

## Tahor (Clean) and Tamei (Unclean)

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Most people have heard of the clean and unclean animals in the Tanakh. So how did the Hebrews (later to be Israelites) understand these words from the time of Noach to Moshe delivering the teaching to them. How did this apply to tent of meeting, the temple and afterwards? How does this apply to us today?

This is what we will be looking at as we study these two words in Hebrew to come to a understanding of them.

The Hebrew word Tahor (Tet-Hey-Resh), which is reference number 2889. It is an adjective and is from the verb Taher 2891. You can find it in the BDB on page 373 and in the NEHC on page 474-475. Taher is found on page 475 I the NEHC and on page 372 in the BDB.

Lets look at Taher the verb.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 11:31-32

31 Those are for you the unclean among all the swarming things; whoever touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until evening. 32 And anything on which one of them falls when dead shall be unclean: be it any article of wood, or a cloth, or a skin, or a sack—any such article that can be put to use shall be dipped in water, and it shall remain unclean until evening; then **it shall be clean** (v'taher וְטָהַר).

Here an article that was unclean (not clean) was made clean by dipping in water after the dead carcass came in contact with it.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 12:7-8

7 He shall offer it before Yehovah and make expiation on her behalf; **she shall then be clean** (v'taharah וְטָהַרָהּ) from her flow of blood. Such are the rituals concerning her who bears a child, male or female. 8 If, however, her means do not suffice for a sheep, she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. The priest shall make expiation on her behalf, and she shall be **clean** (v'taherah וְטָהַרָהּ).

Here we see a sacrifice is made to make her clean from her impurity after the birth of the child.

Malakhi/Malachi 3:3

3 He shall act like a smelter **and purger [purifier]** (umetaher וּמְטַהֵר) of silver; **and he shall purify** (v'tihar וְטִהַר) the descendants of Levi and **refine** (v'ziqqaq זִקְקָא) them like gold and silver, so that they shall present offerings in righteousness.

Here we have the metaphor of refining or purifying gold and silver to make them pure. Here the action is to cleanse them (the Levi'im) as one cleanses metal.

Tehillim/Psalms 51:4

4 Wash me thoroughly of my iniquity, and **purify** (tahareniy טַהַרְנִי) me of my sin;

Here Melekh David asks for his sins to be removed from him. Thus, making him pure/acceptable once more.

So we see from these that Taher the verb is used to show the action of being purified or made acceptable.

So lets look at some examples of that meaning being used in the adjective form of Tahor.

Shemot/Exodus 25:11, 17, 24, 29; 36

11 Overlay it with **pure** (tahor טָהוֹר) gold—overlay it inside and out—and make upon it a gold molding round about.

17 You shall make a cover of **pure** (tahor טָהוֹר) gold, two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide.

24 Overlay it with **pure** (tahor טָהוֹר) gold, and make a gold molding around it.

29 Make its bowls, ladles, jars and jugs with which to offer libations; make them of **pure** (tahor טָהוֹר) gold.

36 Their calyxes and their stems shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single hammered piece of **pure** (tahor טָהוֹר) gold.

All of the gold here is to be pure (tahor) gold. Thus it was not to be made any less acceptable.

Shemot/Exodus 37:29

29 He prepared the sacred anointing oil and the **pure (tahor טָהוֹר)** aromatic incense, expertly blended.

Here we see that the gold and incense were to be pure. So we have established that tahor while clean is also a word for pure.

So how was tahor first used in the Tanakh?

Bereshit/Genesis 7:2,8 and 8:20

7:2 Of every **clean (hattahorah הַטְּהוֹרָה)** animal you shall take seven pairs, males and their mates, and of every animal that is not clean (lo Tahorah לֹא טְהוֹרָה), two, a male and its mate; 3 of the birds of the sky also, seven pairs, male and female, to keep seed alive upon all the earth.

7: 8 Of the **clean (hattahorah הַטְּהוֹרָה)** animals, of the animals that **are not clean** ('eynenah tahorah אֵינְנָה טְהוֹרָה), of the birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9 two of each, male and female, came to Noah into the ark, as Elohim had commanded Noah.

8:20 Then Noah built an altar to Yehovah and, taking of every **clean (hattahorah הַטְּהוֹרָה)** animal and of every clean (hatahor הַטְּהוֹר) bird, he offered burnt offerings on the altar.

