

For the **LORD** your **GOD** walks

in the midst of your camp, to deliver you
and give your enemies over to you;

therefore your camp shall be holy,
that **HE** may see no unclean

thing among you and
turn
AWAY
from
you.



Deuteronomy
23:14
(15th Hebrew)

פי יהוה
אלהיך מתהלך
בקרב מחניך להצילך
ולתת איביך לפניך
והיה מחניך קדוש:
ולא יראה בך ערות
מאחריך {ס}

דבר ושב

29 August 2021 YALLERSON

Deuteronomy 23:1-14
Holy Conduct Before the Lord, Part I
August 29, 2021

¹“He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD.

²“One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

³“An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, ⁴because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. ⁵Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. ⁶You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

⁷“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. ⁸The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

⁹“When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. ¹⁰If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. ¹¹But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.

¹²“Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; ¹³and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. ¹⁴For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

The final verses of our passage today deal with handling of human waste. It’s something I have been intimately familiar with for most of my life. In high school, dad got me into a job at the local wastewater treatment plant. I could go on all day, every day for months, telling you stories about my adventures there.

But that wasn’t enough for me, so when I came back from the military, I got back into the field for some years. Then I left it to go mine gold in Alaska. When I got back from that, I did a few other things, and then...yes, I got back into handling wastewater for several more years. I could go on and on about it.

The stories would probably never get tiring too. It is a great field to be in, the work is (to me) exciting and challenging, and it is one of those things that is actually doing a huge service for society in many ways, for the environment, and for the health and well-being of people worldwide.

Eventually, I left that to take up preaching, but I still have to take care of such things on a smaller level six days a week. Yes, I clean public bathrooms at a mall I take care of. I can absolutely assure you that it is ten thousand times worse than working at a wastewater plant... maybe a million.

No wonder the passage today says what it says. When things aren't properly taken care of in this regard, my morning job is as distasteful as anything you could imagine. The one word I can use to really catch the scent (pun intended) for what I have to deal with is "unholy."

Hence, the Lord told the Israelites that their war camps were to be holy. It is that simple. It is as obvious as the nose on a person's face (and as obvious TO the nose on a person's face), why we are to properly take care of business.

Text Verse: *"But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." Ephesians 4:20-24*

If I can give one general theme for all of Deuteronomy, it would be in accord with the title of this sermon – Holy Conduct Before the Lord. Obviously, each section is quite a bit different, but that is a good main theme for it.

Some of it deals with conduct towards others, some of personal conduct concerning hygiene, and so on. But one thing we need to do is to not get so carried away in our analyses of Scripture that we make the word say something wholly unintended. It is a big and not-uncommon problem though.

One of the sites I use quite often is Abarim Publications. They have the best analyses of the meaning of names in Scripture to be found anywhere. And some of their Bible commentaries are very insightful.

But their commentary on verses 12 and 13 of our passage today is so out of line with the intent of what is being said that I am actually embarrassed to recommend them lest someone read it and get misdirected down such an odd avenue.

Once we start doing what they did there, from that point on we can make anything say anything. This is not responsible theology. We need to stick closely to what the text actually says, and then consider any typological analogies based solely on how the words are fulfilled through the work of Christ or how they apply to believers based on the work of Christ.

I just thought I would say that about Abarim because I want people to be careful and not just accept what they read or hear because it sounds enlightening or insightful. I love their site, I enjoy some of their biblical analyses, but everything has to be carefully considered and not just taken at face value.

You should even do this with the Superior Word sermons. Make sure what you are taking in is in accord with the word. And guess what? The only way you can do that is to ... to ... know the word! Be sure to know this word! It is well worth the time you put into it.

Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Assembly of the Lord (Verses 1-8)

“He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD.

The variations in the translation of this verse are rather incredible. Most are paraphrases to help explain the obvious intent of what is being conveyed. The Hebrew reads: *lo yavo petsua daka u-kerut shaphkah biqhal Yehovah* – “No shall enter – wounded, crushing and cutting, male organ – in assembly Yehovah.”

