

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Leviticus 15: 01–33

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Leviticus chapter 15. We will read verses 15:01-33 today.

Leviticus chapters 1 to 10 reveal the five basic offerings that must be presented when coming before God and also establish the priestly system of service. When the priests begin to fulfill their duties, the first thing God requires them to do is to help people remove the uncleanness from their lives. Therefore, from Leviticus chapters 11 to 15, it is revealed that four types of uncleanness must be dealt with. In this way, when it comes to Leviticus chapter 16, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest can bear the people of Israel and come into the Most Holy Place to meet with God.

Therefore, we see that God's revelation is progressive, and in chapters 11 to 15, what is revealed concerns four types of uncleanness in daily life. The first type, mentioned in chapter 11, tells us about uncleanness in diet. This involves all kinds of things that people come into contact with in their daily lives; unclean things must not be touched. The second, in chapter 12, speaks of uncleanness in birth. This refers to how man's source is unclean because of the sin of the first ancestors, which made human birth unclean. It is only through the ordinances of purification and the offerings that this uncleanness can be removed.

The third type of uncleanness is found in chapters 13 and 14, the uncleanness of leprosy. This represents the disobedience to God's will within man, which outwardly manifests as leprosy. It damages the beautiful image in which God originally created man. Leprosy is also highly contagious, so those who have leprosy can no longer enjoy living among God's people. They must be isolated outside the camp until the leprosy is healed. Afterward, they must go through the purification

ordinances, and finally, after offering sacrifices, they can be restored to fellowship with God and with God's people.

The fourth type of uncleanness is found in chapter 15, which speaks of the uncleanness of a discharge. Discharges are different from leprosy; leprosy is contagious, while discharges are not. Leprosy is visible to others, but only the person with a discharge knows about it. A person with leprosy must be isolated outside the camp, but a person with a discharge does not need to go outside the camp. However, the discharge is still unclean, and purification ordinances must be followed in order to enjoy fellowship with God and intimate fellowship with God's people.

So, what exactly is a discharge? Some discharges are quite clear, such as a man's nocturnal emission and a woman's menstrual period, which are normal physiological responses. There are also others that are not as certain; the English translation often uses the word "discharge," which refers to something expelled or leaked out. As for the cause or from which organ it is expelled, the Bible does not provide further explanation. Of course, some Bible commentators offer their own interpretations, but on this point, I do not wish to delve further. If any saints are interested and have sufficient knowledge of physiology, they can explore this in greater detail. I follow the common interpretation among most commentators, using the term "discharge" to represent any abnormal secretion or expulsion, such as diarrhea, hemorrhoids, or a flow of blood.

Leviticus dedicates an entire chapter, with 33 verses, to address discharges, and we are covering this topic in just one day, so it is highly condensed. Therefore, I will use a different approach to read this chapter, which will also help the saints see another method of interpretation. The authors of the Hebrew text often used symmetrical structures and wrote with a highly logical mindset. If we follow the author's logic, we can uncover the central thought they aim to express. This chapter serves as a perfect example of this method.

From the grammatical structure, this chapter is symmetrical, with well-matched parallelism, and the central verse is verse 18, which speaks about the union of man

and woman. When discussing the structure of this chapter, the saints might find it helpful to write it down with a pen. This will give a clear understanding of the outline and structure of the chapter, allowing everyone to personally experience the completeness of Hebrew writing. Just as reading poetry reveals the beauty of the Chinese language, only when you understand the structure of Hebrew writing can you also see the beauty of the Hebrew language.

As we have mentioned, the central verse is verse 18, which speaks about the union of man and woman. Verse 18 divides the passage into two halves. First, we set aside verse 1, which serves as the introduction for the entire chapter, saying, "The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron." Then we also set aside the final three verses, 31 to 33, which serve as the conclusion, discussing the laws regarding the cleanliness and uncleanness of discharges to prevent the Israelites from defiling God's tabernacle. Using verse 18 as the dividing point, verses 2 to 17 focus on the man's discharge, while the second half, from verses 19 to 30, addresses the woman's discharge.

Next, we extend outward from the center. Verse 18, which speaks about the union of man and woman, is the center. Looking forward to verses 16 and 17, this section speaks only about a man's nocturnal emission, which is a normal discharge from the male reproductive organ. If we look ahead, verses 19 to 24 discuss a woman's menstrual period, which is also a normal discharge related to the female reproductive organ. Moving a little further from the center, verses 2 to 15 describe abnormal discharges in men and the process of purification and offerings required for cleansing.

If we look ahead, verses 25 to 30 address the abnormal discharges in women and the processes for their purification and offerings. This gives us a complete understanding of the structure of this chapter. If you write it down and clearly separate the different levels, you will see that the structure is very well-organized and symmetrical. In our reading today, we will start from the central thought and follow the author's logic, extending outward from the center. We will examine both the male and female aspects simultaneously, with the central verse being verse 18.

