

**14** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup>This shall be the ritual for a leper at the time that he is to be purified.

When it has been reported to the priest, <sup>3</sup>the priest shall go outside the camp. If the priest sees that the leper has been healed of his scaly affection, <sup>4</sup>the priest shall order two live pure birds, cedar wood, crimson stuff, and hyssop to be brought for him who is to be purified. <sup>5</sup>The priest shall order one of the birds slaughtered

**יד** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:  
זֹאת תְּהִי־הַתּוֹרָה הַמִּצְוֶה בְּיוֹם טְהַרְתּוֹ  
וְהוֹבֵא אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן: <sup>3</sup> וַיֵּצֵא הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־מַחוּץ  
לַמַּחֲנֶה וְרָאָה הַכֹּהֵן וְהִנֵּה נִרְפָּא נֶגַע־  
הַצִּרְעָת מִן־הַצְּרוּעַ: <sup>4</sup> וַיִּצְוֶה הַכֹּהֵן וּלְקַח  
לַמַּטְהָר שְׁתֵּי־צִפְרִים חַיִּים טְהוֹרִים וְעֵץ  
אֶרְזוֹ וְשֵׁנִי תוֹלַעַת וְאֵזֹב: <sup>5</sup> וַיִּצְוֶה הַכֹּהֵן  
וַשְׁחֹט אֶת־הַצִּפּוֹר הָאֶחָת אֶל־כְּלִי־חָרָשׁ

### THE PURIFICATION OF SKIN DISEASES (continued)

#### PURIFICATION RITES FOR INDIVIDUALS (14:1–32)

The rites ordained for the purification of a person who had suffered from *tzara-at* are among the most elaborate in the priestly laws. They demonstrate how seriously the *tzara-at* infections were regarded in ancient Israel.

**2. ritual** Hebrew: *torah*, which here means a manual of procedure for the priests, who administered the purification rites.

**When it has been reported to the priest**  
The priest went out to the afflicted person who

could not enter the camp, having been declared impure.

**4. two live pure birds** The birds must be physically sound and of a pure species.

**crimson stuff** Hebrew: *sh'ni tola-at*; literally, “the scarlet of the worm.” A crimson dye is extracted from the eggs of an insect that lives in the leaves of oak trees. The cloth, most likely, was wool.

**5. over fresh water in an earthen vessel**  
Blood of the slaughtered bird not collected in the vessel would flow down into the earth. The Hebrew for “fresh water” (*mayim hayyim*) literally

### CHAPTER 14

This *parashah* (read together with *Tazri-a* in most non-leap years) describes the ritual of purifying and reintegrating the recovered leper. We can read it as a description of the Israelites' attitude to the experience of recovering from illness. The text also discusses the appearance of a “plague” in the stones of a person's house and the implications of menstrual blood and seminal emissions as they relate to ritual impurity (*tum-ah*).

The formal description of the cleansing ritual masks the deep and possibly conflicted feelings of the person who has recovered from a serious illness. These might include feelings of relief and happiness together with a new appreciation of good health, perhaps resentment over what had been gone through as well as envy of people who had remained healthy. The offering of the recovered leper is sometimes referred to as “the sacrifice of one who has re-

turned from the dead,” either because the illness was so grave or because a life cut off from all human contact, a life without friends and family, was not really a life.

**3. the priest shall go outside the camp** He is not to wait until people come to him with their concerns but must go to where the people are.

**4.** The offering included cedar wood, from the tallest and strongest of all plants, and hyssop, a kind of grass, the smallest and most vulnerable of all growing things. This was to symbolize the leveling power of illness, which afflicts the powerful and the powerless alike, and to teach the mighty a lesson about their vulnerability. The person recovered from illness may re-enter the camp but may not go home yet. Perhaps one who leaves the hospital or the isolation of serious illness with great relief is not yet fully oneself, not quite ready to resume the routines and responsibilities of normal life, home, and family.

over fresh water in an earthen vessel; <sup>6</sup>and he shall take the live bird, along with the cedar wood, the crimson stuff, and the hyssop, and dip them together with the live bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the fresh water. <sup>7</sup>He shall then sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be purified of the eruption and purify him; and he shall set the live bird free in the open country. <sup>8</sup>The one to be purified shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe in water; then he shall be pure. After that he may enter the camp, but he must remain outside his tent seven days. <sup>9</sup>On the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair—of head, beard, and eyebrows. When he has shaved off all his hair, he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; then he shall be pure. <sup>10</sup>On the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish, three-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in for a grain offering, and one *log* of oil. <sup>11</sup>These shall be presented before the LORD, with the man to be purified, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, by the priest who performs the purification.