The first words, “No shall enter,” are obviously tied to the last words, “in assembly Yehovah.” The intervening words explain who is being described. Exactly what it means to “enter the assembly” is debated. Adam Clarke may be right when he says –

“If by entering the congregation be meant the bearing a civil office among the people, such as magistrate, judge, etc., then the reason of the law is very plain; no man with any such personal defect as might render him contemptible in the sight of others should bear rule among the people, lest the contempt felt for his personal defects might be transferred to his important office, and thus his authority be disregarded.”

Whether correct, or whether it extends to something even more general, the matter was understood clearly by the people. The word *qahal*, or assembly, is not the same as *edah*, or congregation. Therefore, it may be that such a person could be a part of the congregation, but not entitled to the benefits of the assembly. That seems likely based on the coming verses.

In this verse, are three new and rare words –

Patsa. It is a verb meaning to bruise or wound. It comes from a root signifying “to split.” It will be seen only three times.

Dakah. It is a noun signifying a crushing from the verb *dakah* meaning to crush. This is the only time it is used in the Bible.

Shophkah. It is a noun that speaks of the male organ. Coming from *shaphak*, meaning to pour out, as in wine or blood. It is also only found here in the Bible.

What is being conveyed is a precept that has already been noted concerning the priests of Israel –

“For any who has a defect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred face man or any limb too long, ¹⁹ a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, ²⁰ or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or a man who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. ²¹ No man of the descendants of Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God.” Leviticus 21:18-21

But this precept now goes further. It is an expansion of the thought presented concerning sacrificial animals in Leviticus 22 –

“You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make any offering of them in your land.” Leviticus 22:24

The perfection of the Lord demands that only perfect sacrifices should be presented to Him. The defects now noted in human males, are defects that have been purposefully made by man’s hands. If such sacrificial animals were unacceptable as offerings, how much more should those who are His people, who bring forward their offerings, be perfect in their physical being!

In this, it is seen that perfection is demanded when coming before God. This has already been seen innumerable times in Leviticus. Anyone who was unclean for a host of reasons could not come before the Lord.

Some instances of uncleanness, like leprosy, kept them away from Him permanently. Some, such as an issue in the night, kept them away from Him until evening. But the idea being conveyed is perfection. Only perfection can come into the presence of the Lord.

Thus, being included in the assembly of the Lord meant to be considered a member of the Israelite society with all of its rights, privileges, and responsibilities. It is seen later that eunuchs served kings in Israel, but they were not a part of Israel. One of them, Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian eunuch, received a special blessing from the Lord in Jeremiah 39:16-18 –

“Go and speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be performed in that day before you. ¹⁷ But I will deliver you in that

day,” says the LORD, “and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. ¹⁸For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be as a prize to you, because you have put your trust in Me,” says the LORD.’”

In Acts 8, a eunuch came to Jerusalem to worship, but he was not considered a member of the assembly of Israel. Only those considered as acceptable could be a member of the society, and those who were members of the society still had to be acceptable – at any given time – to make their offerings to the Lord. Again, the idea is that nothing imperfect can come before the Lord.

In Israel, this was all typology. Like the animal sacrifices that were actually ineffectual (Hebrews 10:4), the people of Israel were actually imperfect as well. What they did and the way they were set apart, was only anticipatory of something greater. This is perfectly evident from the words of Isaiah –

“Do not let the son of the foreigner Who has joined himself to the LORD Speak, saying, ‘The LORD has utterly separated me from His people’; Nor let the eunuch say, ‘Here I am, a dry tree.’ ⁴For thus says the LORD: “To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, ⁵Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name That shall not be cut off.” Isaiah 56:3-5

Isaiah prophesied of a time when those who were excluded from the assembly under Moses would actually become an eternal part of the assembly through Christ. The irony of Isaiah’s words is that “those who are ‘cut off’ in the body, would never be ‘cut off’ before God because of Christ.”

This was literally fulfilled in the eunuch of Acts 8. Though excluded from the assembly of Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, he was brought into the commonwealth of Israel through the New Covenant in Christ, thus being given an everlasting name that would not be cut off.

