

Living the Standard: A Briefing on Holiness and the Nephesh

Executive Summary

This document explores the biblical standards for holiness and service to YHWH. The central theme is that holiness is not just a title, but a "manner of life" that must be seen in our thoughts, our will, and our character. Key findings include:

- **Service Requires Humility:** To serve YHWH, a person must "lower" themselves. True service comes from a place of thinking less of oneself and more of Elohim.
- **The Nephesh (Soul) as a Testimony:** The "Nephesh" is more than just a soul; it is a breathing creature's entire life testimony. One can be physically alive but "dead to holiness" due to unrepented sin.
- **Holiness vs. Uncleaness:** Holiness is a set standard that does not automatically spread through contact. However, uncleaness acts like an epidemic, easily infecting everything and everyone it touches.
- **The "Refreshed" Covenant:** The New Testament is described as *kainos*, meaning "refreshed." It provides new access to YHWH's standards through the justification and blood of Yeshua the Mashiach.
- **A Call to Action:** Believers are called to put off the "old man" of corrupt behavior and put on a "new man" characterized by righteousness, edifying speech, and a spirit of reconciliation.

The Standard of Service and Holiness

To serve YHWH, an individual must operate under a specific "line" of humility. Just as children must be a certain height to ride a carnival ride, a servant of Elohim must be "low" enough to serve. This means putting aside personal feelings or "calls" to focus on how YHWH commanded He be portrayed.

Dwelling Near YHWH

The transition in Leviticus moves from how to *draw* near to YHWH to how to *dwell* near Him.

- **Family First:** The first step in dwelling near YHWH involves proper relations with family. Family must be treated as "set apart" and sacred.
- **The Priest as a Model:** According to Leviticus 21, priests (the sons of Aaron) are held to a high standard to ensure they do not profane the name of Elohim. They are the bridge between the people and YHWH.

Understanding the Nephesh

The Hebrew word *Nephesh* (H5315) is often translated as "soul," but its meaning is much broader. It appears 753 times in the Old Testament and is translated into 63 different English words.

The Three Activities of the Nephesh

The Nephesh represents the "animation" of a person, which is shown through three specific activities:

Activity	Description
Mind	The thoughts a person has.
Will	The determination to act on those thoughts.
Character	The consistency in how those thoughts and actions are embodied.

Life and "Dead Works"

A Nephesh is defined by the "breath of life" and the "odor" it exhales. While YHWH gives the first breath, humans are responsible for every breath that follows.

- **The Odor of Existence:** Every breath adds to the testimony of a person's life. A person can be "sweet-smelling" or "corpse-smelling."
- **Living Death:** It is possible to draw breath and still be "dead in trespasses." These "zombie works" can infect a family, workplace, or community.
- **Muwt (H4191):** This refers to dying literally or figuratively. It includes dying prematurely through the neglect of wise moral conduct.

The Epidemic of Uncleaness

A critical lesson from Haggai 2:10-18 is that holiness is a standard, but uncleanness is an epidemic.

1. **Contact with Holiness:** If a person carries "holy meat" in their clothing and touches other food, that food does *not* become holy. Holiness is a specific state of being set apart by YHWH.
2. **Contact with Uncleaness:** If a person who is unclean touches something, that object *becomes* unclean.
3. **The Conclusion:** Carrying around "holy things" in the mind does not make a person holy. Holiness must be enacted. Without action, even the offerings of a nation can become unclean, leading to a loss of YHWH's blessing.

The Manner of Life (Anastrophe)

In the Greek scriptures, the word often translated as "conversation" (G391) actually means "manner of life," behavior, or conduct.

- **More than Words:** Being a believer is not about sounding good; it is about how one lives.
- **The Example:** As seen in 1 Timothy 4:12, believers are to be examples in word, manner of life, charity, spirit, faith, and purity.

- **The Uninitiated:** Those who do not know YHWH's laws (the uninitiated) should be able to behold "good works" and glorify YHWH because of a believer's consistent character.

The Refreshed Covenant

The "New Testament" is described using the Greek word *kainos*, which means "fresh" or "refreshed."

- **Kainos vs. Neos:** It is not *neos* (new in age, like a baby) but *kainos* (refreshed).
- **Restoration:** The covenant is refreshed because believers now have access to it through Yeshua. He is the mediator who redeems transgressions committed under the first testament.
- **Justification:** Through the blood of Yeshua, believers are declared "justified" (*dikaos*). This is a legal declaration that enables a person to approach YHWH.

Manifesting the Kingdom

Believers are called to a "Ministry of Reconciliation." This involves a total change of the "old man" for the "new man."

Practical Changes in Character

According to Ephesians 4, "putting on the new man" requires specific actions:

- **Lying:** Replace lying with speaking truth to neighbors.
- **Anger:** "Be angry and sin not." Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, as staying angry gives the enemy a foothold to resurrect "dead works."
- **Stealing:** It is not enough to stop stealing. One must work with their hands to have something to *give* to those in need.
- **Communication:** No "corrupt communication" should leave the mouth. Instead, speech should be used to "edify" and "minister grace" to listeners.

The Finality of State

A warning is found in Revelation 22:11. There comes a time when a person's state becomes final: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still... he that is holy, let him be holy still." This suggests that if one continues to choose "filthy" works, eventually, they may lose the ability to change their "odor" before their final breath.

Conclusion

The standard for the people of YHWH is to live as "the redeemed," not the "re-dead." This requires an ongoing pursuit of righteousness as defined by YHWH's laws (*nomos*) and walked out in the spirit of His word (*logos*). Believers must bring every thought into captivity to Yeshua, ensuring that their mind, will, and character all witness to the life of Elohim.