

## Leviticus 12

1-4-00

*“Postnatal uncleanness!”*

### 1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. Last week we talked about clean & unclean **food**. This chapter deals with the 2<sup>nd</sup> aspect of “uncleanness”...that of **childbirth**.
- 1.2. The normal procedure for “uncleanness” was for them to wash themselves & their clothing & remain outside the camp until evening.
  - 1.2.1. With some kinds of defilement, **additional measures** were necessary.
  - 1.2.2. Like **childbirth** in this Chaptr, & **infectious sores** or **diseases** in ch13-15.
- 1.3. The entire chapter, brief as it is, shows God’s loving concern for “the family”. Especially mother & child.

### 2. **POSTNATAL UNCLEANNESS! (1-5)**

- 2.1. The theme of this chapter is not personal holiness but ceremonial purification for the mother.
- 2.2. So, this does **not** teach that **human sexuality** is “dirty”, or that **pregnancy** is defiling, or that **babies** themselves are impure.
  - 2.2.1. **Human Sexuality** - Our 1<sup>st</sup> parents were told to “**be fruitful & multiply**.” (given in Eden, & right after the flood; **Gen.1:28; 9:1**)
    - 2.2.1.1. One whole book of the bible(S.of Sol.) is given over to, & thus affirms, intimate relations as God’s idea & His gift to mankind.
  - 2.2.2. **Pregnancy & Babies** – In spite of contemporary negative attitudes toward children, Scripture presents children as  blessings from God.
    - 2.2.2.1. (NIV) **Ps.113:9** “He settles the barren woman in her home **as a happy mother of children**. Praise the LORD.”
    - 2.2.2.2. **Ps.127:3-5** “Behold, children are a **heritage** from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a **reward**. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth. **Happy** is the man who has his quiver full of them;”

- 2.2.2.3. **Prov.17:6** “Children's children are the **crown** of old men, And the **glory** of children is their father.”
- 2.2.2.4. **Mt.19:14** “But Jesus said, “Let the little **children** come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
- 2.2.3. So, **fruitfulness** was seen as God’s favor, & **barrenness** considered a **reproach**.
- 2.2.3.1. **Gen.30:22-24** “Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. And she conceived and bore a son, and said, “**God has taken away my reproach.**” So she called his name Joseph,…”
- 2.2.4. The **mother** was “**ceremonially unclean**” for a time, not because of the **child**, but because of the **blood & fluids** associated w/childbirth.
- 2.2.4.1. It’s because sinful man begets sinful man!
- 2.2.5. So, she was “unclean” for **7 days**(w/male), then she could resume normal activities, except she wasn’t permitted to enter the **Sanctuary** or **touch any hallowed thing** for **40 days**.
- 2.2.6. “**unclean**” can also mean “*not to be touched*”. So this could actually be telling the husbands to be **gentle & considerate** to his wife.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2.6.1. There are periods when a women is in her monthly cycle or after she has given birth when the husband **must** not force himself upon his wife.
- 2.2.6.2. “It is possible, unfortunately, for a man to **rape** his wife.”
- 2.2.6.2.1. Such a **debased** relationship is wholly excluded here.
- 2.2.6.3. What is sought is a relationship of **tenderness**, of **thoughtfulness**, & of **reverence** by the one for the other.
- 2.2.6.4. The husband **must** give his wife ample time to recover from the major & traumatic experience of childbirth which she has undergone.
- 2.3. Time differences between a boy(40 days) & a girl(80 days)?
- 2.3.1. **No, not degrees** of “uncleanness”. (girls aren’t doubly dirty!)
- 2.3.2. **Perhaps** health reasons?
- 2.3.3. **Perhaps** a longer time of “bonding” with her daughter is needed?
- 2.3.4. **Perhaps** God was given the mother extra time to care for her daughter in a masculine society that preferred sons.
- 2.3.5. **Perhaps** God was giving her time to recuperate before her next pregnancy.
- 2.3.5.1. A husband to whom she bore a daughter might be anxious to “try again” for a son.
- 2.3.6. **Perhaps** relates to the 40 years of cleansing that Israel underwent before she could enter the Holy Land?
- 2.3.7. **The text doesn’t say, so we can only speculate!**

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<sup>1</sup> Barclay

- 2.4. The Mosaic Law recognized the “sanctity of marriage” as divinely ordained.