In other words, he was made perfect in Christ and thus made acceptable to God. The typology of the Old only anticipated the fulfillment of it in the New. But this then brings in the words of Paul who was speaking to the Galatians about those of Israel who still preached circumcision as a necessary requirement for being acceptable to God. He says –

“And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. ¹²I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!” Galatians 5:11, 12

What Paul is referring to when he says “cut themselves off” is a step beyond what was mandated for Israel under the law. His words turn on the idea of circumcision. He is showing the utterly ludicrous nature of being circumcised in order to please God over and above what Christ had already done.

And so, he basically says, “Gee, if you can make God happy by being circumcised, then keep on cutting. Maybe He will be more pleased with additional mutilation of the flesh.” His words are both ironic and sarcastic.

If these Judaizers wanted to live out their lives under the Mosaic covenant, they would find that they were as unpleasing to God as if they had emasculated themselves.

They were still living out the typology and not entering into that which the typology anticipated. They had missed the significance of what Christ had done. In Him, we are perfected – regardless of the condition of our physical bodies.

If entering the presence of the Lord means we must be perfect, and if the Mosaic law can make nothing perfect, then no person could ever enter the presence of God. But in Christ, we are made perfect – once and forever. This is stated, explicitly, in Hebrews 7 –

“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”
Hebrews 7:18, 19

²“**One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD;**

lo yavo mamzer biqhal Yehovah – “No shall enter illegitimate into assembly Yehovah.” Here is a new and rare word, *mamzer*. It is found only twice, here and Zechariah 9:6. It signifies a child of incest, or illegitimately generated.

An example of such a birth would be that of Judah and Tamar found in Genesis 38. Judah slept with his own daughter-in-law, and thus, under the law, such a child would be illegitimate. Though that happened before the time of the law, it still could be said to apply to the line of Judah that issued from that union, at least for a certain period. That is because...

² (con’t) **even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD.**

Again, the word *qahal*, or assembly, is used. Any such person, even to the tenth generation, could not enter into the assembly of Yehovah. The number ten in Scripture signifies *the*

perfection of divine order. It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.

When the tenth is arrived at, the cycle of the prohibition is thus completed. It is this verse that the author of the book of Ruth certainly had in mind when he finished the book with the words –

“Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; ¹⁹ Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; ²⁰ Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; ²¹ Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; ²² Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.” Ruth 4:18-22

Perez was the child born to the illegitimate union between Judah and Tamar. As such, until the tenth generation, the descendant could be considered illegitimate. Hence, those words, affixed to the end of Ruth, establish that David was – in fact – eligible to enter the assembly of the Lord and hold the office of king because he was the tenth, or completing, generation of the prohibition.

However, it is clear that his ancestors were accepted as members of the congregation of Israel, and so there is seen to be a difference between the *edah*, or congregation, and the *qahal*, or assembly. This will also be seen again as we continue.

³ “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD;

The explanation for this prohibition will be given in the next verse. For now, the words simply provide the precept. What is said must refer to a male, not a female. However, this is taken by Ezra as an absolute prohibition, and he forced those who married such women to divorce the wives thus also abandoning the children. Ezra must have misinterpreted the law because this cannot be the intent of the verse, as will be seen in the words ahead...

^{3 (con't)} even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever,

A literal translation of the entire verse would say, “No shall enter Ammonite and Moabite in assembly Yehovah; also, generation tenth no shall enter to theirs in assembly Yehovah until vanishing point.”

The question is, does “until vanishing point,” or “forever,” interpret the words “tenth generation,” or does it simply mean that the precept of not entering to the tenth generation is to be adhered to forever?

The answer must be the latter. In other words, “tenth generation” is not – as some scholars claim – being used synonymously with “forever.” Rather, the term “forever” is speaking of the fact that this precept is to be adhered to forever.

First, the reason this must apply to males only is because David’s great grandmother was Ruth, the Moabitess, and yet David was a member of the assembly of the Lord. Likewise, his grandson through Solomon, Rehoboam, was the son of Naamah, an Ammonitess.

