then, who today has the authority to inspect? This debate is much bigger than just “eating with a Gentile”, as it includes everything you can touch and everything that can touch you.

For example: “Can a “Clean” person touch a shovel after an unclean person uses it”? So much for being a construction worker. Can you imagine trying to keep “Clean” by Torah-Temple priestly standards, when you are living in a pagan community wherein almost everything in it would make you “defiled”, by just touching it?

In order to understand Galatians you need to sit and ponder this dilemma for awhile. In our culture it is very hard for us to comprehend the concept of touching something, and all of a sudden you are no longer welcome in the community. Not until you do some specified washings and other things, and then you must wait until evening before you can re-join the community.

This “Oh God, I touched something!” mentality is similar to the concept of getting Cooties. Just remember how you felt as a little kid about getting Cooties. You remember: “Aweahh ! It touched me! The concept behind Cooties was not just a game, it was a real imagined idea that you were completely covered by Cooties by just touching something. You then had to do something to “rub it off”.

A good way to put us modern thinking people into the right frame of mind for debating the clean-unclean rules issue, is to picture the following scene:

You are sitting at the public library tables with some friends studying Torah, and all of a sudden someone sits down right next to you with his arms fully exposed with an ugly oozing infested contagious rash all over him. And then the unthinkable happens, he leans over and his oozing infected rash touches you! You would jump out of your chair: “Oh my God, he just touched me!” Can you picture your reaction to this? Shock, anger, immediate washings, disinfectants, the hospital. Imagine this and then you can start to imagine just how serious it was to the typical Jewish community to keep the unclean person completely away from them. Can you hear yourself saying: “No! You go and sit over there!”

Now, with this same picture in your mind, start to think about living in a community wherein you are trying to keep perfectly “Clean”, but everyone and everything around you has an exposed ugly oozing infested contagious rash all over it. How will you keep from touching anything, how will

you keep it from touching you? Can you picture living this way every day of your life? It would be a nightmare.

Now, can you imagine the heated debates raging, as more and more Gentiles become converted, and want to sit down with you at the library table to learn about YHWH (Yahowah) and the Messiah Yahoshua, and to read the Torah with you? The Gentile believers may be doing the best they know how, but, they don't know how! So, in the eyes of the nice "Clean" undefiled Jewish believers, the Gentile believers cannot be allowed to sit down next to them, no, they must sit "way over there".

The Butter-Knife

Well, thankfully there is a "butter-knife" provided by Yahowah that cuts right through all of this complexity. Without the "easy solution" provided by Yahowah, we would still, to this very day, be debating how far away the new Gentile believers must sit away from us at services and at Passover. What is the "Butter Knife" easy solution? The very quick answer is that:

"The Messiah Is In You" !

This may not sound like an answer yet, but it is. The answer is in the concept of how this can be true. How can the ultra "Clean" Messiah (now think in terms of Cooties and oozing contagious rashes) dwell in you, if at any time you are an oozing unclean thing? Not possible. But, you are not! This "cleansing" was decreed by Yahowah, we are not an unclean thing anymore!

In order for Yahowah and the Messiah Yahoshua to both take up residence within you (as described in the discourse on sending us the Comforter in John 14, 14:23, and the concept of us being a holy Temple): then you as an individual "**Must Be Clean**" in Yahowah's eyes. You must be a "Clean" place to dwell as far as Yahowah is concerned.

So, "how are you made Clean?" This question becomes the focal point of the debate. This is what Paul is talking about in Galatians. The question is: "Are you made "Clean" from all personal defilement by doing Torah's defilement Laws, or, are you made "Clean" from all personal defilement by your persuasion (faith) into the Messiah's Body?" That is the context of the book of Galatians, starting in chapter 2.

The short answer is that you are considered "all Clean" by being inside of the spiritual Body of the Messiah, not by being inside of the physical Torah Laws. Paul was not talking about the Torah Laws being done away, he was talking about the two different ways in which a person can become "all Clean".

The "Butter-Knife" Solution Is Acts 10 and 11

The key scriptures are in Acts 10 and 11. These verses tell us that no person is to be considered Unclean, if Yahowah has made them Clean enough to dwell in them.

Now there is a language-detail that makes this new covenant concept come together. There are two forms of being "Unclean" (defiled), there are two concepts of "The Unclean". Both the Greek and the Hebrew languages have two different words to mean these two different concepts.

One concept is that something is inherently Unclean because of definition. Yahowah says so, so it is Unclean, period. For example, pigs, snakes, and sacrifices offered to idols are by definition Unclean. Nothing can make them Clean, no matter what you do, or how much you white-wash them. Such items are Unclean by definition, and can never be used in any holy context.