<sup>12</sup>The priest shall take one of the male lambs and offer it with the *log* of oil as a reparation offering, and he shall elevate them as an elevation offering before the LORD. <sup>13</sup>The lamb shall be slaughtered at the spot in the sacred area

עַל־מַיִם חַיִּים: <sup>6</sup> אֶת־הַצִּפֹּר הַחַיָּה יִקַּח אֹתָהּ וְאֶת־עֵץ הָאָרֶז וְאֶת־שְׁנֵי הַתּוֹלְעֹת וְאֶת־הָאֵזוֹב וְטָבַל אוֹתָם וְאֶת | הַצִּפֹּר הַחַיָּה בְּדָם הַצִּפֹּר הַשְּׁחֻטָּה עַל הַמַּיִם הַחַיִּים: <sup>7</sup> וְהִזָּה עַל הַמְטָהָר מִן־הַצָּרַעַת שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים וְטָהָרוּ וְשָׁלַח אֶת־הַצִּפֹּר הַחַיָּה עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה: <sup>8</sup> וְכִבֶּס הַמְטָהָר אֶת־בְּגָדָיו וְגִלַּח אֶת־כָּל־שְׁעָרוֹ וְרָחַץ בְּמַיִם וְטָהָר וְאַחַר יָבֹוא אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיֵּשֶׁב מִחוּץ לְאֹהֶלֹ שְׁבַע יָמִים: <sup>9</sup> וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יִגְלַח אֶת־כָּל־שְׁעָרוֹ אֶת־רֵאשׁוֹ וְאֶת־זָקְנוֹ וְאֶת גִּבַּת עֵינָיו וְאֶת־כָּל־שְׁעָרוֹ יִגְלַח וְכִבֶּס אֶת־בְּגָדָיו וְרָחַץ אֶת־בְּשָׂרוֹ בְּמַיִם וְטָהָר: <sup>10</sup> וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי יִקַּח שְׁנֵי־כִבְשִׂים תְּמִימִים וְכִבְשֵׁה אַחַת בַּת־שָׁנָתָה תְּמִימָה וְשִׁלְשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֵלֹת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן וְלֶג אֶחָד שֶׁמֶן: <sup>11</sup> וְהָעֹמֵד הַכֹּהֵן הַמְטָהָר אֶת הָאִישׁ הַמְטָהָר וְאֹתָם לְפָנָי יִהְיֶה פֶתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:

<sup>12</sup> וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַכִּבֶּשׂ הָאֶחָד וְהִקְרִיב אֹתוֹ לְאַשֶׁם וְאֶת־לֶג הַשֶּׁמֶן וְהִנִּיף אֹתָם שְׁנֵי־תְנוּפָה לְפָנָי יִהְיֶה: <sup>13</sup> וְשָׁחַט אֶת־הַכִּבֶּשׂ בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁחַט אֶת־הַחֻטָּאת וְאֶת־

means “living water.” It is water that flows continually, like that of springs.

**9. of head, beard, and eyebrows** It was normally forbidden to shave the beard or the side-locks of the head (19:27). Exceptions are made for these rites of purification.

**10. log** About 10 fluid ounces (0.3 L).

**11.** The person undergoing purification is stationed near the entrance of the Tent of Meet-

ing, together with the material assembled for use in the purification.

**12. reparation offering** This provided sacrificial blood to be sprinkled on the extremities of the individual who was being purified; blood from the burnt offering or from the purification offering could not be applied to the human body.

**13. at the spot in the sacred area** That is, on the north side of the altar (see 1:11, 4:24, and 7:2).

**9. bathe his body in water** This was not simply to cleanse oneself. It symbolized rebirth and re-creation—just as an infant is born out of water, just as a convert emerges out of water to a new life and a new identity, just as the

world was created out of water (Gen. 1:2). The experience of illness and recovery has made the leper a new person—that is, someone who now looks at life differently (*Seifer Ha-Hinnukh*).

where the purification offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered. For the reparation offering, like the purification offering, goes to the priest; it is most holy. <sup>14</sup>The priest shall take some of the blood of the reparation offering, and the priest shall put it on the ridge of the right ear of him who is being purified, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>15</sup>The priest shall then take some of the *log* of oil and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. <sup>16</sup>And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in the palm of his left hand and sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. <sup>17</sup>Some of the oil left in his palm shall be put by the priest on the ridge of the right ear of the one being purified, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot—over the blood of the reparation offering. <sup>18</sup>The rest of the oil in his palm the priest shall put on the head of the one being purified. Thus the priest shall make expiation for him before the LORD. <sup>19</sup>The priest shall then offer the purification offering and make expiation for the one being purified of his impurity. Last, the burnt offering shall be slaughtered, <sup>20</sup>and the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar, and the priest shall make expiation for him. Then he shall be pure.

<sup>21</sup>If, however, he is poor and his means are insufficient, he shall take one male lamb for a reparation offering, to be elevated in expiation

**14. on the ridge of the right ear** The person was treated literally from head to foot.

**18.** The rites were essential to securing expiation, or purification. The purification offering and the burnt offering were also parts of the purification rites. The purification offering served to place the individual in good standing with God.