Therefore, it cannot be that this applied to the descendants of females from these people groups who married into Israel. And further, the word *qahal*, or assembly, must be specifically different than *edah*, or congregation.

This is because listed among David’s mighty men in 1 Chronicles 11 are Zelek the Ammonite (11:39) and Ithmah the Moabite (11:46). To be reckoned as members of his chief fighting men, they surely had to be members of the congregation, even if not members of the assembly.

Therefore, Ezra (and later Nehemiah) – though having good intentions, misunderstood the intent of Moses’ words now. Nehemiah clearly equates the words “to the tenth generation” with “forever” when he misquotes Moses –

“On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God.” Nehemiah 13:1

For now, Moses next explains why the precept is mandated...

⁴because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt,

Rather than “when,” it reads, “in your coming out from Egypt.” The Exodus happened almost forty years before this event. It was a long, extended process that includes the travels after leaving. In this, the words introduce a new thought not previously stated. The Lord specifically told Israel to not harass these people groups –

“Then the LORD said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.’” Deuteronomy 2:9

“And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.” Deuteronomy 2:19

Despite the Lord's admonition to not harm these people because they were extended family who had been given their land as a possession, these same groups did not extend any family courtesies toward Israel, not even the basic necessities such as bread and water. But more than that, they were hostile to them...

⁴ (con't) and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

This was specifically done by Moab, as is seen in Numbers 22. A singular verb is used as well (he hired). Thus, it speaks of the people as a collective.

This could be referring only to Moab then, but in 2 Chronicles 20:1, it identifies the two people as the same stock, even if they are separate clans. They were united in action and so it appears that the guilt of hiring Balaam is imputed to both...

⁵ Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you,

Balaam, who was hired by Moab, blessed Israel. However, Israel is reminded now that the original intent was for him to curse Israel. It was because the Lord intervened in the affair that the anticipated curse was turned into a blessing. Moses then explains why this is what came about saying...

⁵ (con't) because the LORD your God loves you.

This is in the singular still. It refers to the nation as the object of the Lord's affections. And that affection is for who they can be, not necessarily who they are. God is love, and it is the anticipated relationship with Israel, based on the covenant promises, that the Lord directs His love towards them. This is seen in the words of Jesus, the fulfillment of those covenant promises, in John 3 –

“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” John 3:35, 36

The Ammonites and Moabites were not a part of these covenant promises. As such, the Lord acted for Israel. But of this same Israel, most have rejected Christ. In this, God's wrath remains on them. Thus, the love spoken of here is one of covenant love, and it pertains to those who are faithful toward Him in that covenant standing. For Ammon and Moab, this was not true. Thus...

⁶You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

The words are to Israel in the singular, meaning the nation as a whole. The aims and goals of Israel were not the same as the aims and goals of these nations. Nor would they ever fully see eye to eye. Because of this, they were not to unite as nations would in alliances and the like.

Does this prohibition extend to individual relationships as well? It is hard to be dogmatic, but it probably does because of the words of the previous verses, and because the next verse, will speak of individuals from Edom and Egypt. What is evident is that David had a friendly relationship with the king of Ammon –

“It happened after this that the king of the people of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. ²Then David said, ‘I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me.’” 2 Samuel 10:1, 2

It is hard to say if David’s friendship with Nahash was a violation of the precept now being given by Moses. But what occurred in the rest of the chapter shows that the Ammonites remained suspicious of, and at enmity with, Israel. Nahash means “Serpent,” and the son of Nahash turned around and bit at David like a serpent would.

⁷“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he *is* your brother.

Here, Moses speaks of the individual Edomite. He was not to be abhorred. This was to be the case even though Edom came out against Israel with the sword –

¹⁸“Then Edom said to him, ‘You shall not pass through my land, lest I come out against you with the sword.’