The second concept has two parts:

The first part is that some things are inherently Clean because of definition: Yahowah says they are, so they are Clean. For example, chickens, cows, holy offerings, and the Sabbaths are Clean, and therefore can be used in a holy context.

The second part is that something that is by definition inherently Clean, like a chicken, can in some way, somehow, become Unclean because something happens to it. That is, a Clean thing has something “bad” happen to it, and that makes it Unclean. If it becomes Unclean, then it cannot be used in any holy context. For example, you cannot bring a cow as a sacrifice, if the cow had something happen to it that made it Unclean. However, a Clean thing getting into this Unclean status is not permanent, as the Torah tells what things to do to make something that becomes Unclean, back into being Clean again.

In both the Greek and the Hebrew languages there are two different words that mean “Unclean”, but one word means “Unclean by definition” while the second word means “Unclean because something happened to it that made it Unclean”.

Now, read Acts 10:28

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that **I should not call any man common or unclean.**”

Both Greek words are used here: “that I should not call (consider or declare or imagine) any man (that Yahowah has made to be Clean) **“Unclean because something happened to him that made him Unclean”** or **“Unclean by definition”**.”

In the Greek, this sentence becomes the “butter-knife” that cuts through all of the complexities of the Torah laws concerning people becoming personally defiled or Unclean. The “butter-knife” is that believers, who Yahowah has cleansed, **cannot be in any other status other than being Clean**. This is the way it is by Yahowah’s decree, so, it is true. **Thus, new Gentile believers are made Clean by Yahowah’s decree, and no one can say or imagine them to be anything else**. They are Clean, and can sit down with you at the library table, no Cooties anymore.

This is important: We cannot look at a believer, and imagine they might have missed something in the Torah regarding Clean-Unclean rules, and thereby imagine that they are Unclean, and now have Cooties to give you. Because, they are Clean by definition now, and cannot be considered to be otherwise.

Therefore, a woman believer in her monthly cycle cannot be called or declared or imagined to be personally Unclean, because Yahowah has said we cannot do that to a person that **He has Cleansed**. She can come to services even while in her cycle, she can touch the food at the table, she can eat with the men, because she is Clean from personal defilement and cannot be considered anything

else within the congregational-setting. Likewise with men who may have defects, they too are Clean, and cannot be downgraded by other men into any other status.

If Believers Are Clean, Why Still Keep Torah?

So then, because of Acts 10-11 people that are set apart as holy by Yahowah, people that are His children, these people are now Clean from personal defilement by decree, and are Clean at all times. But, does this mean that a believer can now disregard the Clean-Unclean laws in the Torah? Are believers now allowed to defile themselves with all manner of filth, and eat pig, and eat things scarified to idols, and not follow the Torah laws of Clean-Unclean anymore, now that they are Clean and cannot be anything else?

No, sorry, your “All Clean” status is for the purpose of allowing you to have Yahowah’s Spirit in you, to remain in the community, and to sit at table with the others. This “status” does not replace your obligation to keep the covenant laws and instructions of Yahowah. These are two separate subjects. Your Clean status is by a decree from Yahowah, and therefore that Clean status can be un-decreed by Yahowah, if you fail to hold up your end of the holy covenant.

“Peter said, Truly I see that God is not an accepter of persons, but in every nation **the one fearing Him and working [practicing] righteousness** is acceptable to Him”, (Acts 10:34). You are always expected to fear Yahowah and keep His laws, (1-Peter 1:14-17, 21-23).

The purpose of the vision was to include gentiles as “Clean”, so that they are also part of the community. The vision is not talking about releasing anyone from practicing righteousness, which of course is defined by the teachings (Torah) of Yahowah.

Consider, the reason a believer is declared Clean by Yahowah, is because that individual becomes a believer in His Son Yahoshua the Messiah. That person then becomes set apart in Yahowah’s eyes, and through baptism was placed into the Body of the Messiah. This involves both mental processes and physical actions, which Yahowah sees you doing, and then Yahowah Judges that you are Clean by His decree. It follows then that if you stop those mental processes and physically do things contrary to Yahowah’s covenant, then you run the risk of Yahowah seeing what you are doing, and then Judge again that you are no longer being a holy and set apart vessel, and therefore are no longer Clean by His decree.

2 Corinthians 6:15- 7:1: “...For you are a Temple of the living God ... Because of this, come out from among them and be separated, says the Lord, and **do not touch the unclean thing; and I will receive you** ... Then having **these promises**, behold, **let us cleanse ourselves from all defilements of flesh and of spirit**, perfecting holiness in the **fear of God**.” Yes, Paul taught people to stay Clean, and not to purposefully defile themselves, BOTH in the fleshly-realm and in the spiritual-realm.