Verse 18: “Also, when a woman lies with a man, and there is an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.”

When it comes to the union of man and woman, we must recognize that marriage was established by God before the fall of man. This is seen in Genesis 2:24-25: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Here, we see that the union of husband and wife as one flesh is pleasing to God and is essential to fulfilling God's commission. God commanded humanity to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. So, why does this union later become unclean?

The key lies in verse 25 of chapter 2, where Adam and Eve were both naked and felt no shame because their bodies were originally created in the image of God—beautiful and glorious, without any reason for shame. However, when Adam and Eve sinned by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the first thing they realized was that they were naked, and this awareness brought them shame. Consequently, they immediately sewed fig leaves together and made themselves cloths to cover their shame.

After they discerned good and evil, the second thing they realized was that they were wrong, and they began to hide from God. We often question whether knowing good and evil is a bad thing. With the knowledge of good and evil comes the ability to compare, leading to distinctions between the noble and the base. Humanity is created, and God is the Creator. After gaining the knowledge of good and evil, people began to fear God and hide from Him. Before having this knowledge, there was only good and no evil. God is the source of life for humanity, and the relationship between God and humans is like that between parents and children—rooted entirely in life and characterized by love.

However, with the knowledge of good and evil, comparisons began to emerge. At this point, the sense of shame became necessary, as it helps individuals discern between good and evil. Because of this, the union of man and woman became impure, resulting in uncleanness. Although humanity fell, God's plan for

humanity—to manifest His glory through them and for them to manage all He has created—remained unchanged. Thus, even after the fall and the flood, God still commanded Noah and his sons in Genesis 9:7, "And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it." Notice that God did not say to fill the earth but to be fruitful and multiply. This indicates that after the fall, some places became uninhabitable, which is a different topic that we will not delve into today.

We see that even after the fall, the union of man and woman, resulting in offspring, is still blessed by God. Although it is considered unclean, the process of dealing with this uncleanness is relatively straightforward: one simply needs to remain unclean until evening and then wash with water to become clean again. This addresses the central thought regarding the matter of the union of man and woman. Next, we will expand outward from the center and first examine the normal discharges related to the reproductive organs, starting with men.

Verse 16-17: "If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening. And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening."

A seminal emission refers to the normal discharge of a man's sperm, which does not necessarily occur during sleep. In this case, he becomes unclean until evening and can become clean again by washing his entire body with water. Any clothing, bedding, or leather items that have been soiled by his semen also remain unclean until evening, but can be made clean by washing with water. Therefore, the process of achieving cleanliness is relatively straightforward. Now, let's examine the discharges related to the reproductive organs of women.

Verse 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 [d]unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean."

From a physiological perspective, after a woman's egg matures, the uterine lining thickens in preparation for pregnancy. If the egg is not fertilized, this thickened tissue is expelled from the body, resulting in menstrual blood, commonly known as a woman's menstrual period, which typically occurs once a month. The duration of menstruation is usually longer, making her unclean for seven days during this time. Throughout this period, any items she lies on or sits on are also considered unclean.

Anyone who touches her or any items she lies on, such as a bed or chair, becomes unclean. Those who come into contact with an unclean person must remain unclean until evening; however, they can become clean again by washing their body and clothes. If a man has relations with a woman during her menstrual period, he will also be unclean for seven days, just like the menstruating woman. Due to physiological reasons, a woman is considered unclean for a longer duration during her menstrual period, and the range of items that become unclean through her contact is broader. However, this is not entirely a negative aspect.

In Genesis 31, Jacob was leaving Padan-Aram with his wives, concubines, and children when Rachel stole her father Laban's household gods. When Laban discovered that Jacob had fled, he pursued him, claiming that his household gods were missing. In Genesis 31:34-35, it says, "Now Rachel had taken the household idols and put them in the camel's saddle, and she sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find them. And she said to her father, 'Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is with me.' And he searched but did not find the household idols." Here we see that Rachel used the excuse of her menstrual uncleanness to avoid Laban's search.

Next, we will examine the abnormal discharges, beginning with the section regarding men, which is found in verses 2 to 15. Since the passage is relatively long, we will read it in several parts, starting with verses 2 to 4.

Verse 2-4: “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.’”

Here, it speaks of a man who has a discharge, indicating that he is unclean. Whether he is currently discharging or if it has stopped, he is still considered unclean because this is an abnormal discharge. It is similar to diarrhea, which loses nutrients that support life; or like hemorrhoids, which causes blood loss, thereby losing life. Therefore, an abnormal discharge is deemed unclean, and not only is the man unclean, but also the bed he lies on and the objects he sits on are unclean as well.

