

Laws about Bodily Discharges

Leviticus 15

Male discharges

Female discharges

Male discharges

Leviticus 15:1–2 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean.

Leviticus 15:3 And this is the law of his uncleanness for a discharge: whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is blocked up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

Abnormal persistent discharge from the sexual organ

Leviticus 15:4 Every bed on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean.

Don't touch

Leviticus 15:5–7 And anyone who touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. ⁶ And whoever sits on anything on which the one with the discharge has sat shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. ⁷ And whoever touches the body of the one with the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Leviticus 15:8 And if the one with the discharge spits on someone who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Leviticus 15:9–10 And any saddle on which the one with the discharge rides shall be unclean. ¹⁰ And whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening. And whoever carries such things shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Wash your hands

Leviticus 15:11 Anyone whom the one with the discharge touches without having rinsed his hands in water shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Cookware

Leviticus 15:12 And an earthenware vessel that the one with the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

In 6:28 a vessel was broken so that holiness could not be transferred to a person who is not a priest. Here the vessel is broken so that uncleanness could not be transferred to a person.

Making Atonement

Leviticus 15:13–15 “And when the one with a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes. And he shall bathe his body in fresh water and shall be clean. ¹⁴And on the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. ¹⁵And the priest shall use them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge.

Semen

Leviticus 15:16–18 “If a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water and be unclean until the evening. ¹⁷And every garment and every skin on which the semen comes shall be washed with water and be unclean until the evening. ¹⁸If a man lies with a woman and has an emission of semen, both of them shall bathe themselves in water and be unclean until the evening.

Female discharges

Leviticus 15:19 “When a woman has a discharge, and the discharge in her body is blood, she shall be in her menstrual impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening.

Leviticus 15:20 And everything on which she lies during her menstrual impurity shall be unclean. Everything also on which she sits shall be unclean.

Don't touch

Leviticus 15:21–23 And whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. ²²And whoever touches anything on which she sits shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean

until the evening. ²³ Whether it is the bed or anything on which she sits, when he touches it he shall be unclean until the evening.

Leviticus 15:24 And if any man lies with her and her menstrual impurity comes upon him, he shall be unclean seven days, and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

Making Atonement

Leviticus 15:28–30 But if she is cleansed of her discharge, she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. ²⁹ And on the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting. ³⁰ And the priest shall use one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for her unclean discharge.

Leviticus 15:31–33 “Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.” ³² This is the law for him who has a discharge and for him who has an emission of semen, becoming unclean thereby; ³³ also for her who is unwell with her menstrual impurity, that is, for anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and for the man who lies with a woman who is unclean.

Purpose

The secret flow of sin from the natural heart typified in the running issue- Andrew Bonar

Holiness before the Lord

Voluntary admission

Allowed in the camp

No visible inspection

Can transmit uncleanness

Unclean till sundown

Wash with water and be cleansed

Lowest cost offering

Leviticus 15:31 “Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.”

Transmitting of uncleanness

They had to be honest or they would die before the Lord. It would also defile the Tent of Meeting. Everything they touched would be unclean. The priest, the altar and anyone else who touched the unclean person or sacrifice would be unclean till evening. The altar would be unclean and then have to be purified. Exodus 29:37 tells us it is a seven day process to cleans the altar.

Communal holiness

Separate them from pagan religions

Cult prostitution and prostitution

Curb immorality

the rules about bodily discharges give symbolic expression to the laws barring intermarriage with the Canaanites and the prohibitions against foreign customs and religion, which conflicted with Israel's special status as the one elect and holy nation.

Gordon J. Wenham, [The Book of Leviticus](#), The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), 223.

Leviticus 19:2 “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