From this point of view, it should appear obvious that if a person no longer believes in the Messiah, then they would no longer be set apart anymore, and thereby lose their Clean status. Likewise, if a person acts wickedly and defiantly lives as they wish, not practicing the Torah (teachings) of God anymore, then that person runs the risk of no longer being set apart anymore in His eyes, and

thereby lose their Clean status. Remember that it is by the Judgment of Yahowah that you were eligible for being declared Clean in the first place.

Therefore, we are careful not to eat the unclean animals as we are dutiful to try to live a righteous and set-apart lifestyle. We do this so that we can remain a set apart person, and we do this so that we can remain Clean Temples for Yahowah and Yahoshua to dwell within. It is obvious that Yahowah and Yahoshua will not dwell in filth, you must try to keep the covenant and live by His teachings (Torah).

Also consider this: in Torah you do not touch a dead body or eat pig because if you did you would walk away with Cooties, and then you would have to do “these prescribed things described in Torah” to get rid of the Cooties. But now a knowledgeable believer does not touch a dead body or eat pig because: if you did you would run the risk of mentally defying (doing it on purpose) Torah, and thereby run the risk of Yahowah no longer thinking of you as being a holy and set apart vessel any more. Doing such things is no longer about keeping Cooties away from us, which is an **impersonal (detached) approach to defilements**. Rather, doing these things is about living a holy and set apart lifestyle so that we remain righteous and Clean by decree, which is a **personalized (deeper) approach to defilements**.

The Two Key Words: Righteous and Justified

The astute Bible student will recognize that there is no scripture anywhere which tells believers that they are no longer required anymore to live as holy men. Quite the opposite, we are told to live holy (separated) lives as righteous (Clean) people. To remain holy, believers must practice righteousness, which in the context of the holy Text is by definition the keeping of the Torah (Psalms 119).

1-John 3:7 **“Let no one deceive you, he that practices righteousness, is righteous.”**

When studying Galatians, and all of the new Testament scriptures, a vital key to remember is that the English words “righteous” and “justified” **are both exactly the same Greek word** but with a different ending. Strong’s number 1342 is typically translated as “righteous”, and number 1344 is typically translated as “justified”.

Please look these words up in a Lexicon. Don’t let the commentaries written by men who want to do away with the Torah tell you what these words mean. Read the definitions carefully; what did these words mean 2,000 years ago? Notice that both words mean the same thing: (quote) **“one who is such as he ought to be”**, but each is used to convey a slightly different concept of this. The word “1342 righteous” is used to point out a person’s observance. Like a verb, it refers to a person’s actions and behavior, as one who is doing what he ought to be doing. While the word “1344 justified” is used to point out a person’s declared status. Like a noun, it is a “thing”, it refers to someone who is a person that does what he ought to be doing.

The reason to emphasize this is so that you will understand the difference between why believers are to practice Torah and be doing what we ought to be doing, “1342 righteous”, compared to the other concept of being declared by Yahowah to be Clean, “1344 justified”, so that everyone can sit together at services. One concept is like a verb, doing the covenant, by living a righteous lifestyle by keeping Torah. The other concept is like a noun, the “thing” the state of having no personal

defilement within the community. There is no such concept of: “now that I am Clean, a noun, within the community setting, I no longer need to be doing, a verb, the covenant and Torah”.

Remember the definition of what the New Covenant is in the first place, Jeremiah 31:32: “I will put my law into their inward-parts...”. Yahowah’s laws are now internalized within us, and we want to do them. Believers are to keep the Torah with persuasion into the Messiah Yahoshua, and as they do so they are decreed by Yahowah to have no other community-status (noun) except that of being “All Clean” (or He would not be dwelling in them).

This Was a New Concept That Had To Be Explained

Galatians is trying to explain to the Jew of Paul’s day how and why Unclean Gentiles can all of a sudden be declared to be Clean from personal defilement, and thereby can sit down at their meetings. New believers probably are not doing everything in Torah perfectly, and probably are living with others that are Unclean all of the time. But even so, new believers are to sit beside everyone else while they are taught the Torah every Sabbath as Acts 15:21 instructs.

In Galatians Paul was not talking about “law” as in “all Torah teachings (laws) written everywhere”, but is specifically talking about only a small subset of Torah laws that are germane to the defilement subject. Thinking that Paul is doing away with all Torah-keeping is taking Paul’s words completely out of context. Paul was only talking about those Torah laws dealing with the Clean-Unclean rules of personal defilement. That is why Paul challenged Peter, the subject is the defilement laws.

