

## Leviticus Chapter 12

Verses 1-8: This chapter involves purification after childbirth, for the mother was considered to “be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity”. The “separation for her infirmity” is a reference to her menstrual period (verse 5). This is more fully explained in 15:9-24. This legislation deals with the secretions that occur when giving birth, which made the mother unclean. So chapter 15, dealing with bodily secretions, provides the context for chapter 12. Verse 7 says she will “be cleansed from the issue of her blood”. This is the third mention. Why should a woman become unclean by bearing children? Reproduction is essential to the survival of the human race, yet intercourse made both Israelite man and wife ceremonially unclean (15:18).

Why should any discharge make a person unclean? The Bible gives no explicit answer. Some say it was a reminder that sin is transmitted to each person at birth. Others say that every bodily discharge is a reminder of sin and death. It is also suggested that a bleeding or discharging body lacks wholeness and is therefore unclean. Loss of blood can lead to death, the antithesis of normal, healthy life. Anyone losing blood is at least in danger of becoming less than perfect and therefore unclean. In any case, the woman was to bring “a burnt offering” and “a sin offering” indicating her total dedication and surrender to God and the admission of her sin and need for a covering.

The theme of this chapter is not personal holiness but ritual purification for the mother. Nothing here teaches or implies that human sexuality is “dirty”, that pregnancy is defiling, or that babies are impure. On the contrary, Scripture presents children as blessings from God (Psalms 113:9; 127:3-5; 128:3; Prov. 17:6; Matt. 19:14).

### **Leviticus 12:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"**

The laws in the preceding chapter were delivered both to Moses and Aaron, but what follows in this only to Moses. But inasmuch as the priest had a concern in it, it being his business to offer the sacrifices required by the following law, it was no doubt given to Moses, to be delivered to Aaron, as well as to the people. R. Semlai remarks, that as the creation of man was after that of the beasts, fowls, fishes, etc., so the laws concerning the uncleanness of men are after those relating to beasts, etc. And they begin with the uncleanness of a new mother. Because, as Aben Ezra observes, the birth is the beginning of man.

"Saying": As follows.

**Leviticus 12:2 "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean."**

For this law only concerned them, and not other nations of the world.

"If a woman have conceived seed": By lying with a man, and so becomes pregnant, and goes on with her pregnancy until she brings forth a child. The Jews from here gather, that this law respects abortions. That if a woman has conceived and miscarries, eighty one days after the birth of a female, and forty one after a male, she must bring her offering. But the law seems only to regard such as are with child, and proceed to the due time of childbirth, whether then the child is born alive or dead.

"And born a man child": Which is, generally speaking, not only matter of joy to the mother, but to the whole family (see John 16:21). Then she shall be unclean seven days; and be separate from all company. Except those whose presence is necessary to take care of her in her circumstances, and do what is proper for her. And even these became ceremonially unclean thereby. Even her husband was not permitted to sit near her, nor to eat and drink with her.

"According to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean": The same number of days, even seven, she was unclean on account of childbirth, as she was for her monthly courses. Called here an infirmity or sickness, incident to all females when grown up, at which time they were separate from all persons. And the case was the same with a new mother (see Lev. 15:14).

This is a ceremonial uncleanness. In a difficult to understand way, this has to do with the birth of all who are believers. We have seen throughout these lessons in Leviticus, strong spiritual messages to the church. I see in this that we are all born in sin. We are not born lost as some teach, just uncommitted. We are born a fleshly man. This man of flesh is the first birth of man. Man is first flesh, then born of the spirit. To truly understand what I am saying here, a person must truly study (1 Corinthians beginning with chapter 15:42 and go to the end of the chapter). Just one reading will not implant this message, you must read it at least 6 times. Pray while you are reading, that the Holy Spirit reveals to you the meaning. The fact that this man and this woman had a child is not sin. God had instructed Adam and Eve to have children. God would not tell you to do something that was sin.

Genesis 1:28 "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

This happened before the incident in the garden of Eden. The sin in the garden of Eden was disobeying God, not the fact that they had children. I will show you, again, that having children (if you are married), is not sin. God told Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply. I say, again, God would not tell them to do something that was sin.

Genesis 9:1 "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

I could go on and on, but there is no need for that here, the point is made. Two married people producing children is not sin.