¹⁹So the children of Israel said to him, ‘We will go by the Highway, and if I or my livestock drink any of your water, then I will pay for it; let me only pass through on foot, nothing more.’ ²⁰Then he said, ‘You shall not pass through.’ So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand. ²¹Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.” Numbers 20:18-20

Despite their conduct, Moses gives the explicit reason for why they were to not abhor an Edomite, saying emphatically: *ki akhikha hu* – “for your brother, he.” Edom was the brother of Israel; therefore, the Edomite was to be treated as a brother as well. Likewise...

⁷(con’t) You shall not abhor an Egyptian,

Egypt afflicted Israel, and Egypt attempted to destroy Israel, and yet, like the Edomite, the Egyptian was not to be abhorred. And again, Moses explicitly states why it was to be so –

7 (con't) **because you were an alien in his land.**

The people of Egypt had provided a home, land, and sustenance for over two hundred years. When Israel left the land, the Egyptians that they knew gave them many parting gifts. Israel was a stranger nation in their land, and yet they were cared for. Therefore, kindness was to be shown, in turn, to the individual Egyptian as well.

8 The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

The Hebrews says, “sons,” rather than, “children.” In only three generations, instead of ten for Ammon and Moab, the sons of an Edomite or an Egyptian could enter the assembly of the Lord.

What can be seen here is a practical lesson that has already been seen in other examples. First, Edom can be considered near of kin, whereas Ammon and Moab – though related – were not. Secondly, Ammon and Moab had intended to curse Israel without ever having had any direct relations with them.

Edom could be seen as a near of kin, and thus in a special kinsman relationship with Israel. Egypt despite having afflicted Israel as a master to a bondservant, was also kind to him as well. The bonds between these two and Israel were stronger and more enduring than those of Ammon and Moab.

Thus, the lesson of forgetting the lesser matters and uniting on the greater and more enduring matters is being taught to Israel in these directives now.

Holiness before the Lord, to this we have been called
We are to always walk carefully in His ways
Let not our momentum diminish or get stalled
Let us press forward for all of our days

May it be so, to the honor of the Lord our God
May it be so, that we live in holiness
May it be so, every step that we trod
Onward toward the final prize, may we continue to press

He is our God and to Him we must be true
He is our Lord, our glorious Lord Jesus
Let us act in holiness in everything we do
And in this, His smiling countenance will radiate on us

II. Your Camp Shall Be Holy (verses 9-14)

⁹ “When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing.

For consistency, the word “army” here should be “camp.” The same word, *makhaneh*, is used twice in the next verse, both times translated as “camp.” It is the purity of the camp that is being focused on.

When Israel went out as a camp to fight their battles, the Lord would be among them. This has already been seen in Deuteronomy 20, saying –

“When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” Deuteronomy 20:1

Moses is noting that the conduct and purity of the people will have a direct bearing on the Lord’s attention to them in battle. Impurity of the camp would show a disdain for the presence of the Lord who is ultimately the One who would either deliver the enemy over to Israel, or who would deliver Israel over to them. As such...

¹⁰ If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night,

This is referring to a man that has a nocturnal emission. If this were to occur, it would render him unclean until the next evening. This has already been explained in Leviticus –

“If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening.” Leviticus 15:16

In such a case as this...

^{10 (con’t)} then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp.

The Hebrew reads specifically in relation to the camp: *v’yatsa el mikhuts lamakhaneh; lo yavo el tok ha’makhaneh* – “and he shall go unto from outside to the camp; no shall he come unto midst the camp.” The purity of the camp is to be maintained. He is defiled, and he must separate himself from the camp, which is considered holy. That is to continue for a set time period...

¹¹ But it shall be, when evening comes,

The evening is the start of the new day. It is this time that is set forth again and again in Leviticus to reflect the time when a state of defilement is ended. However, this is the only time in Deuteronomy that the term is used in this way. As such, it is right to reexplain the meaning.

As biblical days go from evening until evening, it indicates that the state of defilement lasts until the starting of the new day. Only when the old had passed away, can the new come in.

