

# LEVITICUS 15:1- 33

## OUTLINE

- Uncleaness in Men (v. 1–18)
  - Abnormal Discharges (v. 1-15)
  - Normal Discharges (v. 16-18)
- Uncleaness in Women (v. 19–30)
  - Menstruation (v. 19-24)
  - Chronic/Abnormal Bleeding (v. 25-30)

## SCRIPTURE

### Uncleaness in Men (v. 1-18)

**v. 1-12** *And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean. And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge—whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness. Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. And whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. He who sits on anything on which he who has the discharge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **If he who has the discharge spits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.** Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean. Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until evening. He who carries any of those things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And whomever the one who has the discharge touches, and has not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. The vessel of earth that he who has the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.*

- Most commentators agree that this unclean discharge is due to a disease of some sort, possibly an STD, and is the result of sinful relations.
- Notice that he who is clean can be made unclean by touching a diseased person or being spit upon by them. This was reversed in Christ. He was the only clean person that could touch an unclean person (Luke 5:12-14) or “spit” on them (Mk. 7:33, 8:23, Jn. 9:6) and not only avoid uncleanness but also make them clean themselves. ~ David Guzik (2021 *The Enduring Word Bible Commentary*)

**v. 13-15** *“And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in **running water**; then he shall be clean. On the eighth day he shall take for himself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and give them to the priest. Then the priest shall offer them, the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD because of his discharge.”*

- “The blood of the sacrifice erases the guilt of sin, and the living water erases the stain of sin.” ~ McGee
- Again, this phrase “running water” should be translated as “living water”.
  - Rev. 7:17 says, “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of ***living water***...” We will be forever free of sin!

- Compared to Leprosy

- Leprosy was very obvious, whereas these issues could be kept secret for a lifetime. Similar to overt sins v. hidden sins.
- Leprosy really isn't as contagious as was once thought, whereas these types of diseases (STD's) are highly contagious and can decimate populations. Secret sins of the heart are way more dangerous! If you aren't shouting "unclean" people will not avoid you, which means they can be influenced by you.
  - This was the condition the world was in before God sent the Flood: "*The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*" Genesis 6:5
- People wonder why God includes these passages in Scripture, but we have to remember that these physical issues can be used as vivid metaphors for sin. God can teach us by shedding light and holiness on dark and immoral issues.
  - **Romans 15:4** – "*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.*" NIV

**v. 16-18** "*If any man has an emission of seed, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening. And any garment and any leather on which there is seed, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening. Also, when a woman lies with a man, and there is an emission of seed, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.*"

- By God declaring normal discharges from sexual activity as ceremonially "unclean", He is not condemning it completely. He is creating a distinction between it and what took place in the tabernacle. In the pagan world, sexual activity often took place in the temples. Nothing ceremonially unclean could come into the tabernacle or the temple of the Israelite God, thus ensuring that the pagan sexual rituals of worship would never be allowed to blend into the worship of the God of Moses. ~ David Guzik
- Some people try to take this passage and use it to prove that God deems sex, even within the confines of a holy marriage, impure or defiling. This is not the case.
- Wiersbe writes, "God created sex for pleasure as well as for procreation, but pleasure that isn't disciplined soon becomes bondage and then torture. Unmarried people must exercise self-control lest they commit fornication and invite the judgment of God (Heb. 13:4), but married people also need self-control lest they take advantage of one another and leave God out of their most intimate relationship. God created sex, and wise is the person who permits the Creator to make the rules." (p. 79)

### Uncleanness in Women (v. 19-30)

**v. 19-24** "*If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean. Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening...*

*...If anything is on her bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.”*

- This is referring to a woman’s normal period. Remember, this is not God calling a woman morally unclean. It requires a person to be set apart simply to avoid contaminating others with a bodily fluid.
- Also, to call a man unclean may encourage him to avoid his wife and give her a break, which would be welcome if she had any co-morbid disorders that make periods difficult.
- Ezekiel 18:6 even commends a man who doesn’t go near a menstruous woman while Lev. 20:18 punishes a man who does.
- The phrase “set apart” just means giving her a space of her own for the week, not that she gets kicked out of the camp.

**v. 25-30** *“If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean. Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then the priest shall offer the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness.”*

- Consider the woman with the 12-year flow of blood (Matthew 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43) that Jesus heals in the Gospels. This was again a case where someone who was unclean and not supposed to be touched, became clean by touching Jesus.
  - **Mt. 9:20-22** — *“And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, ‘If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.’”* But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, *“Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.”* And the woman was made well from that hour.
  - **Mark 5:25-34** — *“Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. For she said, ‘If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.’”* Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, *“Who touched My clothes?”* But His disciples said to Him, *“You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”* And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, *“Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”*
  - **Luke 8:43-48** — *“Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, ‘Who touched Me?’”* When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, *“Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”* But Jesus said, *“Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”* Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, *“Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”*

### Conclusion (v. 31-33)

**v. 31-33** *“Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is among them. This is the law for one who has a discharge ... either man or woman, and for him who lies with her who is unclean.’ ”*

- If these passages are to be taken as a metaphor for sin, it makes sense that God would emphasize that being unclean can defile His dwelling place and that’s why He takes it so seriously. We are His dwelling place! Last week we talked about how the heart is Christ’s home and we need to treat it as such.
- **1 Cor. 3:16-17** says, *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”*
- It’s not about us, it’s about Him. Secret sin gets in the way of glorifying God. In fact, if you spend your life “glorifying Him” to the world and then a secret sin comes out, it can do so much more damage than those who live overtly and don’t claim to be His.
- Jesus calls these people hypocrites in Matthew 15. He says, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”
- Being outwardly “clean” does not matter if you are inwardly defiled. Like the entrails and legs of the sacrifices, both your heart and walk need to be washed.

### DISCUSSION

1. Why is Jesus unique (regarding being unclean and clean)?
2. Paul was an expert on the Law! In Romans 15, he rightfully stated that it can still teach us today. Think about some universal truths that can be discerned about sin from this chapter, as well as the chapters on leprosy, and list them below:
3. How did God set apart the worship of His people from the pagan worship that surrounded them throughout history?
4. Consider the woman with the 12-year flow of blood. What hope can we have through reading her story in Scripture?
5. Why is it so important that we keep our hearts and bodies free from sin?