

Learning for Life Class – for April 26

Bible Words and Concepts 3

It might be said that reading the Bible in translation is a bit like shaking hands in the dark with mitts on. We are making genuine contact with the inspired text but often remain somewhat culturally insulated from the contexts and intentions of its composition. To better grasp what the biblical authors intend we should try to wear the thinnest gloves possible (our own presuppositions) and gain as much light as we can to discern the face and posture of those authors (their own cultural and linguistic contexts).

As we have seen in the first two classes, Biblical words often have richer meanings and broader significances than can be translated by any one English word. This week we will consider the Hebrew words commonly translated: **clean and unclean or purity and impurity**. In this case, the challenge is not just expanding the meanings of those words but discovering that they also refer to a cultural concept, attitude and practice that has no exact equivalent in English.



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