The difference of the animals here was that they were either clean/pure or not clean/pure. We also see that the word tamei is not used here. And it won't be used until the sons of Israel use it. So in the time of Noach there was **clean/pure (tahorah)** and **not clean/pure (lo tahorah/'eynenah tahorah)**.

The verb Taher is also found in the book of Bereshit (Genesis) in reference to Yacov telling his family to make themselves pure in preparation forward to Bethel or House of El.

Bereshit/Genesis 35:1-3

1 Elohim said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and remain there; and build an altar there to El who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau." 2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Rid yourselves of the alien gods in your midst, **purify (v'hittaharu וְהִטְהַרְוּ) yourselves**, and change your clothes. 3

Come, let us go up to Bethel, and I will build an altar there to El who answered me when I was in distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone.”

Here we see that they were to rid themselves of the foreign elohey and purify themselves. Was this a reference to the ridding of foreign gods or to clean with water or both.

The next time we see Tahor it is in Shemot (Exodus) chapters 25, 28, 30, 31, 37 and 39 all speaking about the vestments for Aharon, the incense altar, the Miskhan, the Ark of the Covenant, and the lamp stand. All of the metal was to be pure gold, the incense was to be pure also.

How do you make pure gold? You refine it as we have seen from scriptures. That is a heating process where the metal is melted and the impurities float to the top. They can then be skimmed off and the results are pure metal.

Now there is another way to interpret Tahor and Taher, which is to make something acceptable. Which would also tie into clean as a word since the making of the metal and incense could be used to show something as being acceptable to Yehovah.

We see Tahor used in Vayiqra (Leviticus) next.

In chapter 4 verse 12 which reads...

12 all the rest of the bull—he shall carry to a **clean (tahor טָהוֹר)** place outside the camp, to the ash heap, and burn it up in a wood fire; it shall be burned on the ash heap.

Does this place have to be pure, does it have to be clean as we understand it or does it have to be an acceptable place? It would seem to be that this is an acceptable place. A place to hold the many ashes from set-apart burnt offerings of the Chattat and the Red Heifer.

We see this again in chapter 6 verse 4...

4 He shall then take off his vestments and put on other vestments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a **clean (tahor טָהוֹר)** place.

Again like before he carries the ashes of all the burnt offerings out to a clean/acceptable place. Given these two references we can see that in chapter 7 verse 19 we see that it could be used this way also...

19 Flesh that touches anything **unclean (tame טָמֵא)** shall not be eaten; it shall be consumed in fire. As for other flesh, only he who is **clean (tahor טָהוֹר)** may eat such flesh.

A person in an acceptable or pure state may eat of the sacrifice. Thus they don't cause it to become tame.

Now in Vayikra we see that a difference is made between tahor and tame. Even the priest are told to discern between tahor and tame.

Chapter 10 verse 10 through 11...

10 for you must distinguish between the sacred and the profane, **and between the unclean (ubeyn hatame וּבֵינַיִן הַטְּמֵאָה) and [between] the clean (ubeyn hatahor וּבֵינַיִן הַטְּהוֹר)**; 11 and you must teach the Israelites all the laws which Yehovah has imparted to them through Moses.

They are states of being that affect the set-apart things and therefore to ensure what is maintained as set-apart or Tahor stays that way.

And reminded again in chapter 11:46-47

46 These are the instructions concerning animals, birds, all living creatures that move in water, and all creatures that swarm on earth, 47 for distinguishing **between the unclean (beyn hatame וּבֵינַיִן הַטְּמֵאָה) and [between] the clean (ubeyn hatahor וּבֵינַיִן הַטְּהוֹר)**, between the living things that may be eaten and the living things that may not be eaten.

Here we see that for food it is to show what can be eaten (acceptable/pure) and that which we are not to eat (unacceptable/impure).

We see that eating the proper animals is important...Chapter 20:25

25 So you shall set apart (v'habadal'tem – separate וְהַבְדַּלְתֶּם) the clean (hatahorah הַטְּהוֹרָה) beast from the unclean (latame'ah לַטְּמֵאָה), the unclean (hatame הַטְּמֵאָה) bird from the clean (latahor לַטְּהוֹר). You shall not draw abomination (lo t'shaqqitzu 8262 וְלֹא־תִשְׁקֹצוּ) upon yourselves through beast or bird or anything with which the ground is alive, which **I have set apart (habadal'tiy separated) for you to treat as unclean (letame לַטְּמֵאָה).**

The offerings one had to be Tahor state to partake of them... Bamidbar 18:11 – 15

11 This, too, shall be yours: the gift offerings of their contributions, all the elevation offerings of the Israelites, I give to you, to your sons, and to the daughters that are with

you, as a due for all time; everyone of your household who is **clean** (tahor טָהוֹר) may eat it.

