

Leviticus 12-15

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[0 : 00] We'll read Leviticus 12, we'll get into a little bit of Leviticus 13, and then I will catch the end of Leviticus 15 so that you can see them kind of as a summation.

Leviticus 12 says, Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, When a woman gives birth and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean for seven days, as in the days of her menstruation she shall be unclean.

On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised, then she shall remain in the blood of her purification for thirty-three days. She shall not touch any consecrated thing, nor enter the sanctuary until the days of her purification are completed.

But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean for two weeks, as in her menstruation, and she shall remain in the blood of her purification for sixty-six days. Don't ask me, by the way, why the time frame for the female or girl child is twice as long as a male child.

I know that's a question that many people want to know, and there's a lot of speculation there. I can give you a very quick answer. It's because that's what God said. Okay? And we need to accept it as that. Some very applicable rule would probably be, because of the circumcision of the male child on the eighth day, the woman had to be pronounced clean on the seventh day so that she could attend that circumcision, so that she could keep the law.

[1 : 13] But other than that, while there's thirty-three days versus sixty-six days, just a side note, we don't know. Well, this is what God said, just like in the previous chapter. God said, don't eat this, eat this.

Why? Because that's what God said. So we accept it by that. Verse six, When the days of her purification are completed for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the doorway of the tent of meeting a one-year-old lamb for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering.

Then he shall offer it before the Lord and make atonement for her, and she shall be cleansed from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, whether male or female. But if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtle doves or two young pigeons, and the one for a burnt offering, the other for a sin offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.

Now go over with me to chapter 13. Then the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, When a man has on his skin of his body a swelling or a scab or a bright spot, and it becomes an infection of leprosy on the skin of his body, then he shall be brought to Aaron and the priest, or to one of his sons.

The priest shall look at the mark on the skin of his body. And if the hair in the infection has turned white, and the infection appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is an infection of leprosy. When the priest has looked at him, he shall pronounce him unclean.

[2 : 29] And then we go into the difference between that which is unclean and that which is not. One of my favorite passages in Leviticus 13 is, If a man loses the hair on the top of his head, it says, He is bald. I love that.

Because I love how the scripture is just very straightforward, right? And then Leviticus 14 gives us about the cleansing of the priest, and not the priest, the cleansing of a man with leprosy or a skin disease, or a woman with leprosy or skin disease.

Understanding that much of what is referred to as leprosy is not just the disease leprosy. Much is referred to here in Leviticus 13 and 14 are various skin diseases. There are scabs and things of that nature.

Then we get into Leviticus 15, and it talks about the emissions from the man and the woman. And it says in verse 31, this is the end of 15, Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated from their uncleanness, so that they will not die in their uncleanness by their defiling my tabernacle that is among them.

This is the law for the one with a discharge, and for a man who has a seminal emission, so that he is unclean by it, or for the woman who is ill because of her menstrual impurity, or for the one who has a discharge, whether a male or a female or a man who lives with an unclean woman.

[3 : 40] So here you have this wording, it says, Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated from their uncleanness, so that they will not die in their uncleanness, by their defiling my tabernacle that is among them.

And I believe that verse, verse 31, gives us a summation of Leviticus 12, 13, 14, and 15. And I know it is a broad range of scriptures, but what I want you to see are just four truths from these passages that have application to us.

What difference does this matter? Because we need to understand exactly what God is doing here. One thing that God is not doing is God is not dealing with physical illness alone.

Some of these things have application and have what we would call wisdom to the stopping of infectious diseases, right? Some of these things seem to make sense. It would make sense if leprosy was infectious and could be sent from one person to another, that God would isolate them and separate them and set them apart.

But really, that is not the entirety of what God is dealing with. As a matter of fact, what we see repeated over and over again is they are separated by their uncleanness. So the title would be they're separated by their uncleanness, that God is setting them apart and putting them outside because they are unclean.

[5 : 00] Everything in these passages are not necessarily wrong or unclean, right? Childbirth is not a sin. The bearing of children is not an act of sin or uncleanness in the fact of mankind.

It is not wrong. As a matter of fact, it is something which leads to great rejoicing. But at that moment, God sets the lady and the child apart and calls her unclean.