Also notice that Paul was not talking about the Torah’s Clean-Unclean rules for Temple services performed by the priests. Paul was only talking about believers attending services and sitting at the library table and the dinner table with you, outside of the Temple environment. Paul was talking about how a believer in the Messiah enters into the Body of the Messiah, and does this because of the reason of their mental persuasion (the Greek word 4102 translated “faith” is actually better translated into modern English as the word “persuasion”), and not because of their physical adherence to washings and rituals. Paul was explaining to the technically minded Jew of his day how and why Yahowah would do such a thing. How Yahowah could and would declare a man to be Clean because of what they thought, “the Spirit”, rather than because of what they could do, by performing the Clean-Unclean rules of the law perfectly all of the time.

Summarizing the “Butter-Knife”

We are no longer Justified (1344 noun) within the community of believers by works of the laws dealing with personal defilement. The various washings; do-this, do-that, standing outside the camp, etcetera, is not what makes us Clean in the eyes of the community or Yahowah. But we are now Justified (1344 noun) by our personal mental persuasion into the Messiah’s Body. Being in the Body of the Messiah sets us apart, and that is the reason why Yahowah decrees that we are now Clean in His eyes, so that Yahowah and Yahoshua do now dwell within us. Thus, we are now Justified (1344 noun) from personal defilements via a mechanism which is outside of the defilement laws, and this was a new concept to the Jews of the day.

Clean Through the “Melchizedek Priesthood”

In order to include the gentiles, and to have righteous congregations outside of Judea (without priests, sacrifices, and a Temple), those Laws dealing with staying “Clean” and purification have to be administered differently. Essentially, a change in Law had to occur.

This is exactly what Hebrews 7:11-17 says. **Yahoshua (Jesus) is our High Priest in a different priesthood, the Melchizedek Priesthood.** The list of Laws dealing with purification and getting back into right-standing with Yahowah (YHWH) has been superseded by the provisions of the Melchizedek Priesthood. That is, different rules for “being Clean” now apply. This path to being “Clean” is why the Holy Spirit can dwell inside of us.

We enter the congregation; we engage in direct communication (prayer) with the Father, and stand “Clean”, because of our belief in the exalted Yahoshua (Jesus) the Messiah, through the provisions of the Melchizedek Priesthood. And at the same time, we practice righteousness by obeying the list of Laws which define what sin is in the first place.

Thus, we are no longer justified (stand “Clean” again) by the works of the Law, that list of Laws dealing with ritual purification. We are now justified through the provisions of a better priesthood, the Melchizedek Priesthood. **But this “grace” has nothing to do with tossing out the list of Laws telling us what sin is in the first place.** “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **God forbid.**” (Romans 6:1, Hebrews 10:26). **Grace is not a license to sin.**

The New Covenant is a refreshing of the previous Covenant. **The New Covenant is what was there before, plus some new administrations, gifts, promises, and cleanliness through the Melchizedek Priesthood.** The previous Covenant is not tossed, it is enhanced. **The Hebrew Text does not “go away”!** Ezekiel 40 through 48 describes that when the Temple is rebuilt, and when there are priests doing their duties again, than those same Hebrew Text instructions (Torah) will be back into practice by them once more.

The list of Laws which tell us what to do to live holy lives, are now written into our minds and hearts (Jeremiah 31:31 and Galatians 5:16-26). Now we want to obey the Laws (teachings) of Yahowah (YHWH), **so that we do not practice sin.** And at the same time we cannot call any man “unclean” nor “defiled” (Acts 10:28, 11:9) when the Father has given him His Holy Spirit. Access to the Father, including how to be “Clean”, is now through a better priesthood, in which our Lord Yahoshua (Jesus) is the High Priest.

The New “Point of View”

From this point of view, nothing outside of ourselves can make us suddenly become Unclean to the community of the other believers. From the point of view of personal defilement, which previously kept you outside of the community until “Clean” again, we are “All Clean” all of the time. We are Clean to others by decree from Yahowah Himself. If this were not the case, then Yahowah and Yahoshua would have to leave dwelling within us every time we touched something with Cooties, and then could not return back again until we finished doing the works of the law to get rid of those Cooties.

Another Primary Point to Make

If it were up to us to follow the defilement-laws to get rid of our personal Cooties, then this would mean that our Clean and our Unclean status would be dependent upon us doing things, rather than upon Yahowah Judging things. How much better it is that our personal defilement status be declared to be Clean because Yahowah has Judged us to be someone doing what they ought to be doing, **and thereby are set apart vessels to dwell within.**

In Service To The Brethren,
Wayne L. Atchison, an Elder in the Body of the Messiah

Two Tassels Ministry



Living By Both Covenants
Empowering His Communities
Standing Up for the Gospel of the Christ as it is Proclaimed in the Greek Text !
www.YhwhIs1.com