12 All the best of the new oil, wine, and grain—the choice parts that they present to Yehovah—I give to you. 13 The first fruits of everything in their land, that they bring to Yehovah, shall be yours; everyone of your household who is **clean** (tahor טָהוֹר) may eat them. 14 Everything that has been proscribed in Israel shall be yours. 15 The first issue of the womb of every being, man or beast, that is offered to Yehovah, shall be yours; but you shall have the first-born of man redeemed, and you shall also have the firstling of **unclean** (hatame'ah הַטְּמֵאָה) animals redeemed.

Here we see the first born of every womb was to be given to the priests and only the first born of men or tame animals we to be redeemed.

So what will make a person taher (purified)?

Wash and wait for evening.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 11:39 If an animal that you may eat has died, anyone who touches its carcass shall **be unclean** (yit'ma יִטְמָא) until evening; 40 anyone who eats of its carcass shall **wash his clothes and remain unclean** (v'tame וְטֵמָא) until evening; and anyone who carries its carcass shall **wash his clothes and remain unclean** (v'tame וְטֵמָא) until evening.

One thing one must do is wash ones clothes.

Sacrifice for Childbirth

Vayiqra/Leviticus 12:7 He shall offer it before Yehovah and make expiation on her behalf; she shall **then be clean** (v'taharah וְטִהַרָה) from her flow of blood. Such are the rituals concerning her who bears a child, male or female.

Evidence of Disease is gone after being isolated

Vayiqra/Leviticus 13:6 On the seventh day the priest shall examine him again: if the affection has faded and has not spread on the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean (v'tiharu וְטִהַרוּ). It is a rash; he shall wash his clothes, and he shall be clean (v'taher וְטִהַר).

Here the absence of the rash is enough to pronounce him clean then he still must wash his clothes.

The ritual of the healed Leper

Vayiqra/Leviticus 14:2 This shall be the ritual for a leper at the time that he is to be cleansed.

When it has been reported to the priest, 3 the priest shall go outside the camp. If the priest sees that the leper has been healed of his scaly affection, 4 the priest shall order two live clean birds, cedar wood, crimson stuff, and hyssop to be brought for him who is to be cleansed. 5 The priest shall order one of the birds slaughtered over fresh water in an earthen vessel; 6 and he shall take the live bird, along with the cedar wood, the crimson stuff, and the hyssop, and dip them together with the live bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the fresh water. 7 He shall then sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed of the eruption and cleanse him; and he shall set the live bird free in the open country. 8 The one to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe in water; then he shall be clean (v'taher וְטָהַר). After that he may enter the camp, but he must remain outside his tent seven days. 9 On the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair—of head, beard, and eyebrows. When he has shaved off all his hair, he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; then he shall be clean (v'taher וְטָהַר). 10 On the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish, three-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in for a meal offering, and one *log* of oil.

The first day the Leper shaves all hair off, wash clothes and bath in living water and again on the seventh the same steps, then on the eighth day bring an offering.

We can see that Tahor as translated as clean can be understood to be pure and acceptable. We also see that Tame as in the state of uncleanness is important for not making those things tame which as tahor.

So what about Tame which is translated as unclean? It is reference number 2930 and from the root (Tet-Mem-Aleph). It is a verb. The same word can also be an adjective and found as reference number 2931. The are both found on pages 481-482 in the NEHC and on pages 379-380 in the BDB.

Since Tahor is pure or acceptable then to know the difference does Tame mean the opposite of Tahor. Let us see.

Bamidbar/Numbers 5: 2 Instruct the Israelites to remove from camp anyone with an eruption (tzarua) or a discharge (zav) **and anyone defiled (vakol tame וְכֹל טָמֵא)** by a corpse. 3 Remove male and female alike; put them outside the camp so that they do **not defile (valo yitam'u)** the camp of those in whose midst I dwell.

We can see here that if one have a flow (discharge) or an eruption (leper) they are unclean. Their presence (contact) will cause others to be unclean. Thus changing clean to unclean or pure to impure or acceptable to unacceptable.

Why is this important that they be taken from the camp?