So I want us just to see four things that we are reminded of when God separates his people due to their uncleanness. And hopefully, we see an application to us today because we do not live by these laws, right?

We just don't. If you have a scab or an infectious disease, we expect, you know, if you have a skin disease or skin disorder, we would expect that you would take care of that yourself. But we're not going to cast you out and cause you to go stand isolated and say unclean, unclean, unclean.

You know, we're not going to do that. We see these things that are going on here and we see as God is not necessarily dealing with just a physical healing. He's actually dealing with a spiritual healing and a spiritual renewal.

[6 : 14] That which he is dealing with has to do with worship and the corporate body. Everything here, if you remember in Leviticus, is about the holiness of God and be holy as I am holy.

It is a result of God taking his place in the tabernacle among his people, that God was there. So in Leviticus 1 through 10, he shows the way to God.

Since I'm in your presence, this is what it's going to take to be near me. And in Leviticus 11 and following, it is the walk with God, what it looks like when we're walking with God in his holiness.

So that part has application to us. The four truths that we need to see, that we are reminded of in these chapters, the first one is very clear. We are reminded of the holiness of God.

We are reminded of the holiness of God. In particular, that God does not just allow anything into his presence. That we cannot just rush headlong into God's presence any way we want to, in any condition in which we have had, with anything that is going on in our life.

[7 : 16] We do not have the right to rush into the presence of a holy God. God is holy. Remember, we looked at that reality. That does not mean that he's different than us. That means that he's other than us.

Right? There are people who have positions in this world that are higher than us. They are different than us. So they have places of authority or places of prominence. But it does not make them holy.

Holiness means other than. He's nothing like us. Right? In the image of God, he created man. In the image, we were created in his image, and we marred that image. One thing we find in Genesis, which is astounding to me, is that it says, in the beginning, God created man in his own image.

In his image, he created them. And then when Adam and Eve began to have children after the fall of man, you'll see that they were born in the image of Adam. That Adam marred that image, and then we took on the seed of Adam.

And we have all of these things that are, we sure we bear a little bit of the image of God, but we are nothing like him. And we'll get to that in just a moment. But we are reminded, first and foremost, of the holiness of God.

[8 : 15] That sometimes those things, even those things which cause rejoicing among men, would hinder his people here in the Old Testament covenant laws from being in his presence, such as childbirth. Again, it's not that childbirth was wrong.

It's not that it was unclean. It's not that it was just a sinful action. It was the fact, he said, in her blood, the shedding of that blood. But in the tabernacle of God, there was only one type of blood that was allowed, and that was the blood of the sacrifice.

And it was such a holy place that no other blood could be brought in. The only blood that would be accepted was the blood of the sacrifice. And I know the ladies could testify to this a whole lot more than me.

Well, I can't even testify to this, but I can speak to the truth of this, and you can testify to this. The birth of a child was a desperate reminder and a very clear reminder of this next point that we'll get to in just a minute, and that is the presence of sin.

Because one of the requirements that were put upon man because of the fall is that man would work the ground by the sweat of his brow, and that the lady would have pain in childbirth, right?

[9 : 21] So during that time, it was just this reminder. One of the greatest things I've ever seen. Anybody know who the skit guys are? Two skit guys. I mean, they do, like, they act out comedy. That's great. I've seen them with the youth.

And you ever need to just look up the skit guys. I showed it one time years ago, and maybe I'll show it again. There's two guys. One of them's, like, short and bald, and the other one's tall and skinny, and they're just great.

They were best friends growing up. One actually led the other one to Christ and ended up doing acting out. They act out this whole Adam and Eve scene, and every time I preach that, I can't get over it. Because one of them is Adam. It's like, you're a sweater brown.

The other one's Eve. And he's like, I got to do what? And he said, I'll take his. I'll work hard in the field and let him have the kids. But God's like, no, there'll be that pain in childbirth. And it's these things that are just a reminder of God's holiness and man's sinfulness, right?

And God says, these things can't be allowed in my presence because I am holy. Even with the various skin diseases here, it's not necessarily that they were all wrong. But God says, I'm perfect.