The fact that the woman who has a man child is unclean 7 days, has to do with the 7 days that Aaron and his sons were to wait at the door of the tabernacle to be acceptable to God. This was a time of consecration. The beautiful thing that happened when Mary conceived in her flesh of the Holy Spirit of God could never have been classified as sin, yet Jesus was not circumcised until the eighth day. Eight means new beginnings. This new beginning on the eighth day is like the day our spirit is born. Jesus' number is 8. He is our new beginning. This circumcision on the eighth day is like the new birth in Christ. Our new life begins the day we accept Christ as our Savior. The sign that an Israelite man has accepted God was on the eighth day when he is set aside for God by circumcision. The woman in the Bible is symbolic of the church. This seven days of separation is the same as the seven days of separation for the high priest. The church is born in us (we become the church), when we accept new life in Jesus. The seven (1000 year days), of the earth is also symbolized in this 7 days of consecration. We are waiting outside the door to heaven 7000 years, and then the new beginning is here.

**Leviticus 12:3 "And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."**

“Eighth day”: Joseph and Mary followed these instructions at the birth of Christ (Luke 2:21).

“Circumcised”: The sign of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:9-14), was incorporated into the laws of Mosaic cleanness (compare Rom. 4:11-13). For a discussion on circumcision (see notes on Jer. 4:4).

Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day.

Luke 2:21 "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb."

The baby Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day and named Jesus. He was not dedicated in the temple until the 40<sup>th</sup> day. We will see this as we go on.

**Leviticus 12:4 "And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled."**

That is, so many more, in all forty. For though at the end of seven days she was in some respects free from her uncleanness, yet not altogether. But remained in the blood of her purifying, or in the purifying of her blood, which was more and more purified, and completely at the end of forty days. So with the Persians it is said, a new mother must avoid everything for forty days. When that time is passed, she may wash and be purified; and which perhaps Zoroastres, the founder of the Persian religion, at least the reformer of it, being a Jew.

"She shall touch no hallowed thing": As the tithe, the heave offering, the flesh of the peace offerings, as Aben Ezra explains it, if she was a priest's wife.

"Nor come into the sanctuary": The court of the tabernacle of the congregation, or the court of the temple, as the same writer observes. And so with the Greeks, a pregnant woman might not come into a temple before the fortieth day, that is, of her delivery.

"Until the days of her purifying be fulfilled": Until the setting of the sun of the fortieth day. On the morrow of that she was to bring the atonement of her purification, as Jarchi observes (see notes on Lev. 12:6).

The issue of blood that women have every month, and at childbirth is a cleansing for their bodies. No woman should think of herself as being a nothing, because this happens to her. There is no life without the shedding of blood. Women are chosen of God to pro-create life. Husbands and wives are one in God's sight. The creation of life in God's plan, is beautiful. The new life, is a blessing to the husband and wife, but is also a blessing for God. The natural functions of the body are one of the great mysteries of life. Every time a new baby is born, it lets us know God has not given up on mankind. This 40 day period of separation from the holy things is for cleanliness' sake and just simply because God said to do it. Forty throughout the Bible is a time of testing. Perhaps this is the time the woman should take before beginning to function in her usual role. Jesus was carried to the temple on the 40th day for his dedication.

Luke 2:22 "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present [him] to the Lord;"

The natural function of the woman's body has usually stopped by the 40th day after a male child is born. and it would be alright for her to come back to the temple. We will find in another lesson that anything that could be construed as uncleanness, would keep the person from attending services in the sanctuary.

**Leviticus 12:5 "But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days."**

"Two weeks ... threescore and six days": Apparently mothers were unclean twice as long (80) days after the birth of a daughter as a son (40 days), which reflected the stigma on women for Eve's part in the Fall. This stigma is removed in Christ (see notes on 1 Tim. 2:13-15).

The time for the cleansing for the birth of a female child is definitely twice as long. Boy babies were circumcised on the 8th day, which as we said in a previous verse, was a sign of accepting God. Since a girl baby is not circumcised, then the purification would be different also. To say that this longer time for purification was because girls were more sinful is slightly ridiculous. With God there is no male or female. The only time there is a gender is for the procreation of life on this earth. As we have said over and over in these lessons, the woman symbolizes the church. The 40 days for the purification of having a man child symbolized the 40 years wandering in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. The church of Jesus Christ was not established on the way to the Promised Land. Could the 80 days required for the female child symbolize the 40 years in the wilderness to establish a people of God, and then the 40 days Jesus ministered on the earth after He resurrected from the tomb, to establish the church? The church of the Lord Jesus Christ was not established during the wilderness wanderings, but that had to be the beginning.

