
LEVITICUS 15:1 The LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,

Laws concerning uncleanness of men, Lev 15:1-12. Mode of cleansing, Lev 15:13-15. Of uncleanness, accidental and casual, Lev 15:16-18. Laws concerning the uncleanness of women, vv. 10-27. Mode of cleansing, Lev 15:28-30. Recapitulation of the ordinances relative to the preceding cases, Lev 15:31-33.

LEVITICUS 15:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and tell them, 'When any man has a discharge from his body, because of his discharge he is unclean.

Verse 2

When any man hath a running issue - The cases of natural uncleanness, both of men and women, mentioned in this chapter, taken in a theological point of view, are not of such importance to us as to render a particular description necessary, the letter of the text being, in general, plain enough. The disease mentioned in the former part of this chapter appears to some to have been either the consequence of a very bad infection, or of some criminal indulgence; for they find that it might be communicated in a variety of ways, which they imagine are here distinctly specified. On this ground the person was declared unclean, and all commerce and connection with him strictly forbidden. The Septuagint version renders *בזבז* hazzab, the man with the issue, by *ὁ γονορροῦς*, the man with a gonorrhoea, no less than nine times in this chapter; and that it means what in the present day is commonly understood by that disorder, taken not only in its mild but in its worst sense, they think there is little room to doubt. Hence they infer that a disease which is supposed to be comparatively recent in Europe, has existed almost from time immemorial in the Asiatic countries; that it ever has been, in certain measures, what it is now; and that it ever must be the effect of sensual indulgence, and illicit and extravagant intercourse between the sexes. The disgraceful disorder referred to here is a foul blot which the justice of God in the course of providence has made in general the inseparable consequent of these criminal indulgences, and serves in some measure to correct and restrain the vice itself. In countries where public prostitution was permitted, where it was even a religious ceremony among those who were idolaters, this disease must necessarily have been frequent and prevalent. When the pollutions and libertinism of former times are considered, it seems rather strange that medical men should have adopted the opinion, and consumed so much time in endeavoring to prove it, viz., that the disease is modern. It must have existed, in certain measures, ever since prostitution prevailed in the world; and this has been in every nation of the earth from its earliest era. That the Israelites might have received it from the Egyptians, and that it must, through the Baal-peor and Ashteroth abominations which they learned and practiced, have prevailed among the Moabites, etc., there can be little reason to doubt. Supposing this disease to be at all hinted at here, the laws and ordinances enjoined were at once wisely and graciously calculated to remove and prevent it. By contact, contagion of every kind is readily communicated; and to keep the whole from the diseased must be essential to the check and eradication of a contagious disorder. This was the wise and grand object of this enlightened Legislator in the ordinances which he lays down in this chapter. I grant, however, that it was probably of a milder kind in ancient times; that it has gained strength and virulence by continuance; and that, associated with some foreign

causes, it became greatly exacerbated in Europe about 1493, the time in which some have supposed it first began to exist, though there are strong evidences of it in this country ever since the eleventh century.

LEVITICUS 15:3 This shall be his uncleanness in his discharge: whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body has stopped from his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

LEVITICUS 15:4 "Every bed whereon he who has the discharge lies shall be unclean; and everything he sits on shall be unclean.

LEVITICUS 15:5 Whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:6 He who sits on anything whereon the man who has the discharge sat shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:7 "He who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:8 "If he who has the discharge spits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:9 "Whatever saddle he who has the discharge rides on shall be unclean.

LEVITICUS 15:10 Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening. He who carries those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:11 "Whoever he who has the discharge touches, without having rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

Verse 11

And whomsoever he toucheth - Here we find that the saliva, sitting on the same seat, lying on the same bed, riding on the same saddle, or simple contact, was sufficient to render the person unclean, meaning, possibly, in certain cases, to communicate the disorder; and it is well known that in all these ways the contagion of this disorder may be communicated. Is it not even possible that the effluvia from the body of an infected person may be the means of communicating the disease? Sydenham expressly says that it may be communicated by lactation, handling, the saliva, sweat, and by the breath itself, as well as by those grosser means of which there is no question. But the term unclean, in this and the following cases, is generally understood in a mere legal sense, the rendering a person unfit for sacred ordinances. And as there was a mild kind of gonorrhoea that was brought on by excessive fatigue and the like, it may be that kind only which the law has in view in the above ordinances.

LEVITICUS 15:12 "The earthen vessel, which he who has the discharge touches, shall be broken; and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

LEVITICUS 15:13 "When he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes; and he shall bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.