[10 : 22] So the one who's going to come into my presence is going to be perfect. We even see this with what we see as the requirements for the priest, right? They had to be perfect. The requirements of the sacrifice had to be perfect.

You say, well, that's just not fair. Well, that is absolutely the point. Remember, the law is our tutor pointing us to Jesus Christ. And what the law is showing us is that God is perfectly holy.

He is perfectly holy. And the only thing allowed into his presence is perfection. Anything that is marred is not welcome into the presence of a holy God, which all of a sudden shows us we don't belong there.

And that's pointing us to the one who can take us there. That's pointing us to the only one who can get there. And that is Jesus Christ. So we are reminded of all of these things in the holiness of God.

God says, they are unclean. Set them apart. They are unclean. Set them apart. They are unclean. Set them apart. They cannot be in my presence. Set them apart. They cannot be around any of God's people. Set them apart. They are unclean over and over again.

[11 : 29] We are commanded to do this. Why? Because I am holy. I am here. When did these things come into effect? When he redeemed them? When he led them out of Egypt? No. When he dwelt among them in the Shekinah glory of the tabernacle.

When God said, now my manifest presence is here. So things with you are going to change. I am holy. So we are reminded, number one, of the holiness of God. The second thing follows this, and it is something that we cannot overlook.

It is the fallen nature of man. God is holy and we are not. It reminds us when we read these, we are reminded of the fallen nature of man. We are reminded immediately in the birthing of children that man is a fallen nature.

We are also reminded of the fallen nature of man in the various skin diseases and all these things, leprosy and psoriasis and all these other things that God pronounces as unclean. That man lives in a fallen nature.

Man is not perfect. Man cannot just win his way. One thing we notice is that one of the things that would cause a man and a woman, a husband and a wife to celebrate, because not having children in scripture was a sign of the curse of God, but bearing children was a sign of the blessings of God.

[12 : 36] And one thing that they would see as a blessing from God would also separate them from being in the presence of God for a number of days. At minimum, 33 days. That God says, okay, this is cause for rejoicing and it should be.

And giving birth to children is awesome and it's wonderful, but be mindful, you are still living and existing in a fallen nature. We don't know in particular why God chose the skin diseases to be that which would separate his people in complete isolation.

We can kind of take medical reasons and think through it, but one of the easiest applications is that that which was being displayed on the outside of the body was clearly seen by all. It wasn't something you could hide.

If you contracted leprosy and your fingers began to draw up and your knuckles began to swell and your hands began to be deformed and everything else in your body began to shape and change, everybody noticed it, right?

We have a way of hiding our sin and glossing over our imperfections, but when it is being displayed on the outside of the body, it is something very visible. So it was a reminder that we live in a fallen nature.

[13 : 41] We are not supposed to be that way. As a matter of fact, when we get to the end of the book of Revelation, those things disappear. There is no longer sin. There's no longer pain. There's no longer sorrow. There's no longer all these diseases and all these things which cause man.

The reality is that every disease and every sickness is a result of sin. I did not say it was a result of that person's sin. So I'm not saying that you got sick because you sinned, okay?

I'm not saying that. But we can say this. All diseases and sicknesses are a result of sin because God created man perfect in a perfect environment, in a perfect world, and man rebelled against God, that is, our fallen nature, and therefore introduced sin.

What would he say? Do not take from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day you take it, you will what? Die.

Now, it took a long time for Adam to die after that physically, but he was already beginning to die, right? He introduced death through his rebellion, through that fallen nature, and that is a result of sin.

[14 : 48] Sin began to creep in, and if you read Scripture, you see the lifespan of mankind dwindling throughout the pages of Scripture because sin begins to have a greater and greater and greater effect, and different things begin to be introduced into man, and all these different diseases come into effect in man, and all of a sudden we see sin reigning, and this is exactly what we are reminded of in this passage, that God is holy, man is fallen.

The fallen nature of man is that which separates us from being there. Number three, this great truth that we see, and you have to read it over and over again, and you be reminded of it, and you do not have to read these passages very often to see it continuously be brought up, and it is the provision of the priest.

We are reminded here of the provision of the priest, because every time someone was pronounced unclean, they had to go before the priest. One commentator said, For those pastors who think they wear too many hats in the church already, just be thankful you weren't a priest during these days.