הָעֹלָה בַּמָּקוֹם הַקֹּדֶשׁ כִּי כִחַטָּאת הָאֲשֶׁם  
 הוּא לִפְהֶן קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים הוּא: <sup>14</sup> וְלָקַח  
 הַפֹּהֵן מִדָּם הָאֲשֶׁם וְנָתַן הַפֹּהֵן עַל-  
 תַּנּוּף אֶזְנוֹ הַמִּטְהָר הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בִּהֶן  
 יָדוֹ הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בִּהֶן רַגְלוֹ הַיְמָנִית:  
<sup>15</sup> וְלָקַח הַפֹּהֵן מִלֹּג הַשֶּׁמֶן וַיִּצַק עַל-כַּף  
 הַפֹּהֵן הַשְּׂמָאלִית: <sup>16</sup> וְטָבַל הַפֹּהֵן אֶת-  
 אֶצְבָּעוֹ הַיְמָנִית מִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּפוֹ  
 הַשְּׂמָאלִית וְהִזָּה מִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ  
 שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: <sup>17</sup> וּמִיֵּתֵר הַשֶּׁמֶן  
 אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּפוֹ יִתֵּן הַפֹּהֵן עַל-תַּנּוּף אֶזְנוֹ  
 הַמִּטְהָר הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בִּהֶן יָדוֹ הַיְמָנִית  
 וְעַל-בִּהֶן רַגְלוֹ הַיְמָנִית עַל דָּם הָאֲשֶׁם:  
<sup>18</sup> וְהִנּוֹתָר בַּשֶּׁמֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּף הַפֹּהֵן יִתֵּן  
 עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמִּטְהָר וְכִפֵּר עָלָיו הַפֹּהֵן לִפְנֵי  
 יְהוָה: <sup>19</sup> וְעָשָׂה הַפֹּהֵן אֶת-הַחֲטָאת וְכִפֵּר  
 עַל-הַמִּטְהָר מִטְּמֵאתוֹ וְאַחַר יִשְׁחַט אֶת-  
 הָעֹלָה: <sup>20</sup> וְהֵעֹלָה הַפֹּהֵן אֶת-הָעֹלָה וְאֶת-  
 הַמִּנְחָה הַמִּזְבֵּחַה וְכִפֵּר עָלָיו הַפֹּהֵן  
 וְטָהַר: **ס**

<sup>21</sup> וְאִם-דָּל הוּא וְאִין יָדוֹ מִשְׁגֶּת וְלָקַח  
 בֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד אֲשֶׁם לְתַנּוּפָה לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו

שלישי  
[חמישי]

The burnt offering symbolized renewed acceptability as a worshiper and full reinstatement in the community.

**21–32.** These verses repeat the rites prescribed in verses 1–20, except that birds are substituted for animals in the burnt offering and in the purification offering.

**17.** The oil is placed on the leper's head, hand, and foot and sprinkled on the altar, to convey the idea that recovery from illness is

the combined result of our actions, our attitudes, and divine grace.

for him, one-tenth of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in for a grain offering, and a *log* of oil; <sup>22</sup>and two turtledoves or two pigeons, depending on his means, the one to be the purification offering and the other the burnt offering. <sup>23</sup>On the eighth day of his purification he shall bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, before the LORD. <sup>24</sup>The priest shall take the lamb of reparation offering and the *log* of oil, and elevate them as an elevation offering before the LORD. <sup>25</sup>When the lamb of reparation offering has been slaughtered, the priest shall take some of the blood of the reparation offering and put it on the ridge of the right ear of the one being purified, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>26</sup>The priest shall then pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand, <sup>27</sup>and with the finger of his right hand the priest shall sprinkle some of the oil that is in the palm of his left hand seven times before the LORD. <sup>28</sup>Some of the oil in his palm shall be put by the priest on the ridge of the right ear of the one being purified, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, over the same places as the blood of the reparation offering; <sup>29</sup>and what is left of the oil in his palm the priest shall put on the head of the one being purified, to make expiation for him before the LORD. <sup>30</sup>He shall then offer one of the turtledoves or pigeons, depending on his means—<sup>31</sup>whichever he can afford—the one as a purification offering and the other as a burnt offering, together with the grain offering. Thus the priest shall make expiation before the LORD for the one being purified. <sup>32</sup>Such is the ritual for him who has a scaly affection and whose means for his purification are limited.