LEVITICUS 15:14 "On the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD to the door of the Tent of Meeting, and give them to the priest:

LEVITICUS 15:15 and the priest shall offer them, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. The priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge.

LEVITICUS 15:16 "If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall bathe all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:17 Every garment, and every skin, whereon the semen is, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:18 If a man lies with a woman and there is an emission of semen, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the evening.

Verse 18

They shall both bathe themselves - What a wonderful tendency had these ordinances to prevent all excesses! The pains which such persons must take, the separations which they must observe, and the privations which, in consequence, they must be exposed to in the way of commerce, traffic, etc., would prevent them from making an unlawful use of lawful things.

LEVITICUS 15:19 "If a woman has a discharge, and her discharge in her flesh is blood, she shall be in her impurity seven days: and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:20 "Everything that she lies on in her impurity shall be unclean. Everything also that she sits on shall be unclean.

LEVITICUS 15:21 Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:22 Whoever touches anything that she sits on shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:23 If it is on the bed, or on anything whereon she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:24 "If any man lies with her, and her monthly flow is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed whereon he lies shall be unclean.

Verse 24

The common sense of all mankind has led them to avoid the gross impropriety referred to in this verse - and it has been a general opinion, that off-spring obtained in this way has been infected with

leprous, scrofulous, and other deeply radicated diseases, from which they and their posterity have been scarcely ever freed. In Lev 20:18, persons guilty of this are condemned to death; here only to a seven days' separation; because, in the former case, Moses speaks of the act when both the man and woman were acquainted with the situation: in the latter, he speaks of a case where the circumstance was not known till afterwards; at least, so it appears these two places should be understood, so as to be reconciled.

LEVITICUS 15:25 ““If a woman has a discharge of her blood many days not in the time of her period, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her period; all the days of the discharge of her uncleanness shall be as in the days of her period: she is unclean.

LEVITICUS 15:26 Every bed whereon she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her period: and everything whereon she sits shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her period.

LEVITICUS 15:27 Whoever touches these things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

LEVITICUS 15:28 ““But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.

LEVITICUS 15:29 On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the Tent of Meeting.

Verse 29

Two turtles, or two young pigeons - In all these cases moral pollution was ever considered as being less or more present, as even such infirmities sprang from the original defection of man. On these accounts sacrifices must be offered; and in the case of the woman, one of the birds above mentioned must be sacrificed as a sin-offering, the other as a burnt-offering, Lev 15:30.

LEVITICUS 15:30 The priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the uncleanness of her discharge.

LEVITICUS 15:31 ““Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, so they will not die in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is in their midst.””

Verse 31

Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness - By this separation the cause became less frequent, and the contagion, if it did exist, was prevented from spreading. So pest-houses and fever-wards are constructed for the purpose of separating the infected from the sound; and thus contagion is lessened, and its diffusion prevented.

That they die not - That life may be prolonged by these prudential cares; and that he who is morally and legally unclean, may not presume to enter into the tabernacle of God till purified, lest he provoke Divine justice to consume him, while attempting to worship with a polluted mind and impure hands.

1. How unpromising and how forbidding, at the first view, is this chapter! and yet how full of wise, humane, and moral regulations, manifesting at once the wisdom and kindness of the great Legislator! Every word of God is pure in itself, and of great importance to us. He who cannot derive instruction from the chapter before him, and be led by a proper consideration of its contents to adore the wisdom and goodness of God, must have either a very stupid or a very vitiated mind.

2. In all these ordinances we may plainly see that God has purity of heart continually in view - that the soul may be holy, he cuts off the occasions of sin; and that men may be obliged to keep within due bounds, and possess their vessels in sanctification and honor, he hedges up their way with briars and thorns, and renders transgression painful, shameful, and expensive.

3. Preventing grace is not less necessary than that which saves and which preserves. These three chapters, avoided and neglected by most, contain lessons of instruction for all; and though many things contained in them belong exclusively to the Jewish people as to the letter, yet in their spirit and gracious design they form a part of those revealed things which are for us and for our children; and although they cannot be made the subject of public oral instruction, yet they are highly necessary to be known, and hence the advantage of reading the Scriptures in regular order in private.

May we read so as to understand, and practice what we know, that, being wise unto salvation, we may walk as children of the light and of the day, in whom there shall be no occasion of stumbling!

LEVITICUS 15:32 This is the law of him who has a discharge, and of him who has an emission of semen, so that he is unclean thereby;

LEVITICUS 15:33 and of her who has her period, and of a man or woman who has a discharge, and of him who lies with her who is unclean.