Devarim/Deuteronomy 23: 11 If anyone among you has been **rendered unclean (lo yih'yah tahor – not is pure )** by a nocturnal emission, he must leave the camp, and he must not reenter the camp. 12 Toward evening he shall bathe in water, and at sundown he may reenter the camp. 13 Further, there shall be an area for you outside the camp, where you may relieve yourself. 14 With your gear you shall have a spike, and when you have squatted you shall dig a hole with it and cover up your excrement. 15 Since Yehovah Eloheykha moves about in your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemies to you, let your camp be holy (set apart); let Him not find anything unseemly (er'vat 6172) among you and turn away from you.

The reason for their need to be tahor all the time was they were in the midst of Yehovah as he guided through the wilderness. Today we are not in his midst all the time.

What makes one unclean/impure/unacceptable to be in the midst with Yehovah?

Vayiqra/Leviticus 5: 2 Or when a person touches any unclean thing—be it the carcass of an unclean beast or the carcass of unclean cattle or the carcass of an unclean creeping thing—and the fact has escaped him, and then, being unclean, he realizes his guilt; 3 Or when he touches human uncleanness—any such uncleanness whereby one becomes unclean—and, though he has known it, the fact has escaped him, but later he realizes his guilt;

There is an offering for those who forget they were in a unclean (tame) state touching something clean (tahor). Only when he realizes his guilt then does he bring his offering.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15: 2 Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

When any man has a discharge issuing from his member, he is unclean. 3 The uncleanness from his discharge shall mean the following—whether his member runs with the discharge or is stopped up so that there is no discharge, his uncleanness means this: 4 Any bedding on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean, and every object on which he sits shall be unclean. 5 Anyone who touches his bedding shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening. 6 Whoever sits on an object on which the one with the discharge has sat shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening.

This is the discharge of the man.



Vayiqra/Leviticus 15:7 Whoever touches the body of the one with the discharge shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean (v'tame אִטְמָאִי) until evening.

This is the touching of a male discharge. Again wash clothes, bathe in water and become clean after sunset.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15:13 When one with a discharge **becomes clean (yit'har יִטְהַר)** of his discharge, he shall count off seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in fresh water; then he shall be clean. **14** On the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before Yehovah at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and give them to the priest. **15** The priest shall offer them, the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. Thus the priest shall make expiation on his behalf, for his discharge, before Yehovah.

This is the male with the discharge (zov). Once no visible sign he must wait for seven days, wash his clothes, bathe in water and then be clean. But he must bring the offering and be made acceptable once more.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15: **16** When a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water and remain unclean (v'taher אִטְמָאִי) until evening. **17** All cloth or leather on which semen falls shall be washed in water and remain unclean (v'taher אִטְמָאִי) until evening.

Here this is a nightly emission. This is completely different from sex but still makes the man unclean. He must wash in water both him and the items that the semen fell upon and both are unclean until evening.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15: **18** And if a man has carnal relations with a woman, they shall bathe in water and remain unclean (v'tame'u אִטְמָאִי) until evening.

Here is the reference to sex. They both must bathe in water and remain unclean until evening.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15: **19** When a woman has a **discharge (zovah), her discharge (zovah)** being blood from her body, she shall remain **in her impurity (baniddatah)** seven days; whoever touches her **shall be unclean (yit'ma אִטְמָאִי)** until evening.

**20** Anything that she lies on during **her impurity (baniddatah) shall be unclean (yit'ma אִטְמָאִי)**; and anything that she sits on **shall be unclean (yit'ma אִטְמָאִי).**

**21** Anyone who touches her bedding shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and

**remain unclean (v'tame' אִטְמָא)** until evening; 22 and anyone who touches any object on which she has sat shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean (v'tame' אִטְמָא) until evening. 23 Be it the bedding or be it the object on which she has sat, on touching it he **and remain unclean (v'tame' אִטְמָא)** until evening.

24 And if a man lies with her, **her impurity (niddatah נִדְּתָהּ)** is communicated to him; he shall **be unclean (v'tame' אִטְמָא)** seven days, and any bedding on which he lies **shall become unclean (yit'ma יִטְמָא)**.

This is commonly referred to as her Niddah. The Niddah is the period of impurity that covers the seven days regardless whether blood is shown on those seven days. Anything she touches or sits upon or lays upon becomes unclean and must be washed and remains unclean until evening. If a man has sex with a woman in this state her state is transferred to him and he is unclean for seven days. And the same rules apply to him.