<sup>33</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

*TZARA-AT* IN BUILDING STONES  
(vv. 33–53)

This section deals with some sort of mold, blight,

וְעִשְׂרוֹן סֹלֶת אֶחָד בְּלוּל בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה  
וְלֹג שֶׁמֶן: <sup>22</sup> וּשְׁתֵּי תוֹרִים אֹךְ שְׁנַיִ בְּנֵי יוֹנָה  
אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׂיֵג יָדוֹ וְהָיָה אֶחָד חֲטָאת וְהָאֶחָד  
עֹלָה: <sup>23</sup> וְהֵבִיא אֹתָם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי  
לְטַהֲרָתוֹ אֶל-הַפֶּהֶן אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד  
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: <sup>24</sup> וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן אֶת-כֶּבֶשׂ  
הָאֵשֶׁם וְאֶת-לֹג הַשֶּׁמֶן וְהֵנִיף אֹתָם הַכֹּהֵן  
תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: <sup>25</sup> וְשָׁחַט אֶת-כֶּבֶשׂ  
הָאֵשֶׁם וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן מְדָם הָאֵשֶׁם וְנָתַן  
עַל-תְּנוּפָה אֶזְנוֹ-הַמִּטְהָר הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בֹּהֶן  
יָדוֹ הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בֹּהֶן רִגְלוֹ הַיְמָנִית:  
<sup>26</sup> וּמִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן יִצַק הַכֹּהֵן עַל-כַּף הַכֹּהֵן  
הַשְּׂמָאלִית: <sup>27</sup> וְהָיָה הַכֹּהֵן בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ  
הַיְמָנִית מִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּפוֹ  
הַשְּׂמָאלִית שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:  
<sup>28</sup> וְנָתַן הַכֹּהֵן מִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּפוֹ  
עַל-תְּנוּפָה אֶזְנוֹ הַמִּטְהָר הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בֹּהֶן  
יָדוֹ הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בֹּהֶן רִגְלוֹ הַיְמָנִית עַל-  
מְקוֹם דָּם הָאֵשֶׁם: <sup>29</sup> וְהִנּוֹתָר מִן-הַשֶּׁמֶן  
אֲשֶׁר עַל-כַּף הַכֹּהֵן יִתֵּן עַל-רֹאשׁ הַמִּטְהָר  
לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: <sup>30</sup> וְעָשָׂה אֶת-  
הָאֶחָד מִן-הַתּוֹרִים אֹךְ מִן-בְּנֵי הַיּוֹנָה  
מֵאֲשֶׁר תִּשְׂיֵג יָדוֹ: <sup>31</sup> אֶת אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תִּשְׂיֵג יָדוֹ  
אֶת-הָאֶחָד חֲטָאת וְאֶת-הָאֶחָד עֹלָה עַל-  
הַמִּנְחָה וְכִפֵּר הַכֹּהֵן עַל הַמִּטְהָר לִפְנֵי  
יְהוָה: <sup>32</sup> זֹאת תּוֹרַת אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ נִגַע צָרַעַת  
אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִשְׂיֵג יָדוֹ בְּטַהֲרָתוֹ: פ  
<sup>33</sup> וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן  
לֵאמֹר:

רביעי  
[ששי]

or rot, perhaps of a fungoid nature, that produced recessed lesions and discoloration in the plaster or mud used to cover building stones.

<sup>34</sup>When you enter the land of Canaan that I give you as a possession, and I inflict an eruptive plague upon a house in the land you possess, <sup>35</sup>the owner of the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, "Something like a plague has appeared upon my house." <sup>36</sup>The priest shall order the house cleared before the priest enters to examine the plague, so that nothing in the house may become impure; after that the priest shall enter to examine the house. <sup>37</sup>If, when he examines the plague, the plague in the walls of the house is found to consist of greenish or reddish streaks that appear to go deep into the wall, <sup>38</sup>the priest shall come out of the house to the entrance of the house, and close up the house for seven days. <sup>39</sup>On the seventh day the priest shall return. If he sees that the plague has spread on the walls of the house, <sup>40</sup>the priest shall order the stones with the plague in them to be pulled out and cast outside the city into an impure place. <sup>41</sup>The house shall be scraped inside all around, and the coating that is scraped off shall

כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לְכֶם לְאֶחְזָה וְנִתְּתִי נִגַע צֹרַעַת בְּבַיִת אֶרֶץ אֲחֻזְתְּכֶם: <sup>35</sup>וּבֹא אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הַבַּיִת וְהִגִּיד לַפֹּהֵן לֵאמֹר כְּנָגַע נִרְאָה לִי בַבַּיִת: <sup>36</sup>וְצִוָּה הַכֹּהֵן וּפָנּוּ אֶת-הַבַּיִת בְּטָרִם יָבֹא הַפֹּהֵן לִרְאוֹת אֶת-הַנִּגַּע וְלֹא יִטְמָא כָּל-אֲשֶׁר בַּבַּיִת וְאַחַר כֵּן יָבֹא הַפֹּהֵן לִרְאוֹת אֶת-הַבַּיִת: <sup>37</sup>וְרָאָה אֶת-הַנִּגַּע וְהִנִּיחַ הַנִּגַּע בְּקִירַת הַבַּיִת שִׁקְעוֹרוֹת יִרְקַרְקַת אוֹ אֲדַמְדָּמֹת וּמְרִאִיהֶן שָׁפֵל מִן-הַקִּיר: <sup>38</sup>וַיֵּצֵא הַפֹּהֵן מִן-הַבַּיִת אֶל-פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת וְהִסְגִיר אֶת-הַבַּיִת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים: <sup>39</sup>וְשָׁב הַפֹּהֵן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְרָאָה וְהִנִּיחַ פָּשָׁה הַנִּגַּע בְּקִירַת הַבַּיִת: <sup>40</sup>וְצִוָּה הַפֹּהֵן וְחִלְצוּ אֶת-הָאֲבָנִים אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶן הַנִּגַּע וְהִשְׁלִיכוּ אֹתָהֶן אֶל-מַחוּץ לְעִיר אֶל-מְקוֹם טָמֵא: <sup>41</sup>וְאֶת-הַבַּיִת יִקְצַע מִבַּיִת סָבִיב וְשִׁפְכוּ אֶת-הָעֶפֶר אֲשֶׁר הִקְצוּ אֶל-מַחוּץ לְעִיר