Verse 5-10: “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.”

This lengthy passage addresses how others become unclean if they touch a person with a discharge. If they come into contact with objects the person has touched,

such as the bed, saddle, or any other items, those individuals also become unclean. Those who become unclean through contact must remain unclean until evening, and they are required to wash their bodies and clothes with water to be restored to a state of cleanliness.

Verse 11-12: “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.”

Anyone touched by a person with a discharge becomes unclean until evening. They must wash their bodies and clothes to regain their cleanliness. As for pottery that has been touched by the person with a discharge, it must be broken, and wooden items must be washed with water before they can be considered clean.

Verse 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.”

These are the regulations for the cleansing of a person with a discharge. From the day of his healing, he remains unclean for seven days. On the seventh day, he must wash his body and clothes with water, and then he will be clean. On the eighth day, he must bring a sin offering and a burnt offering to the priest. The sin offering is for his sinful nature, while the burnt offering is to be accepted by God. If the saints remember, the leper, after being cleansed, was also required to offer a guilt offering in addition to the sin offering and burnt offering, to address his

transgressions, along with a grain offering to partake of God's provision and to demonstrate good character.

Therefore, in the matter of offerings, the sacrifices for a person with a discharge are significantly fewer, and the sacrifices for a person with a discharge consist of two turtle doves or two young pigeons; one is for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. This is the least expensive offering; even a wealthy person who is cleansed from a discharge can only offer two birds as sacrifices and cannot offer more. This is because a person with a discharge is not due to their own fault but is related to the inherent sinful nature of humanity. Next, let us look at the abnormal discharges in women, which are recorded in verses 25 to 30.

Verse 25-27: “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.”

When a woman has an abnormal discharge, it is mostly a case of a hemorrhage, which signifies the loss of life. Some of these hemorrhages are related to her menstrual period, while others are not. A woman suffering from a hemorrhage is considered unclean, and during the days of her affliction, the bed she lies on, the objects she sits on, including chairs and saddles, are also unclean. Anyone who touches her or any object she has used will become unclean until evening. She only needs to bathe and wash her clothes to become clean.

Mark 5:25-34 records the story of a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years. She had endured much at the hands of many physicians and had spent all that she had, yet 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 her affliction. 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." This woman sought to receive healing secretly, but Jesus publicly declared that she was healed, so that everyone would know that the woman with the flow of blood had been made whole and could be considered clean.

Verse 28-30: "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."

After the woman with the flow of blood was healed, she had to count seven days to be considered clean. On the seventh day, she was to wash herself and her clothes. On the eighth day, she was to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the door of the tabernacle and ask the priest to offer a sin offering and a burnt offering on her behalf. This would allow the priest to atone for her, enabling her to restore her communion with God and return to communal life with God's people.

Verse 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, and for him who emits semen and is unclean thereby, and for her who is indisposed because of

her customary impurity, and for one who has a discharge, either man or woman, and for him who lies with her who is unclean."

This section concludes the regulations regarding the cleansing of those with a flow of discharge, applicable to both men and women. It emphasizes that the Israelites must be separated from the impurities that arise from their bodies. Whether it is a normal discharge, such as nocturnal emissions or menstruation, or an abnormal discharge, all are considered unclean and must undergo cleansing before they can approach the tabernacle of God. God established these regulations to ensure that the Israelites remain cautious and do not defile His dwelling place, which could lead to their destruction.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is our spiritual flow of discharge as New Testament saints? Generally speaking, a flow of discharge signifies a loss of life, much like the woman who suffered from a flow of blood for twelve years. For twelve long years, she was unable to communicate with God and could not interact with God's people, leading to a loss of twelve years of her life. So, what can cause New Testament saints to lose life? Certainly, anything that prevents you from participating normally in church gatherings results in a loss of life for you. Therefore, all saints must follow God's command and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, lest we miss out on life.

Moreover, in our daily lives, there is something that can easily cause us to miss out on life. Watchman Nee has a message titled "Idle Talk Causes the Loss of Life." Proverbs 13:3 states, "He who guards his mouth preserves his life; but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction." If you guard your mouth and speak with care and caution, you will be able to preserve your life. On the other hand, if you speak idly and gossip, you will lose life, just like the flow of blood. May God keep us.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! After being saved by Your grace, You have placed us in the church life, where, through our gatherings with the saints week after week, we come before You together to offer worship and praise, ensuring that we do not miss out on life. If we find ourselves in situations, whether normal

or abnormal, that cause us to lose life, Lord, have mercy on us and help us to receive healing from You. Not only healing, but also going through the process of cleansing, allowing us to return to intimate fellowship with You and worship alongside our brothers and sisters. For You desire that Your children receive life and have it more abundantly. Bless the church life I am in, that it may be a church life rich in abundant life. I pray in the holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ.