

119

M I N I S T R I E S

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Answering Your Questions

(Noahide Laws in the U.S., Galatians and Pharmacy, Unclean Things, 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 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 they are seeking.

So, let's get started. First question:

Shalom! I enjoy very much the videos you offer. I understand about the 7 Noahide laws, but, Israel News Live & On Point Preparedness, 2 channels on YouTube, are telling people that the Noahide Laws have been written into the US Congress and the Sanhedrin has asked President Trump to uphold these laws. My great concern regarding this is that it is being said according to these laws that idol worship has the penalty of beheading, and idol worship would include worshiping Yeshua. I would appreciate any info you have on this matter, as it is a growing concern among many people. Thank you for your time.

The seven Noahide laws are taught by Jews to be seven laws universal to all Gentiles, whereas the rest of the Torah as the Word of God is only for Jews. We, of course, disagree with such a position as detailed in any number of our teachings. For more on this, please see our teaching "[The Seven Laws of Noah](#)".

This particular question is expressing a concern with a belief that the United States is adopting the Noahide Laws as a law of the land. When researching this issue, we find that there is nothing that really

substantiates such a concern. So from where does this concern originate?

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation speaking of "*the historical tradition of ethical values and principles, which have been the bedrock of society from the dawn of civilization when they were known as the Seven Noahide Laws, transmitted through God to Moses on Mount Sinai,*". In 1991, Congress stated in the preamble to the 1991 bill that established Education Day in honor of the birthday of Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the leader of the Chabad movement:

"Whereas Congress recognizes the historical tradition of ethical values and principles which are the basis of civilized society and upon which our great Nation was founded; Whereas these ethical values and principles have been the bedrock of society from the dawn of civilization, when they were known as the Seven Noahide Laws..."

First, this is actually rather old information, from nearly 30 years ago in fact. Second, including such a statement in the preamble of a bill is not the same as recognizing it as a law of the United States. Making the Noahide laws a law of the United States is not possible according to the U.S. Constitution, which is the foundation of the U.S. government and the United States as a nation. This would conflict with the U.S. Constitution's declaration of the freedom of religion Amendment 1:

Amendment I. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Even if it was signed into law, which it wasn't, the Noahide laws, as a law of the United States would be quickly shot down by the Judicial branch of the U.S. government as being unconstitutional.

Israel News Live & On Point Preparedness are spreading misinformation that is easily verifiable as inaccurate, if they are indeed making such claims. There are plenty of things to be concerned with in regard to the moral direction of the United States, but this is not one of them.

Let's move on to the next question...

Galatians 5:16-24 talks about walking in the Spirit and putting to death the works of the flesh. In verse 20, it says to stay away from sorcery. From what I understand, the Greek word for sorcery is *pharmakeia* (Strong's #5331), which today would be the word *pharmacy*. There's also reference to this word in Revelation 9:21. The Rod of Asclepius & the Caduceus symbols are also commonly used in medicine. Shouldn't we, as believers, be fleeing from these practices, or am I misinterpreting something?

In Yeshua's day, the Greek word *pharmakeia* was related specifically to magic, and the beliefs that one could use rituals and sacrifices in order to bribe the gods. In other words, some were using witchcraft in order to manipulate the divine in an attempt to bring healing.

Words change meaning over time, and especially when the culture changes. But the meaning of a word cannot be removed from what the word actually means/meant in current usage—otherwise, we are forced to believe that all gay men are happy nowadays because that is the "true" meaning of the word. Well, words have no true and timeless meaning—their meaning in a conversation is determined by the intention of the moment, and not necessarily from ancient roots. Generally, they are related in some

way, but we cannot pretend that meanings do not change as society changes—in this case, from a culture familiar and experienced in witchcraft to one that largely believes such things to be silly superstition. So while the English word “pharmacy” is derived from the Greek word *pharmakeia*, the meaning is not exactly the same. In fact, many English words are derived from Greek, but the meanings are often not exactly the same. The first century usage of the word *pharmakeia* has to do with healing potions that are inseparably attached to conjuring spirits and calling on the power of false gods.

Pharmaceuticals, in a modern sense, do not include worshipping false gods as a part of the healing protocol.