The evening then looks forward to the work of Christ. He died in the afternoon and was buried as the evening approached. With His death and burial, all defilement of man was washed away. This is seen in Matthew 27 –

“Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.” Matthew 27:57-61

¹¹ (con't) **that he shall wash with water;**

yirkhats bamayim – “he shall wash in the water.” He is defiled, it is evening, and he is now being purified. This typologically looks to the cleansing of Christ as is seen in Hebrews 10 –

“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹and having a High Priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:19-22

Christ died, He entered the Most Holy Place, and we enter into His death and burial. In this, our spiritual bodies are washed clean. What Israel did in the fleshly body, we participate in through Christ in a spiritual sense.

¹¹ (con't) **and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.**

The thing about this prohibition is that it doesn't matter if it happens just at sundown (we'll say 7:20pm) or five minutes before the guy wakes up (at 5:50am), the state of uncleanness only lasts until the evening.

Therefore, it cannot be that the emission is unclean, but that it is typical of something else that is unclean. So, what is it concerning an emission of semen that so renders a person unclean?

As we saw in Leviticus, this precept is actually understood by many religions. It was considered so in ancient Egypt. It is so in Islam. Babylonians, Hindus, and others considered such an emission unclean.

Judaism to this day follows the precept in a cultural sense, especially those who piecemeal adhere to the law. Other religions as well understand this. It is something ingrained in the religious psyche. But it is not something Christians consider defiling.

The reason it is so is because the precept anticipates Christ. The bible implicitly teaches that the seed of man is how sin travels to the next generation of humans.

As all people (male and female alike) are born of man's seed, all thus all inherit Adam's sin through the male's emission. Religions around the world intuitively know there is inherited sin, even if they don't understand why it is so.

It is the reason why circumcision was given to Abraham. In cutting the male member, it pictured cutting the transfer of sin in humanity. The Lord even called circumcision a sign. But a sign is something that anticipates something else.

That which circumcision anticipates is Christ. Christ came born of a woman, but with no human father. Thus, He cut the line of sin because no human seed (bearing sin) from a father was transmitted to Him. The picture is fulfilled, the requirement in the law is ended. We are cleansed when we come to Christ's perfection and His sacrifice, pictured by the coming of the new day at evening.

For the Israelite in the camp of the Lord, after washing, he remained unclean until evening. When the sun set, he could then reenter the camp. This was merely a ceremonial defilement of the conscience that typologically anticipated Christ. Now, in Him, our consciences are cleansed. We are free from the consciousness of sin, because we are freed from all sin through the work of Christ.

¹² "Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out;

The Hebrew of this and the next verse is very obscure. Here, it reads: *v'yad tihyeh lekha mikhuts lamakhaneh v'yasata shamah khuts* – "and hand shall have to you from outside to the camp and you go there outside."

The word “hand” certainly is indicating a direction or location. In other words, if someone needs to go, he will ask the sentry of the camp, “Hey buddy, where do I go?” The response is with the hand – “over there.” Thus, most translations say, “place,” or “station.” In other words, a latrine.

¹³ and you shall have an implement among your equipment,

v’yated tihyeh lekha al azenekha – “and peg shall have to you upon your ear.” That doesn’t make much sense, does it? The idea is that a peg will be used as a handle, and the ear is being equated to something broad, or ear-shaped. In other words, Moses is describing a spade with a handle and a flat part for digging.

¹³ (con’t) and when you sit down outside,

v’hayah b’shivtekha khuts “and it shall be in your sitting outside.” In other words, it is repeating the thought that one is to sit (meaning you know what) outside. The repetition is to ensure that the outside is where this is to occur. The lowest soldier to the highest chief, all were to go to the designated place and do their sitting out there.

¹³ (con’t) you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.

v’kaphartah bah v’shavta eth tseatekha – “and you shall dig with it and turn and cover the coming out.” The wording, though a bit annoying to us from a literal translation, has an obvious meaning – “You are to take your spade, dig a hole, and then cover what just came out.”

In this, is another rare word, *tseah*. It signifies outcomings. It is found only here and in Ezekiel 4 –

“And you shall eat it as barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight.” Ezekiel 4:12

Just a couple verses later, we read this –

“So I said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth.’”