If you had something wrong with your skin, you had to go before a priest. If you had something wrong with an article of clothing, you had to bring it before a priest. And if you had something wrong with your house, you had to ask that priest to come to your house. The priest had the authority and the responsibility to tell you, You are unclean.

You've got to live out there for seven days, and you have to separate yourself. Or, hey, you've got to sit out there, and any time someone gets near you, say unclean. Or they had the authority and the responsibility that if you brought an article of clothing that had a leprous spot on it, they would cut it out, and if it came back, they would destroy it.

[16 : 10] Be like, that was my best coat. And I'm like, sorry, we've got to do that. Or if your house had a leprous spot in it, then they would scrape the plaster and remove the stones, and if it came back, they would tear your house down. Everything went through the priest.

The priest determined if you were clean. The priest determined if you were unclean. And when you were pronounced clean, it was the priest that you brought your sacrifice back to so that the priest could offer your sacrifice to be accepted before a holy God.

If you gave birth to a child, you would bring your offering to the priest. And it was an offering of redemption, right? It was an offering of being brought back into fellowship with God. This is a reminder of the provision of the priest.

God knew that man was fallen, and he is holy, but he created this mediator between a holy God and fallen man. And the mediator is the priest. That when man's uncleanness separated him from the holiness of God, then he was able to come back into the presence of God.

He could only do that through the priest. Again, this serves a purpose. Because man didn't just walk into the tabernacle and say, Well, I feel like I'm clean today, so I'm going to offer my sacrifice.

[17 : 17] No, man presented himself to the priest, and the priest looked at him and said, Yes, you are clean. He accepted the sacrifice, and he offered that sacrifice on the altar. Why is that important? Because the Bible tells us in the book of Hebrews that now we have a great high priest who sits beside the right hand of the Father, who lives daily to intercede on our behalf.

We, too, as fallen men, come into the presence of a holy God through the provision of a priest. It is not a descendant of Aaron. Rather, he is a priest according to the order of Mechizedek, that he did not offer the blood of the bulls and lambs.

Rather, he offered his own blood. And we, too, have to come before God in one way through one person, and that would be the great high priest who rules over us. We are reminded here that man could not go before a holy God, even though God was right there in their presence.

I mean, he was literally in the center of the camp. Before they could get to him, they had to go to the doorway and meet the priest. They had to go to the door to the priest, and we have a priest who is the door.

You see how all this is pointing to Jesus. This is pointing to the fact that we do not come in our fallen nature before a holy God. We come through the priest and the sacrifice that he offers on our behalf that restores us back into fellowship with a holy God.

[18 : 35] Even in our uncleanness, even in our fallen nature, even in those things which separate us, the Bible says that if we are faithful to confess our sins, and he is faithful to forgive us of our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and therefore restore us into fellowship with a holy God, we must come through the high priest who is Jesus Christ.

The fourth and final application we see. Not only do we see the holiness of God, and not only are we reminded of the fallen nature of man, and I know I'm covering it very quickly, and we don't have to spend a lot of time on this, because you can go through these passages and rehash them yourself.

We see the provision of the priest who is Jesus Christ. But I think the fourth takeaway that we take from this passage is we see the importance of corporate worship. We see the importance of corporate worship.

Because probably the gravest thing that could have happened to someone from the nation of Israel at this time was for God to tell them, You're unclean, you have to leave the body.

You're unclean, you cannot be here. You're unclean, you cannot bring your sacrifice. They worshipped through a sacrificial system, and they worshipped in a corporate manner. If you remember, there were a number of sacrifices that God had laid out for them, five sacrifices he had given them in the early pages of Leviticus.

[19 : 53] And they would do this as a corporate body. And one of those sacrifices was very corporate worship in nature, in that they would come together as a group and bring that sacrifice to the tabernacle. And that priest would take that sacrifice and cut it up and grill it, so to say we hate to say that, but offer it up on the altar, but not offer it up in complete smoke, and then bring it back out.

It was a fellowship sacrifice. And they would sit down together at the doorway and eat this meal. And they would have their loved ones with them, their friends and their neighbors. And the priest would be there, and there would be this fellowship of worship.