Vayikra 15: 25 When a woman has had a discharge of blood (yazuv zov damah her discharge discharge of blood) for many days (yamin rabbim), not at the time of her impurity (lo et niddatah), or when she has a discharge (tazuv) beyond her period of impurity (niddatah), she shall be unclean (tumatah טִמְאַתָּה), as though at the time of her impurity (Kiyamey niddatah) , as long as her discharge lasts [unclean] (tame'ah טִמְאָה). 26 Any bedding on which she lies while her discharge lasts shall be for her like bedding during her impurity; and any object on which she sits shall become unclean, as it does during her impurity: 27 whoever touches them shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening. 28 When she becomes clean of her discharge, she shall count off seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29 On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. 30 The priest shall offer the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering; and the priest shall make expiation on her behalf, for her unclean discharge (mizuv tumatah מִזֻּב טִמְאַתָּה), before Yehovah.

This is the flow of many days. She is unclean for how many days the flow continues and must add seven days to it end. All the same restriction are required for the Niddah apply her to. The difference is after seven day the nidah is clean. The flow of many days must be absence of discharge then after a count of 7 days is clean.

Why is this so important?

Vayiqra/Leviticus 15: 31 You shall put the Israelites on guard **against their uncleanness (mitumetam מִטְמֵאֲתָם)**, lest they die through **their uncleanness (batumetam**

**batame'am** בַּטְמֵאִים בְּטַמְּאֵתִי) by defiling My Tabernacle which is among them.

This is important because we make things tahor become tame.

Bamidbar/Numbers 19: 11 He who touches the corpse of any human being shall be unclean (v'tame טַמֵּא) for seven days. 12 He shall cleanse himself with it on the third day and on the seventh day, and then be clean; if he fails to cleanse himself on the third and seventh days, he shall not be clean. 13 Whoever touches a corpse, the body of a person who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles Yehovah's Tabernacle; that person shall be cut off from Israel. Since the water of lustration was not dashed on him, he remains unclean; his uncleanness is still upon him.

Here the person having tame met (unclean by the dead) is to have the water of the niddah (water of the separation) put on him on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> days. There is an extreme penalty for not doing this. He is cut off from Yisrael.

14 This is the ritual: When a person dies in a tent, whoever enters the tent and whoever is in the tent shall be unclean seven days; 15 and every open vessel, with no lid fastened down, shall be unclean. 16 And in the open, anyone who touches a person who was killed or who died naturally, or human bone, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. 17 Some of the ashes from the fire of cleansing (hachattat sin) shall be taken for the unclean person, and fresh water shall be added to them in a vessel. 18 A person who is clean shall take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle on the tent and on all the vessels and people who were there, or on him who touched the bones or the person who was killed or died naturally or the grave. 19 The clean person shall sprinkle it upon the unclean person on the third day and on the seventh day, thus cleansing him by the seventh day. He shall then wash his clothes and bathe in water, and at nightfall he shall be clean. 20 If anyone who has become unclean fails to cleanse himself, that person shall be cut off from the congregation, for he has defiled Yehovah's sanctuary. The water of lustration (niddah) was not dashed on him: he is unclean.

21 That shall be for them a law for all time. Further, he who sprinkled the water of lustration (niddah) shall wash his clothes; and whoever touches the water of lustration (niddah) shall be unclean until evening. 22 Whatever that unclean person touches shall be unclean; and the person who touches him shall be unclean until evening.

Thus the ways to be unclean/impure/not acceptable were to have a flow, a disease like a leper, or contact with a dead body. Secondly, you could be unclean/impure/unacceptable by contact with another who is unclean/impure.

So to make clean/pure/acceptable in every case except a dead body there were several steps:

1. Separate ones self from spreading it to another.

2. Wash yourself and your clothes
3. Wait until Sunset.

If you made contact with something set apart (a offering/utensil etc...)

1. Separate ones self from spreading it to another.
2. Wash yourself and your clothes
3. Wait until Sunset.
4. Bring an offering for Sin

If you have touched/been near a dead body

1. unclean for seven days
2. Combine water and ashes from the red heifer or chattat (sin offering)
3. A clean person uses hyssop to sprinkle the water over the areas for the dead and the persons
4. This is to done to he persons on the third and seventh days
5. Then bathe in water and wash clothes
6. At sunset he in clean

A woman in her flow

1. Is unclean for seven days of her flow
2. Must bring an offering to the priest

A woman with a flow of many days

1. Is unclean for seven days after her flow stops
2. Must bring an offering to the priest

We see that the main purpose of being tahor was to be acceptable to bring offerings, or being in the midst of Yehovah. In this respect it is very similar to qodesh (set apart) and common (chalal/chol). Tahor is pure/acceptable whereas tame is not. What does this mean for us today? How will this made right again and we will be pure/acceptable.