**36.** Once the priest arrives and quarantines the house, everything inside it becomes impure as well.

**37. streaks that appear to go deep into the wall** Literally, "lesions that appear to be recessed within the surface of the wall."

**38. close up the house** A diseased person is closed up in a house. Here, the house itself is locked up to keep people out.

**39.** If the lesions became enlarged, it is likely that the blight, or fungus, has penetrated to the stones themselves.

**41.** The mud coating is scraped off the interior facing of the rest of the stones to ascertain whether the infection had penetrated the stones themselves.

**34.** The appearance of *tzara-at* in the stones of a house was a mysterious event. Some Sages doubted it ever happened, and others consigned it to a distant past. Commentators consider the afflicted house (*ha-bayit ha-m'nugga*) to be a moral warning rather than a natural occurrence, even more emphatically than they consider cases of skin disease to be a moral warning. They fasten on the word for "I inflict" to deduce that this was a plague sent by God. A home is a family's private refuge. Thus a home afflicted by plague represents the breakdown of the social values that kept a family safe and united. It was a cause for concern if the problems of society at large had come to infect the home. Most commentators suggest

that the antisocial behavior that brought the plague to the house was selfishness, a blindness to the needs of others.

**35. owner of the house** Literally, "one whose house it is," leading the Sages to conclude that the owner sinned by saying, "the house and everything in it are mine and I don't have to share it with anyone else" (BT Yoma 11b). As punishment, the house is torn down. The Midrash pictures such owners claiming that they cannot help the poor because they are poor themselves. When their houses are dismantled, all will see what they were hoarding (Lev. R. 17:2).

**40. stones . . . to be pulled out** From the heart of the selfish owner.

be dumped outside the city in an impure place. <sup>42</sup>They shall take other stones and replace those stones with them, and take other coating and plaster the house.

<sup>43</sup>If the plague again breaks out in the house, after the stones have been pulled out and after the house has been scraped and replastered, <sup>44</sup>the priest shall come to examine: if the plague has spread in the house, it is a malignant eruption in the house; it is impure. <sup>45</sup>The house shall be torn down—its stones and timber and all the coating on the house—and taken to an impure place outside the city.

<sup>46</sup>Whoever enters the house while it is closed up shall be impure until evening. <sup>47</sup>Whoever sleeps in the house must wash his clothes, and whoever eats in the house must wash his clothes.

<sup>48</sup>If, however, the priest comes and sees that the plague has not spread in the house after the house was replastered, the priest shall pronounce the house pure, for the plague has healed. <sup>49</sup>To purify the house, he shall take two birds, cedar wood, crimson stuff, and hyssop. <sup>50</sup>He shall slaughter the one bird over fresh water in an earthen vessel. <sup>51</sup>He shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the crimson stuff, and the live bird, and dip them in the blood of the slaughtered bird and the fresh water, and sprinkle on

אֶל־מְקוֹם טָמֵא: <sup>42</sup>וְלָקְחוּ אֲבָנִים אַחֲרוֹת וְהִבְיִאוּ אֶל־תַּחַת הָאֲבָנִים וְעָפְרוּ אַחֲרָיִקַח וְטַח אֶת־הַבַּיִת:

<sup>43</sup>וְאִם־יָשׁוּב הַנִּגַּע וַפָּרַח בַּבַּיִת אַחֲרֵי חֲלִיץ אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים וְאַחֲרֵי הַקְּצוֹת אֶת־הַבַּיִת וְאַחֲרֵי הַטּוּחַ: <sup>44</sup>וּבֹא הַכֹּהֵן וְרָאָה וְהִנֵּה פָּשָׁה הַנִּגַּע בַּבַּיִת צָרַעַת מִמְאֶרֶת הוּא בַּבַּיִת טָמֵא הוּא: <sup>45</sup>וְנָתַץ אֶת־הַבַּיִת אֶת־אֲבָנָיו וְאֶת־עֲצָיו וְאֶת כָּל־עֹפֵר הַבַּיִת וְהוֹצִיא אֶל־מְחוּץ לְעִיר אֶל־מְקוֹם טָמֵא:

<sup>46</sup>וְהִבָּא אֶל־הַבַּיִת כָּל־יְמֵי הַסְּגִיר אִתּוֹ יִטְמָא עַד־הָעֶרֶב: <sup>47</sup>וְהִשְׁכַּב בַּבַּיִת יִכַּסּ אֶת־בְּגָדָיו וְהֵאֱכַל בַּבַּיִת יִכַּסּ אֶת־בְּגָדָיו:

<sup>48</sup>וְאִם־בָּא יָבֵא הַכֹּהֵן וְרָאָה וְהִנֵּה לֹא־פָּשָׁה הַנִּגַּע בַּבַּיִת אַחֲרֵי הַטּוּחַ אֶת־הַבַּיִת וְטָהַר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַבַּיִת כִּי נִרְפָּא הַנִּגַּע: <sup>49</sup>וְלָקַח לְחֹטֵא אֶת־הַבַּיִת שְׁתֵּי צִפְרִיִּים וְעֵץ אֲרָז וּשְׁנֵי תוֹלַעַת וְאֵזֶב: <sup>50</sup>וְשָׁחַט אֶת־הַצִּפֹּר הָאֶחָד אֶל־כַּלְי־חֶרֶשׁ עַל־מִים חַיִּים: <sup>51</sup>וְלָקַח אֶת־עֵץ־הָאֲרָז וְאֶת־הָאֵזֶב וְאֶת שְׁנֵי הַתּוֹלַעַת וְאֶת הַצִּפֹּר הַחַיָּה וְטָבַל אֹתָם בְּדַם הַצִּפֹּר הַשְּׁחוּטָה וּבַמִּים הַחַיִּים וְהִזָּה אֶל־הַבַּיִת שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים:

**42. take other coating and plaster the house** The stones could be retained if the blight had not penetrated into them.

**46–47.** These verses deal with the transmission of an impurity that is present in a closed structure to people who are inside the structure while it is impure.

**49.** The procedures for purifying the house that has “healed,” so to speak, are almost identical to those prescribed in verses 1–32 for purifying a diseased person. There is only one difference: Oil and blood are sprinkled on a person; water and blood are sprinkled on a house.

**43–45.** Is the problem superficial, easily cleared up, or has it entered the structure of the institution, so that the institution is beyond saving?

**The house shall be torn down** The Midrash sees this as an anticipation of the destruc-

tion of Solomon’s temple, a house that will have been corrupted by the behavior of its inhabitants (Lev. R. 17:7). It then adds, “But it will not be forever, as it is stated, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation’” (Isa. 28:16).

the house seven times. <sup>52</sup>Having purified the house with the blood of the bird, the fresh water, the live bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the crimson stuff, <sup>53</sup>he shall set the live bird free outside the city in the open country. Thus he shall make expiation for the house, and it shall be pure.

<sup>54</sup>Such is the ritual for every eruptive affection—for scalls, <sup>55</sup>for an eruption on a cloth or a house, <sup>56</sup>for swellings, for rashes, or for discolorations—<sup>57</sup>to determine when they are impure and when they are pure.

Such is the ritual concerning eruptions.

**15** The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup>Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

When any man has a discharge issuing from his member, he is impure. <sup>3</sup>The impurity from his discharge shall mean the following—whether his member runs with the discharge or is stopped up so that there is no discharge, his impurity means this: <sup>4</sup>Any bedding on which the one with the discharge lies shall be impure, and every object on which he sits shall be im-

<sup>54–57</sup>. These verses are a postscript to the entire contents of chapters 13 and 14.

DISCHARGES FROM SEXUAL ORGANS (15:1–33)

Most of this chapter deals with discharges from the sexual organs as a result of illness or infection, not the normal menstruation of females or seminal emissions of males. Little was known about their treatment, apart from bathing, laundering clothing, and carefully observing the course taken by the ailment itself. All the impurities dealt with in this chapter, like any prevailing impurity

within the Israelite community, threatened, directly or indirectly, the purity of the sanctuary, which was located within the area of settlement.