¹⁵ Then He said to me, ‘See, I am giving you cow dung instead of human waste, and you shall prepare your bread over it.’” Ezekiel 4:14, 15

It is cooking with the human waste that defiled the food Ezekiel was to eat. Thus, these outcomings were to be covered. And there is a specific reason for this...

14 For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp,

The idea here is still that of typological purity. The waste from a body is putrid and it is defiling (as seen in Ezekiel 4). To do this in the camp would then defile the camp. But the camp is the fighting force of the hosts of the Lord, and thus it was to remain undefiled. In this, the Lord would be among them...

14 (con't) to deliver you and give your enemies over to you;

The implication is that if the camp was defiled, the Lord would not be among them, and they would not be delivered. Rather, in offending the Lord, they would be delivered over to their enemies.

14 (con't) therefore your camp shall be holy,

v'hayah makhanekha qadosh – “And it shall be your camp holy.” The camp was to be set apart from all defilement and thus holy to the Lord. This is the main purpose of everything that has been said in these verses. The Lord is holy, and He will not walk among those who are unholy. The camp was to be kept pure...

***14 (fin) that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.**

The law is what sets the standard. To not adhere to the precept would be a violation of the law. The typology of the coming of Christ must be maintained, and therefore the purity of the camp – based on the standard set forth in the law – was to be adhered to. If not, as should be obvious, the Lord would turn away from them.

It is without any doubt at all that this set of verses was on Paul's mind when he wrote his words to those at Corinth. Though divided by a chapter, the words run concurrently from the end of one chapter to the beginning of the next –

“For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ ¹⁷ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ¹⁸ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty.’” 2 Corinthians 6:16-18

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 17:1

Everything that is said anticipates something that looks forward to the coming of the Messiah and of the true cleansing that can only come from Him. All of these earthly ordinances anticipated His coming, and in Him is found the fulfillment of them all.

He either actually fulfills the precepts, or He does so through fulfilled typology. Either way, it is only through Christ that we are truly cleansed and set apart to God. As this is so, we should separate ourselves, wholly and forever, from that which defiles.

He has already set us apart as holy through faith in His work, but it is our responsibility to act in accord with the word that has now been given and to conduct ourselves in a manner which is honoring of Him.

Therefore, may it be so. May we strive from day to day to walk in holiness, to act in righteousness, and to live in the hope of that day when our full, final, and forever glorification comes to be. May it be so, to the glory of the Lord who has already fulfilled that which restores us once again to our heavenly Father.

Closing Verse: *“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”*
Colossians 1:9-12

Next Week: Deuteronomy 23:15-25 *No way you will be bored, it is true...* (Holy Conduct Before the Lord, **Part II**) (68th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Holy Conduct Before the Lord, Part I

“He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation
Shall not enter the assembly of the LORD
-----this is to be a holy nation

“One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD
Even to the tenth generation
None of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD
This is to be a holy nation

“An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly
Of the LORD; even to the tenth generation
None of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD
Forever: This is to be a holy nation

Because they did not meet you with bread and water
On the road when you came out of Egypt, so they did not do
And because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor
From Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you

Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam
But the LORD your God turned, because He is faithful and true
The curse into a blessing for you
Because the LORD your God loves you

You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity
All your days forever, so shall it be

“You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he *is* your brother
You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien
----- in his land
The children of the third generation born to them
May enter the assembly of the LORD so you now fully understand

“When the army goes out against your enemies for fighting
Then keep yourself from every wicked thing

If there is any man among you who becomes unclean
By some occurrence in the night
Then he shall go outside the camp
He shall not come inside the camp as is just and right

But it shall be, when evening comes
That he shall wash with water until all watered up and damp
And when the sun sets
He may come into the camp

Also you shall have a place outside the camp
-----where you may go out
And you shall have an implement among your equipment
-----so I say
And when you sit down outside
You shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse
-----so to you I relay

For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp
To deliver you and give your enemies over to you
-----as He has promised to do
Therefore your camp shall be holy
That He may see no unclean thing among you
-----and turn away from you

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...