We live in lands in which this concept is not know or even taught. We ride on public transportation which others have touch. All of us except for the smallest child have come into contact with a dead body. So we are all impure today. Whether by direct contact or by contact with someone else we are impure.

We can manage the some of the ritual by bathing and washing our clothes. If we have made something set apart common where must approach Yehovah with our lips to ask forgiveness.

The dead body impurity (tame met) cannot be resolved until the ashes of the red heifer or chattat (sin offering) are produced for the people. Before that the Levi'im, are cleansed

by the ashes of the chattat offering. Before that the Kohen Gadol must be set apart like Aharon and his sons were.

We know that the teaching of this will happen in the future and were the reason for many of the problem in the past.

Yehez'qel (Ezekiel) 22: 26 Her priests have violated My Teaching: they have profaned what is sacred to Me, they have not distinguished between the sacred and the profane, they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have closed their eyes to My sabbaths. I am profaned in their midst.

Yehez'qel (Ezekiel) 44: 21 No priest shall drink wine when he enters into the inner court. 22 They shall not marry widows or divorced women; they may marry only virgins of the stock of the House of Israel, or widows who are widows of priests.

23 They shall declare to My people what is sacred and what is profane, and inform them what is clean and what is unclean. 24 In lawsuits, too, it is they who shall act as judges; they shall decide them in accordance with My rules. They shall preserve My teachings and My laws regarding all My fixed occasions; and they shall maintain the sanctity of My sabbaths.

25 [A priest] shall not defile himself by entering [a house] where there is a dead person. He shall defile himself only for father or mother, son or daughter, brother or unmarried sister. 26 After he has become clean, seven days shall be counted off for him; 27 and on the day that he reenters the inner court of the Sanctuary to minister in the Sanctuary, he shall present his sin offering—declares the adoni Yehovah.

And how should we pray to be forgiven?

Tehillim (Psalms) 51:

1 For the leader. A psalm of David, 2 when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had come to Bathsheba. 3 be gracious to me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. 4 Wash me completely of my iniquity, and **purify (taherniy)** me of my sin; 5 for I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 6 Against You, You only have I sinned, and done evil in Your eyes; That you might be justified in your speaking, and be clear when you judge. 7 Behold I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin my mother conceived me. 8 Behold You desire truth in the inward parts and in the hidden parts; You teach me wisdom. 9 Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. 10 Cause me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones You have crushed may rejoice. 11 Hide Your face from my sins; blot out all my iniquities. 12 Create a **pure (tahor)** heart for me, O God; renew in me a steadfast spirit. 13 Do not cast me out of Your presence, or take Your holy spirit away from me. 14 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit 15 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, that sinners may return to You. 16 Save me from bloodguilt, O God, God, my

deliverer, that my tongue may sing aloud of your righteousness. 17 O LORD, open my lips, and let my mouth declare Your praise. 18 You do not desire sacrifice or I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offerings; 19 True sacrifice to God is a broken spirit a broken and contrite heart. 20 Do good in your pleasure to Zion build the walls in Jerusalem. 21 Then You will be pleased with sacrifices of righteousness, burnt and whole offerings; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

You see here to uses of the ideas of the hyssop for cleansing with the water, the making of oneself pure to be able to offer sacrifices. The teaching and singing of Righteousness to those who are not is important.

Hosea 14: 2-5

2 Return, O Israel, to Yehovah Eloheykha,  
For you have fallen because of your sin.

3 Take words with you  
And return to Yehovah.

Say to Him:

“Forgive all guilt  
And accept what is good;  
Instead of bulls we will pay  
[The offering of] our lips.

4 Assyria shall not save us,  
No more will we ride on steeds;  
Nor ever again will we call  
Our handiwork our god,  
Since in You alone orphans find pity!”

5 I will heal their affliction,  
Generously will I take them back in love;  
For My anger has turned away from them.

Here you see that instead of sacrifice we are told to bring our lips or prayers.

Yehovah desires us to approach him in a way that is acceptable. One of our punishments was to be in a land that does not keep his ways. We must do our best until that time his ways are fully restored.