THE ISRAELITE MALE (vv. 1–18)

**2. member** Hebrew: *basar* (body, flesh); here it is a euphemism for the male sex organ.

**4. lies . . . sits** Two sorts of objects are ren-

וְחִטָּא אֶת־הַבַּיִת בְּדָם הַצִּפּוֹר וּבְמִיִּם  
הַחַיִּים וּבַצִּפּוֹר הַחַיָּה וּבַעֵץ הָאָרֶז וּבְאֵזֹב  
וּבְשֵׁנֵי הַתּוֹלַעַת: <sup>53</sup>וְשָׁלַח אֶת־הַצִּפּוֹר  
הַחַיָּה אֶל־מְחוּץ לְעִיר אֶל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה  
וּכְפָר עַל־הַבַּיִת וְטָהַר:

חֲמוּשֵׁי <sup>54</sup>זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה לְכָל־נֹגַע הַצָּרַעַת וּלְנִתְקוֹ:  
<sup>55</sup>וּלְצָרַעַת הַבְּגָד וּלְבַיִת: <sup>56</sup>וּלְשֵׂאת  
וּלְסַפַּחַת וּלְבִהָרַת: <sup>57</sup>לְהוֹרֹת בְּיוֹם  
הַטָּמֵא וּבְיוֹם הַטָּהוֹר  
זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַצָּרַעַת: ס

**טו** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן  
לֵאמֹר: <sup>2</sup>דַּבְּרוּ אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתֶּם  
אֲלֵהֶם  
אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי יִהְיֶה זָב מִבְּשָׁרוֹ זֹבֹו טָמֵא  
הוּא: <sup>3</sup>וְזֹאת תִּהְיֶה טְמֵאתוֹ בְּזֹבֹו רַר  
בְּשָׁרוֹ אֶת־זֹבֹו אוֹ־הַחֲתִיִּם בְּשָׁרוֹ מְזֹבֹו  
טְמֵאתוֹ הוּא: <sup>4</sup>כָּל־הַמְּשָׁכָב אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב  
עָלָיו הִזָּב יִטָּמֵא וְכָל־הַכֵּלִי אֲשֶׁר־יִישַׁב

CHAPTER 15

**2ff.** Once again we encounter the notion of *tum-ah* not as uncleanness or contamination but as an encounter with the mysterious

life-engendering power of certain bodily fluids and with the life-endangering dimension of disease. This encounter with the primal forces of life and death rule out (or may possibly replace) other ways of entering into the divine presence.

pure. <sup>5</sup>Anyone who touches his bedding shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>6</sup>Whoever sits on an object on which the one with the discharge has sat shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>7</sup>Whoever touches the body of the one with the discharge shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>8</sup>If one with a discharge spits on one who is pure, the latter shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>9</sup>Any means for riding that one with a discharge has mounted shall be impure; <sup>10</sup>whoever touches anything that was under him shall be impure until evening; and whoever carries such things shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>11</sup>If one with a discharge, without having rinsed his hands in water, touches another person, that person shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>12</sup>An earthen vessel that one with a discharge touches shall be broken; and any wooden implement shall be rinsed with water.

<sup>13</sup>When one with a discharge becomes purified of his discharge, he shall count off seven days for his purification, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in fresh water; then he shall be pure. <sup>14</sup>On the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and

עָלָיו יִטְמָא: <sup>5</sup>וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִגַּע בְּמִשְׁכְּבוֹ יִכְבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>6</sup>וְהִישָׁב עַל-הַפְּלִי אֲשֶׁר-יִישָׁב עָלָיו הִזָּב יִכְבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>7</sup>\*וְהִנְגַּע בְּבֶשֶׂר הִזָּב יִכְבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>8</sup>וְכִי-יִרֶק הִזָּב בְּטְהוֹר וְכִבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>9</sup>וְכֹל-הַמְרֻכָּב אֲשֶׁר יִרְכַּב עָלָיו הִזָּב יִטְמָא: <sup>10</sup>וְכֹל-הַנִּגָּע בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה תַּחְתָּיו יִטְמָא עַד-הָעֶרֶב וְהַנוֹשֵׂא אוֹתָם יִכְבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>11</sup>וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִגַּע-בּוֹ הִזָּב וְיָדָיו לֹא-שָׁטַף בַּמַּיִם וְכִבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>12</sup>וְכֹל-יְחַרֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִגַּע-בּוֹ הִזָּב יִשְׁבֵּר וְכֹל-פְּלִי-עֵץ יִשְׁטַף בַּמַּיִם:

<sup>13</sup>וְכִי-יִטְהַר הִזָּב מִזֹּבָו וְסָפַר לוֹ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים לְטְהָרְתוֹ וְכִבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרַחֵץ בְּשָׂרוֹ בַּמַּיִם חַיִּים וְטָהַר: <sup>14</sup>וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי יִקַּח-לוֹ שְׁתֵּי תֹרִים אֹו שְׁנֵי בְּנֵי יוֹנָה וּבָא | לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד

v. 7. חצי הספר בפסוקים

dered impure by contact with a person who has a discharge: those on which one lies, and those on which one sits. These objects must be purified.

**5. bathe in water** One must bathe completely.

**7.** Direct contact with the affected person renders one impure.

**8–9.** Verses 8–9 deal with contact initiated by the affected person.

**spits** Spittle was thought to carry infection and disease.

**means for riding** Hebrew: *merkav*, denoting “an object on which one rides,” such as a saddle or other appurtenance located under the rider. If

someone with a discharge rides on these objects, they become impure.