### 3. SACRIFICES! (6-8)

- 3.1. **Burnt Offering** – A lamb.
- 3.2. **Sin Offering** – A turtle dove, or pigeon.
- 3.2.1. In the case of the **poor**, a 2<sup>nd</sup> turtle dove or pigeon was acceptable.
- 3.2.2. **See Lk.2:22-24**
- 3.2.2.1. Jesus was obviously born into a family of poverty.
- 3.2.2.2. **2 Cor.8:9** “...for your sakes He became **poor**, that you through His poverty might become **rich**.”
- 3.2.2.3. **Ex.13:2** “**Consecrate** to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.”
- 3.2.2.4. **Consecrate** = The word {*kadash*} is to consecrate, separate, and set apart a person or thing from all common or secular purposes to some religious use; because everything offered or consecrated to God was separated from all earthly uses.”
- 3.3. The **Burnt offering** symbolized her dedication to God as she returned to her normal life. - The **Sin offering** took care of the defilement involved in the birth process.
- 3.4. It also reminded them that every child, no matter how beautiful or delightful he or she might be, is born in sin & must one day trust the Lord for Salvation.
- 3.4.1. **Ps.51:5** “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in **sin** my mother **conceived me**.”
- 3.4.2. **Ps.58:3** “**The wicked are estranged from the womb**; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.”
- 3.4.3. **Rom.5:12** “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death **spread to all men**, because **all sinned**;”

### 4. CIRCUMCISION! (3)

- 4.1. Circumcision was usually done in the parents’ home, and was also the occasion when the child was officially named.

- 4.2. This rite was an external sign indicating that a covenant relationship had been established between the individual & the Lord, w/all the privileges & responsibilities entailed by such relationship. (from Gen.17:10-14)
- 4.2.1. The operation was also symbolized the “**spiritual surgery**” that God wants to perform on the **human heart**.
- 4.2.1.1. **Deut.10:16** “Therefore circumcise the foreskin **of your heart**, and be stiff-necked no longer.”
- 4.2.1.2. **Deut.30:6** “And the LORD your God will circumcise **your heart** and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. (also Jer.4:4)
- 4.2.2. **Note this isn’t NT application from Deut!**
- 4.2.3. Unfortunately they ignored the **spiritual** principle of the ceremony, & considered the **physical** operation alone!
- 4.2.3.1. **Q:** Isn’t that what happens when any **spiritual** application is given to a **physical** event? People like leaning heavy on the **physical** event alone!
- 4.2.3.2. **Like Baptism** - when it is promoted as bringing about salvation itself, that “it” washes away sins.
- 4.2.3.2.1. Thus many people will be Baptized for “fire insurance!”
- 4.2.3.2.2. **Mt.3:7-9** “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? “Therefore **bear fruits worthy of repentance**, “and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.”
- 4.2.3.3. **Like Communion** - when it is taught as actually becoming the body & blood of our Lord.
- 4.2.3.4. **Aristotle** taught, in simple terms, that every object(entity) is made up of *substance & accidents*.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.2.3.5. **The Substance** = The deepest essence, or “stuff” of a thing.
- 4.2.3.6. **The Accidents** = The outward surface appearance of an object.
- 4.2.3.7. The 2 were normally inseparable, taught Aristotle, for something to have the Substance of one thing, & the Accidents of another, would require a **miracle**(*thus the miracle of transubstantiation*).

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<sup>2</sup> R.C.Sproul; pg.235; Essentials of the Christian Faith

- 4.2.3.7.1. The bread & wine thus keeping the “**Accidents**” of bread & wine, yet its very “**Substance**” being the body & blood of Jesus.
- 4.2.3.8. **One argument** - Since “the Mass” is celebrated in different parts of the world, at the same time, can the body & blood of Jesus, which belong to His **humanity**, not to His **deity**, be at more than 1 place at a time?
- 4.2.3.8.1. His **human nature** is localized in heaven (**sitting at the right hand of the Father**). His **Divine nature** still has power of omnipresence.
- 4.2.3.9. **Q:** So, how would this be possible?
- 4.2.4. **People like leaning heavy on the physical event alone!**
- 4.2.5. So **physical Circumcision** was done often times w/o the spiritual aspect of the ceremony...**see Rom.2:25-29.**

## 5. **Communion:**

5.1.