

119

MINISTRIES

“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”

Answering Your Questions - (Job’s Hair, Organ Transplants, Beards and Christmas, Unclean Pets, Unclean Food Ingredients, and more...)

119 Ministries receives thousands of emails every year. And as you would expect, many of those emails contain questions. Quite often, we repeatedly receive various forms of the same questions. Ideally, we would like to have a teaching available for every question that we receive, however, some questions can be answered rather briefly, and do not require a regular length teaching to serve as a response. That is the purpose of this teaching series, to offer an easily available vehicle to answer your common questions.

In this teaching series, we will read a collection of hand-picked questions that we have received via email. Then, for whatever it is worth, we will offer a brief response, hopefully leading those interested in the right direction to find the answers that they are seeking.

So, let’s get started. First question:

I was doing some study and ran across a verse in job that is confusing. In Job 1:20-22, he had just learned that all his children and servants were dead. He tore his clothes and shaved his head and fell on his face and Praised YAH. My confusion is this: we are told not to shave our head for the dead. He did not sin. So how can he have shaved his head at learning he had lost all his children and servants but it was not a sin?

I considered that it was part of his worship, however. If he shaved his head as an act of worship at learning of his loss, would that not be in violation of the law stating we are not to worship our Father as the pagans do? I realize that the law was given at a later time, but just like the laws for sacrifices and tithing were given after Cain and able or after Abraham, then it is clearly in effect before the Torah was written when it was still oral.

Great question. Really good question in fact. So the question is this: if pulling out one’s hair for the dead is against the Torah (Leviticus 19:27-28), why do we seemingly see Job doing this? And more

importantly, why are we told that it was not a sin?

Job 1:20

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved (*gazaz*) his head and fell on the ground and worshiped.

Job 1:22

In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

There are other verses similar to this...

Jeremiah 7:29

‘Cut off (*gazaz*) your hair and cast it away; raise a lamentation on the bare heights, for the LORD [YHWH] has rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.’

Ezra 9:3

As soon as I heard this, I tore my garment and my cloak and pulled (*marat*) hair from my head and beard and sat appalled.

There appears to be a pagan ritual that involved cutting or pulling out hair, getting tattoos, and pulling out one’s beard, all for the dead.

But in Ezra, we see that it seems like it is an acceptable practice when one receives bad news, and is perhaps even a Hebraic or Ancient Near East practice. Since the event with Job seems to be dangerously close in appearance to the forbidden practice of pulling one’s hair for the dead, we would submit that that is why the clarification occurred in verse 22, indicating Job, in fact, did not sin. Job was simply reacting to the bad news (like Ezra), and despite the bad news, still worshipped YHWH.

Like Job, Ezra’s pulling out his beard is also a sign of anguish, distress as is the tearing of one’s garments and cloaks. They are signs of grief used for various reasons, they are not done “for the dead”, but because someone died. Perhaps there is a difference and distinction in there.

Shaving one’s head is allowed or permitted as a sign of mourning. We see that even women who are taken in war are permitted their time of mourning and required to shave their head as such (Deuteronomy 21:10-14). Shaving one’s head is not the same as pulling out one’s hair, which appears to be more specific to the Biblical prohibition.

Here are some more verses that might be worth considering as it relates to this topic:

- Jeremiah 48:36-37
- Jeremiah 41:5
- Ezekiel 7:18
- Deuteronomy 14:1

While the details are not afforded to us, we would imagine that the pulling of hair for the dead likely incorporated some associated religious practices which would have been rather well known to those in the ancient Near East. In some way, whatever Job did, it was not exactly related to such false god religious practices. But since it looked very close to that when documented as text, verse 22 offers the clarification that he was not sinning in that practice.

Let's move on to the next question.

Are organ transplants biblical? Is there a teaching you've done? Thank you.

In short, there is nothing in the Torah that says we cannot have organ transplants. If anything, the nature and character behind the Torah would encourage it, as the Torah is all about preserving life. Of course, this assumes that one is not harming others in the process to obtain organs for transplant.

I watched your video on beards. I don't understand fully. If it is ok to shave your beard as long as we aren't doing it to worship pagan gods, then why is it wrong to celebrate Christmas as long as we aren't worshipping pagan gods?

The shaving of beards is something that can be done without it being a form of worship, and serves a benign purpose. The holiday of Christmas, by its very own design, purpose, and intent, exists solely as a means to worship God. Assuming the possibility, if not the likelihood, that some or many Christmas traditions originate or evolved from the traditions of worshipping false gods, then this of course would be a problem according to Deuteronomy 12:30-31.

For a believer to say they are celebrating Christmas, but saying that they are keeping God out of it, that would be a little difficult to believe. It makes about as much sense as keeping Ramadan but saying you are not doing that to worship Allah. It would not be too believable.

Let's move on to the next question.

I transcribe your teachings in long hand cursive and send them to my husband who is in prison. One of the other ministries that I watch actually sends me links to their transcripts so that I can print them out instead of spending weeks hand transcribing. Do you have transcripts of your teachings? If so could you please share them with me? Thanks for your consideration.

