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The Mitzvot of Purification

11:1 to 15:33

In the previous section **the Israelite** priests were ordained to put the final piece of **the Israelite** sacrificial system in place. At the end of the ordination, **Aaron** was commanded to **teach the Israelites in all the mitzvot ADONAI had told them through Moshe**, in **distinguishing between the holy and the common, between the clean and the unclean (10:10)**. In **Leviticus 11:1 to 15:33** the **LORD** instructs **Moses and Aaron** more specifically about what is considered **clean** and **unclean**.

The mitzvot of **purification** cannot be isolated from previous teaching concerning instruction for bringing sacrifices (**to see link click [Ah](#) - The Offerings from the People's Perspective**), instruction for the priests in carrying out the sacrifices (see **[An](#) - The Offerings from the Priests Perspective**), or the inauguration of the priesthood (see **[Av](#) - The Ordination Ceremony of the Priesthood**). **The purification** mitzvot assumes knowledge of the sacrificial system, in that the sacrifices play a vital role in making a **ritually unclean Israelite** able to enter the camp and to have fellowship with other members of the covenant community.

However, these mitzvot are being discussed now because they are immediately relevant to the Tabernacle. One's state of **ritual purity** determined whether or not one was able to participate in the Tabernacle services and sacrifices. In that regard, the majority of the mitzvot of **purification** do not have a practical relevance in today's world. As of the writing of this commentary, the Holy Temple in Jerusalem has not yet been rebuilt. Until it is, it really makes no practical difference whether one is **ritually clean** or **unclean**.¹⁵⁵



The concern for cleanness for the Israelite was an essential part of his or her response to the holiness of God. Cleanness is thus related to holiness, but the two are not equivalent. The **clean** is not necessarily holy, but the holy is always **clean**.¹⁵⁶ Let me put it another way. What happened to **the ritually unclean** person? **The Torah** teaches that when a person was rendered spiritually **unclean**, he was not able to come into physical representation of the realm of **life . . . God's realm**. This is pictured for us by the regulations which require a person to wait for a declaration of **ritual cleanness** from a priest or to be immersed in water before he could come to the Tabernacle/Temple and offer sacrifices and draw near to **ADONAI**. It was not that **YHVH** was repulsed by the person. It was, instead, **the LORD** teaching us through an important picture, the picture of **ritual cleanness** and **uncleanness** with **their** resulting consequences.

The lesson was this: just as there were two conditions, **ritual cleanness** and **uncleanness** in regard to drawing near to **ADONAI**, so there are only two conditions in the universe where **God** is **King** - **life** or **death**. Either one is **living** or one is **dead**; something either has to do with **life** or with **death**! The two do not mix. On a spiritual level, then, we see that **Ha'Shem** is **life** and **sin** is **death**. That which is of the realm of **sin** and **death** produces **deadly** results. Since **sin** is the ultimate cause of **death**, the two are very closely related. That is why **ritual uncleanness** comes when a person is either not living the **Torah** as a blueprint for living (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Bk - The Ten Words**), or has come into contact with **death**.

The vital truths about **ritual cleanness** and **uncleanness** that we have learned so far reveal to us some of the deepest truths of **the Torah**. Here is what **Deuteronomy 32:47** declares about **the Torah**: **"For Torah is not an idle word for you, indeed, it is your life. Again, the LORD declares: I call on heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have presented you with life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life, so that you will live, you and your descendants, loving ADONAI your God, paying attention to what he says and clinging to him - for that is the purpose of your life! This depends on the length of time you will live in the land ADONAI swore he would give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob"** (**Deuteronomy 30:19-20**). If one were to paraphrase these two concepts, it would be the same as stating that "these words, which are our **life** are **written on our hearts** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Eo - I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el**) once we have been immersed in **Messiah**, our Mikveh (pool of immersion, required for **ritually unclean** people to become **ritually clean**.)

To understand this concept even more clearly, we need to know that the Bible teaches the

incredible truth that **Messiah** is, in reality, **the Living Torah**! When **Messiah** walked the earth, it was written of **Him** that **He** was **the Torah made flesh and dwelling among us (John 1:14)**. **He** now **lives** in us. Thus, we can understand, in a deeper way, the passage: **We have this treasure in earthen vessels (Colossians 4:7)**. When we are walking in who we are as **new creations in Messiah** (see the commentary on **Second Corinthians Bd - A New Creation**), **the life of Messiah** flows from within us. Just as it was said that the written **Torah** is our **life**, even more so, can it be said that **the Living Torah** is our **life**. This kind of **life** is therefore declared to be **ritually clean**. Therefore, **Torah**, through concepts of **ritual cleanliness** and **ritual uncleanness**, teaches us the realities of what is **God's life** in and through us, and what is not **His life** on the earth.

Two Kingdoms: Let us take these ideas one step deeper. I would like to suggest that in the declaration of **ritual cleanness** and **uncleanness**, **the Holy One** is teaching Isra'el, and us, through a graphic object lesson, a basic lesson on the reality of **life** here on earth. **He** was teaching that there are only two realms, two **kingdoms**. The one **kingdom** can be called **the kingdom of this world, the kingdom of sin and death**, or **the kingdom of Adam**. It can be called by several different names, but all are synonymous. The second **kingdom** can be called **the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Messiah, the Kingdom of Life, the Kingdom of Light**, etc.

No matter what they are called, there are only two **kingdoms**. The two states of **ritual cleanness** and **uncleanness** picture these two **kingdoms**. In one **kingdom**, **sin** and **death** reign. In the other, grace, righteousness and **life** reign. It is important, however, to remember that there is no third **kingdom** . . . no middle ground. It is either black or white, though **the kingdom of sin and death** often tries to imitate **God's Kingdom**. But if we keep in mind that something is either **ritually clean** or **ritually unclean**, it will help us to remember that even though something may look like **God's Kingdom**, it is not, if it consists of **sin and death**.

Please note that stating that there are two **kingdoms** does not mean that these two **kingdoms** have equal power nor do they have anything equal! There is not a dualism in the universe. There is only one **God** in this world and **He** is the only absolute **Sovereign**. That other **kingdom**, **Satan's kingdom**, only *thinks* it is equal to **God's**. Moreover, that other kingdom would like to persuade us into the deception that it is equal to, and even greater than, **God's Kingdom**. This is all a charade, a fake travesty. However, that other **kingdom** *does* exist and possess a lot of power. **ADONAI** wants us to be aware that **it** exists and is vying for our allegiance. That is why we need to learn about it.¹⁵⁷