This is not to say that there are not serious problems with the pharmaceutical industry; there indeed is, and few would disagree with obvious problems with the modern healthcare system. But the problems are of a different context than the usage of the Greek word *pharmakeia* in the first century. Technically speaking, from an ancient perspective, even modern supplements, health drinks, vitamins, essential oils, etc., would fall into the category of pharmaceuticals, except back then, it would have also included the calling on of false god intervention. We don’t want to give the impression that the Bible forbids the use of medicine. It might be worthwhile to mention that the Bible does not condemn preparing or using substances to treat disease, which would be much more analogous to the intent of modern medicine. In fact, sometimes this is prescribed in the Bible. Isaiah told the people to treat Hezekiah’s boil with a cake of figs (Isaiah 38:21). Paul told Timothy to drink wine for his stomach’s sake and frequent ailments (1 Timothy 5:23), and the Good Samaritan treated the man’s wounds with oil and wine (Luke 10:34).

Otto, Bernd Christian. "Towards Historicizing "Magic" in Antiquity" from Numen Vol. 60, No. 2/3 (2013), Brill, pp. 308-347 (specifically p. 324)

Eidinow, Esther. Patterns of Persecution: Witchcraft Trials in Classical Athens Past & Present, No. 208 (AUGUST 2010), pp. 9-35

Redford, Donald B. The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion, Oxford University Press (2002), pp 195-6, 198-204

Okay, so let's go ahead and move on to the next question.

Hello 119 Ministries team! Shalom! I have been a long time subscriber and have really learned a lot from your videos. I so long to fellowship with other like-minded believers in my area (I live in Idaho), but unfortunately the options are very limited here. I have met a few others here in Boise, but the majority of the fellowship groups seem to be very heavily focused on more of a Christian version of Judaism type of approach, and that just doesn't quite resonate with my heart and spirit. I was wondering if you wouldn't mind providing your feedback or knowledge of the First Fruits of Zion ministry? There's a few groups out here that host a FFOZ Torah study group, but I'm hesitant to get plugged in as I feel a little unsure on FFOZ doctrine/beliefs. I would be grateful for your feedback or any insight that you may have regarding FFOZ teachings and if there is anything to be concerned about?

We really dislike calling negative attention to any ministry, but we receive this question so often that it really needed to be included in this series.

As we understand it, FFOZ teaches that Gentiles are not instructed to keep the Torah:

The apostles did not require Gentile believers to adopt the specific Torah practices unique to the Jewish people (such as circumcision, Sabbath, holy days, levitical rituals, etc.) but neither did they discourage Gentiles from participating along with them in the Sabbath, holy days, and Jewish life. When a Gentile becomes a believer, he receives a divine mandate to keep the laws that apply to him as a Gentile and a divine invitation to celebrate with the Jewish people the laws that apply to the Jewish people.

<https://ffoz.org/info/frequently-asked-questions.html>

Accessed Online October 10th, 2019

In that regard, FFOZ teaches against everything 119 stands for. We teach that Israel was always to be a light to the nations, bringing them into obedience to all of God's commandments, including the Sabbath, holy days, and so forth, thereby glorifying our shared Creator. This continued in the New Testament: Yeshua commissioned His disciples to make disciples of "all nations," and to teach "them to observe all that I have commanded you," which certainly included commands like the Sabbath, feasts, and so forth (Matthew 28:19-20).

As FFOZ acknowledges, Yeshua taught His disciples that the Torah remains authoritative and binding. They just think it remains authoritative and binding only for Jews. As we outline in many teachings, we think the Scriptures clearly contradict that idea.

On a positive note, FFOZ does offer some great teachings and insights in other areas.

Moving on...

There is a question on FB that makes some sense. Relating to Leviticus 5:2-3, if you touch something that's unclean, it's a sin. Although I find this odd. The point brought up is Yeshua touched lepers, or anything unclean, then he sinned which means he couldn't be Messiah. Thoughts?

I didn't really read it that way before, but it does make some sense. I must be forgetting something as I don't remember being unclean as being a sin.

Reading the verses I thought that maybe it was the "not knowing" that caused the sin meaning they were unclean and went to the temple/tabernacle, but that would be an assumption and not in the text.

Okay, good question. So being unclean does not mean one has sinned. For example, a woman becomes unclean every month (Leviticus 15). That is a natural process for a woman's body; it does not mean she has entered a time of being sinful.

Being unclean happens. It is not a sin. It is a sin, however, if one enters the temple while being unclean.

Some read Leviticus 11 and assume that we are to not touch unclean animals at all. But the context of Leviticus 11 opens as follows:

Leviticus 11:2

Speak to the people of Israel, saying, These are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth.

Leviticus 11 defines which animals are and are not food, meaning what we can and cannot eat. Within that same context, there is mention that if we touch the carcass of any unclean animal we then become unclean. Should this occur, you are unclean until evening and you should wash your clothes. It is not a big deal.