The church was truly launched when Jesus returned to the Father in heaven and promised to send the comforter. Jesus was seed of the woman, and not of the man.

Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

There was the age of the law (physical Israel), then there was the age of grace (spiritual Israel). The time of testing for the physical house was 40. The time of testing for the spiritual house was 40. Forty and 40 make 80. There could not have been grace, except it had been preceded by law. Then the woman (church), takes 80 days for purification, 40 days for the law and 40 days for grace.

**Leviticus 12:6 "And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:"**

"Burnt offering ... sin offering": Thought the occasion was joyous, the sacrifices required were to impress upon the mind of the parent the reality of original sin and that the child had inherited a sin nature. The circumcision involved a cutting away of the male foreskin, which could carry infections and diseases in its folds. This cleansing of the physical organ so as not to pass on disease (Jewish women have historically had the lowest incidence of cervical cancer), was a picture of the deep need for cleansing from depravity, which is most clearly revealed by procreation, as men produce sinners and only sinners. Circumcision points to the fact that cleansing is needed at the very core of a human being, a cleansing God offers to the faithful and penitent through the sacrifice of Christ to come.

These offerings were not for direct sin, but if you will, inherited sin of the flesh. This sin is really not this mother's sin, but Eve's sin, which was not a deed but an inheritance. This burnt offering was as devotion to God. The sin involved was not her own sin, but sinful nature of all of humanity, until the new birth in Christ. Jesus was dedicated to God on the 40th day of His mother's purification.

Luke 2:22 "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present [him] to the Lord;"

**Leviticus 12:7 "Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This [is] the law for her that hath born a male or a female."**

Upon the altar of burnt offering.

"And make an atonement for her": For whatsoever sin in connection with or that attended childbearing. As typical of the atonement by Christ both for sin original and actual.

"And she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood": In a ceremonial sense, and according to that law be pure and clean.

"This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female": Enjoined her, and to be observed by her. And though now with the rest of the ceremonial law it is abolished. Yet it has this instruction in it; that it becomes women in such circumstances to bring the freewill offerings of their lips. Their sacrifices of praise, and in a public manner signify their gratitude and thankfulness for the mercy and goodness of God vouchsafed to them. In carrying them through the whole time of childbearing, and saving them in the perilous hour.

As I said before, the uncleanness was of a ceremonial nature, rather than of a spiritual nature. We will get into the issue of blood in another lesson.

**Leviticus 12:8 "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean."**

"Turtledoves ... pigeons": Compare (Lev. 1:14-17; 5:7-10). These were the offerings of Joseph and Mary after Christ's birth (compare Luke 2:24), when they presented Jesus as their firstborn to the Lord (Exodus 13:2; Luke 2:22). Birds, rather than livestock, indicated a low economic situation, though one who was in total poverty could offer flour (5:11-14).

The mother of Jesus brought two turtledoves and 2 young pigeons.

Luke 2:24 "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

To sum this up, we see the birth of all of Christendom in this lesson through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Leviticus Chapter 12 Questions

1. Who did God give the law to, about the purification of the woman after childbirth?
2. How many days shall she be unclean after the birth of a son?
3. What kind of uncleanness is this?
4. We have seen strong spiritual messages to the \_\_\_\_\_ in Leviticus.
5. We are born in \_\_\_\_\_, not born \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Man is first flesh, then \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Where should you read over and over to get the full lesson on the flesh and spirit of man?

8. How do we know that the man and woman did not sin in having a child?
9. God would not tell you to do something that was \_\_\_\_\_.
10. What was the sin in the garden of Eden?
11. Two married people having children is not \_\_\_\_\_.
12. What parallel does the seven days of uncleanness represent?
13. Jesus was circumcised on what day?
14. What does the number eight mean?
15. This circumcision on the eighth day is like what in Christ?
16. Who is our new beginning?
17. The woman, in the Bible, is symbolic of what?
18. When is the church born in us?
19. We have been waiting outside the door to heaven how long?
20. What day was Jesus named?
21. What day was Jesus dedicated in the temple?
22. How many days could the mother not enter the temple after the male child was born?
23. What is the purpose of the issue of blood that women have?
24. What is the number 40 symbolic of?
25. What was the difference in the time of separation for a maid child and a male child?
26. The woman symbolizes what?
27. The 40 days of purification for a male child symbolized what?
28. When was the church of the Lord Jesus Christ truly launched?
29. Why did it take 80 symbolic days for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to be launched?
30. What type of sin was this offering in the temple for?