It was really a corporate environment that God was there, and God was among his people, and his people were worshipping him. But when man was pronounced unclean, or woman was pronounced unclean, the very first thing that stopped was their worship.

God set them apart. He cast them out. And God said they had to separate themselves and isolate themselves or quarantine themselves and be set apart, and they could not take part in corporate worship.

And this was something that was very harmful to the people, and it was very hurtful, and it was something that really just began to destroy the people, and their desire was to get back to this worship.

[21 : 02] Their desire was to get back to a restored worship with the people of God. And we see the importance of that because God was letting them know that I'm holy, you're not. There's a provision of the priest.

But one thing we cannot neglect is the importance of corporate worship. I know this seems kind of ironic in today's time, and it's one of the things that we're dealing with. A number of pastors are dealing with things that they have never dealt with.

A number of pastors and churches are going through issues they have never done. And probably one of my greatest fears, not necessarily for War Trace Baptist Church, but for our nation, is that our nation will begin to neglect the importance and the power of corporate worship.

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones used to say, there is something about the people of God joining together in the presence of God and listening to the Word of God. As a matter of fact, D. Martin Lloyd-Jones is one of the greatest pastors who lived during his time.

He preached in England and in European countries around that area. But a number of his pastors, I mean, a number of his messages, they wanted him to write them down and to record them, write them in books, and he wouldn't allow them to do it.

[22 : 06] There's a couple of his works, The Sermon on the Mount. It's a great series. He wrote a great book called Preaching and Preachers, and there's a few others. But a number of them, he would not let anyone, he lived in an age even when they were recording his messages.

I believe he died in the 1960s, and he wouldn't let them be broadcast. And he would go preach at conferences, and they wanted him to write books. I read A.W. Tozer, and many of the books of A.W. Tozer, nothing other than the records of his sermons that were put together after he died in book form.

And you can read his sermons, because he wrote them out in manuscripts. D. Martin Lloyd-Jones didn't let people do that. And the reason he said it, he said, preaching has its place only among the people of God in the church of God.

He used to say there's something very spiritual to the people of God gathering together, and the man that God has called to be the one who would deliver his message, that God is presence.

And he would emphasize the importance of corporate worship. I know there are those who can't gather together across our nation, and I understand that, and I respect that. And I pray for the day which we get back to those who desire to, would have every opportunity to, and that there would no longer be any hindrance, either physical hindrance or a concern that is put out there.

[23 : 15] And I don't discredit that at all, but this is just me as a pastor being honest to you. My great fear is, is that our country, and along with a lot of other countries around the world, will begin to fail to really understand the importance of corporate worship.

When God was writing this through his man Moses, the greatest thing that you could tell, the most tragic thing that you could tell someone of the nation of Israel was, you can't go with everybody else to the tabernacle.

You're not allowed. You're not clean. We're going to separate you. And they would strive to get back to that place.

Why? Because worship was important. And worship's still important for the people of God. We don't do it in a perfect way because we're imperfect people.

But he is a holy God. And can you worship alone? Absolutely. I worship alone quite often. I worship alone more than I worship corporately. You can worship with two or three others.

[24 : 21] You can. But my friend, there is something that scripture says that is very important, and that is the corporate worship of the saints. And we need to pray that God would allow those things to take place in various ways, various forms.

It doesn't have to be in great multitudes. It can be in a small number gathered together. But we need to pray that God would begin to open that up again for ourselves and for others around the world.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this night that you've given us. And, Lord, we thank you for the opportunity we have to look at your word. But, God, we pray that your word would resonate within us. Lord, that the truth of scripture would not only show us our uncleanness, O God, the fallen nature which we exist in.

But, Lord, that they would magnify your holiness. May you be exalted and lifted up on high, O God. You are holy, and you are true, and you are sure. And, Lord, we long to worship you.

And we thank you for Jesus Christ who has paved that way that we could come into your presence through a restored relationship. And, Lord, we ask that you would get all the glory and the honor and the praise. And we ask it in Jesus' name.

[25 : 25] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[28 : 45] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

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Amen. Amen.

[31 : 15] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

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[33 : 45] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.

[36 : 15] Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

[38 : 45] Amen.