We actually have a transcript available for every one of our 400+ teachings. There is no need to transcribe them. On our website, go to any teaching page. To the right of the video you will see a button called "transcript." Click on that button and it will take you to a PDF version of the teaching.

Hi, I am new to following Torah and feel strongly obligated to do so. I am a college student double majoring in electrical and computer engineering. I am wondering if it would be ok to study in general or for a test on the Sabbath. In the past I've also had labs and classes that go into the evening on Sabbath. Since I am in my final years, some classes are only offered at specific times so I feel I will not be able to get an accommodation. I know I need to follow Torah, but I feel very strongly that the Holy Spirit has put me in this path to study.

Wow...this is a tough one. Most are going to suggest that studying is taxing and wears a person out. That is completely contrary to the idea and commandment to rest. Most would not suggest they feel rested after studying for hours. You know what we mean? There might be those that debate this, or perhaps you would debate this yourself, but in our minds, for whatever it is worth, and because it was asked, we would have a hard time suggesting that we should be deeply engaged in our secular studies on the Sabbath. We would expect that most who follow the Sabbath would likely agree just the same.

The Sabbath also instructs us to not have anyone working for us. A teacher is present to directly serve and work for the student. We would not see how having classes on the Sabbath is consistent with

observing the Sabbath. Perhaps there are things to consider that we are missing, but we would not be sure what that could be. At minimum, we would certainly encourage examining all possible options that would allow a person to not break the Sabbath when scheduling classes.

As universities today often aggressively promote diversity and inclusiveness, that could perhaps be used to a person's advantage. Perhaps they would be eager to offer a solution compatible with the Torah observant faith, as to not be excluding certain groups from their educational programs. For those in a similar situation, we would suggest reaching out to the diversity office for recommendations and suggestions.

We wish we had a convenient answer for those in such a situation. The Sabbath is an amazing gift to us from our Creator, and sometimes our convictions regarding the Sabbath are challenged by the world we live in. Many of us have been in similar circumstances regarding this choice. Sometimes, we wonder, if YHWH places such a choice in our path to be a light and example to others. It is something to consider perhaps.

Let's move on to the next question.

Have you done or are you currently working on anything about whether or not Torah permits dogs as pets, or even cats? I understand in Biblical culture they were treated as a lowly species and are unclean, at least for eating purposes, but don't see any direct commands to not have them. Would think the shepherds had them, but not sure if they kept them in the house. If something is considered to be unclean, didn't it mean to not touch it as much as possible or you'd have to wait it out? And wasn't the case that if anything touched anything unclean then become unclean itself? Had that same question in relation to your Honey teaching. Bless.

There is nothing in the Torah about not touching an unclean animal. While in ancient times it was unlikely that an unclean animal would be kept as a pet, the Torah does not seem to restrict it. A parallel might be considering the fact that working animals or animals we ride on can be unclean. For example, Yeshua rode on an unclean animal, a donkey. David and Solomon had horses. If we touch an unclean animal carcass, and carcass means a dead body, then we are simply unclean till evening and we should wash our clothes.

Continuing on...

Hello, I've found out something very important about unclean ingredients in foods. There is a coloration named E120 Carmine and it is almost in everything that's red, red ice cream, alcoholic drinks, cookies, milky products, red colored M&Ms, energy drinks, etc. This is made from crushed insects (red lice). Maybe it's a good idea to make a short video about this, because very few are aware of this uncleanness. I wish you blessings and peace; 119 has helped me much on the path.

This is an interesting topic. There are forms of red dye that are not Carmine based, such as Red 40, which comes from coal tar. But there are still many red dye products that use E120, which is red carminic acid derived from crushed insects. Most rabbinical commentary would consider E120 to be unclean and not suitable to eat. Some might suggest that the red dye derived from the crushed insects is so processed that it is not an unclean thing, as it is just the carminic acid that is extracted and used.

To some, such a debate might sound like blasphemy, but there is a comparable thought. The insect also

contains calcium. If the calcium was extracted to be pure calcium, is that calcium then unclean, since it came from an unclean insect? What if the calcium is absorbed by a tomato plant? Is the tomato unclean now? Not likely, that would just be absurd. What if pure water was extracted from an unclean insect? Would that be unclean water even if it was now pure H₂O? In a similar way, if pure carminic acid is harvested from an unclean insect, is that the same as eating the unclean insect, or is the carminic acid simply now carminic acid? At some point, an unclean animal or insect breaks down to elements that really no longer constitute as an unclean thing. We are not saying we have a definitive answer here, but we do understand and respect the debate. But perhaps that answers the question? If we don't know, then why eat it? Maybe the saying "when in doubt throw it out" could apply? But others might suggest that it is no longer an unclean thing, and it is possible that they could have a point.

If this series and presentation format interested you, there are many more questions we will be covering in the subsequent parts of this teaching series. As always, if you have questions for 119 Ministries, please use the Contact Us page offered on our website, <http://119ministries.com/contact-us>. And if you do contact us, thank you for your patience as our team works to respond.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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