The pig, however, appears to have a direct commandment to not touch their carcass. Thus, we should not touch a pig carcass.

Leviticus 11:7-8

And the pig, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. You shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

But the point is this. There are times you will become unclean. Yeshua touched a dead body. Our Messiah was then temporarily in an unclean status. It means that he could not enter the temple during the time he was considered to be unclean.

Is it a sin to touch an unclean animal that is still alive?

No, of course not. We see that David and Solomon had horses. Messiah Yeshua rode a donkey. There are plenty of examples available to us to clearly demonstrate that touching an unclean animal is acceptable.

Perhaps more importantly, eventually these animals die and you have to take care of an unclean animal's dead body. You bury it, which of course, requires touching it. In doing so, you are unclean until evening, and you then go and wash your clothes, and there is no sin here.

Sometimes we are asked if a pig skin football is unclean. But, a pig skin football is not a dead body. Consider some other Biblical examples. John wore camel skin. A camel is an unclean animal. Yet, camel skin is not a dead carcass. It is simply skin. A carcass is a dead body. Processed skin for clothing is not a dead body. Processed skin for a football is not a dead body. We do not become unclean by touching such things.

But here is something interesting. A camel, which is unclean, had to die to produce that camel skin. An unclean carcass had to be touched. A person might become unclean, but was that a sin? No. You simply wait till evening, take a bath or shower, wash your clothes, and then you are clean again. While you are unclean you do not enter the temple.

Can clean things come from unclean things. Yes, we have provided some examples already. Things can come from unclean things and still be clean. Let's consider another example.

Pearls come from oysters, which are unclean, yet Scripture mentions pearls in a positive light.

Revelation 21:1 mentions that the New Jerusalem has gates made out of pearls. In Matthew 13, our Messiah mentions a parable about a merchant in search of fine pearls. Yeshua mentions in Matthew 7:6 that we are to not throw our pearls before swine. Job 28:18 states that wisdom is more valuable than even pearls.

But pearls come from oysters, and oysters are unclean. You even have to kill the oyster to get the pearl

out, which means that one has to dig a pearl out of a dead unclean carcass.

Are you following along here? Being unclean is not a sin, it is simply a status. It is a status that defines whether or not you can or cannot enter into the temple. Things that may have originated from an unclean carcass do not stay unclean.

Now let's go back to the verse presented in the original question, Leviticus 5:2-3.

Leviticus 5:2-3

or if anyone touches an unclean thing, whether a carcass of an unclean wild animal or a carcass of unclean livestock or a carcass of unclean swarming things, and it is hidden from him and he has become unclean, and he realizes his guilt; or if he touches human uncleanness, of whatever sort the uncleanness may be with which one becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and realizes his guilt;

In reading this set of verses, despite all evidence we have already offered to the contrary, some might still say, "But see, if you touch an unclean carcass you are then guilty; it is sin." But, that is not the context of this section of the Torah. These verses and surrounding verses are in the context of certain things being hidden, and thus, could cause sin without being aware. For example, consider the next couple of verses.

Leviticus 5:4-5

or if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath to do evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that people swear, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and he realizes his guilt in any of these; when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he has committed,

In making a rash oath, one might easily forget about it and fail to do or not do what was said in the oath. So, by it being hidden from him, he may have sinned by failing to comply with the oath. That of course is a problem. When one realizes his guilt, there are steps outlined to rectify it.

Verses 2-3 are similar. If you are unclean and do not know it, you can make others unclean. Likewise, they would not know it. That would be an issue if you or others were going to the temple in an unclean status. It would be hidden sin. When you are knowingly unclean, you are to take care to not make others unclean. But, if you are unclean and do not know it, then you could be making others unclean without them knowing it was well.

What we mean is this: while becoming unclean is not a transgression or sin, there are consequences involved if you are unclean and do not know it—it could lead to sin. Should this situation occur, the Torah outlines the steps to correct it.

We just covered a lot. So, in summary, we have discussed the following things:

- It is ok to touch unclean animals.
- An unclean carcass is specifically a dead body.
- Touching an unclean carcass, with the exception of pigs, is not sin.
- Touching an unclean dead body will make you unclean 'til evening, and one's clothes should be washed, and a shower or bath might be in order.
- Being unclean is not a sin.
- When one is unclean, one cannot enter the temple, but there is no temple today.

That was a lot to cover, and we hope it was helpful.

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.testeverthing.net

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

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