**10. whoever touches anything that was under him** That is, under the affected person. In this case, the impurity extends only to the body of the person who touches such objects, not to the clothing.

**whoever carries such things** Contact by carrying objects entails the usual severe restrictions in response.

**13. seven days for his purification** Seven consecutive days must pass after the termination of the ailment before ritual purification can be undertaken.



give them to the priest. <sup>15</sup>The priest shall offer them, the one as a purification offering and the other as a burnt offering. Thus the priest shall make expiation on his behalf, for his discharge, before the LORD.

<sup>16</sup>When a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water and remain impure until evening. <sup>17</sup>All cloth or leather on which semen falls shall be washed in water and remain impure until evening. <sup>18</sup>And if a man has carnal relations with a woman, they shall bathe in water and remain impure until evening.

<sup>19</sup>When a woman has a discharge, her discharge being blood from her body, she shall remain in her menstrual impurity seven days; whoever touches her shall be impure until evening. <sup>20</sup>Anything that she lies on during her menstrual impurity shall be impure; and anything that she sits on shall be impure. <sup>21</sup>Anyone who touches her bedding shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening; <sup>22</sup>and anyone who touches any object on which she has sat shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening. <sup>23</sup>Be it the bedding or be it the object on which she

וַנִּתְּנֶם אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן: <sup>15</sup> וְעָשָׂה אֹתָם הַכֹּהֵן  
אֶחָד חֲטָאת וְהָאֶחָד עֹלָה וְכִפָּר עָלָיו  
הַכֹּהֵן לְפָנָי יְהוָה מִזֹּבָבוֹ: ס

<sup>16</sup> וְאִישׁ כִּי-תִצֵּא מִמֶּנּוּ שִׁכְבַּת-זָרַע וְרִחֵץ  
בַּמַּיִם אֶת-כָּל-בְּשָׂרוֹ וְטָמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב:  
<sup>17</sup> וְכָל-בְּגָד וְכָל-עוֹר אֲשֶׁר-יִהְיֶה עָלָיו  
שִׁכְבַּת-זָרַע וְכִבֵּס בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד-  
הָעֶרֶב: פ <sup>18</sup> וְאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אִישׁ  
אִתָּהּ שִׁכְבַּת-זָרַע וְרִחֲצוּ בַמַּיִם וְטָמְאוּ  
עַד-הָעֶרֶב:

ששי  
[שבועי]

<sup>19</sup> וְאִשָּׁה כִּי-תִהְיֶה זֹבָה דָּם יִהְיֶה זֹבָה  
בְּבִשְׂרָהּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּהְיֶה בְּנִדְתָּהּ  
וְכָל-הַנֹּגַע בָּהּ יִטָּמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>20</sup> וְכָל-  
אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁכַּב עָלָיו בְּנִדְתָּהּ יִטָּמֵא וְכָל-  
אֲשֶׁר-תִּשָּׁב עָלָיו יִטָּמֵא: <sup>21</sup> וְכָל-הַנֹּגַע  
בְּמִשְׁכָּבָהּ יִכֹּבֵס בְּגָדָיו וְרִחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא  
עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>22</sup> וְכָל-הַנֹּגַע בְּכָל-כְּלִי אֲשֶׁר-  
תִּשָּׁב עָלָיו יִכֹּבֵס בְּגָדָיו וְרִחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא  
עַד-הָעֶרֶב: <sup>23</sup> וְאִם עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּב הוּא אֹ  
עַל-הַכְּלִי אֲשֶׁר-הוּא יִשְׁבַת-עָלָיו בְּנִגְעוֹ-

**15.** A purification offering is required not because the person in question offended God by any act on his or her part, but because the impurity (i.e., the ailment) threatened the purity of the sanctuary.

**18.** Both the man and the woman are ritually impure after the sex act, and both must bathe.

THE ISRAELITE FEMALE (vv. 19–30)

The subjects of the law in this section are a woman's normal menstruation and her abnormal discharges of blood.

**19. menstrual impurity** Better: "menstrual condition." Hebrew: *niddah*, denoting the physiologic process of the flow of blood.

**19.** The enforced separation of husband and wife during her menstrual period parallels the dietary laws. Both sets of regulations inculcate holiness by introducing rules of what is permitted and what is forbidden into what

are matters of instinct for all other living creatures. Once again, the Torah defines the uniqueness of the human being as the ability to control instinct instead of being controlled by it.

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

**15:19. discharge being blood** This and the following verses are the basis for *taharat ha-mishpahah*, the "family purity" laws that prohibit sexual contact during a woman's menstrual period until after her subsequent immersion in a *mikveh* (ritual bath). The biblical requirement for a man to immerse after a seminal emission (Lev. 15:16–17) fell into disuse by talmudic times (BT Ber. 21b–22a).

**15:20. shall be impure** Jewish law places no restrictions on a menstruant's touching a Torah scroll or reciting or leading prayers.

has sat, on touching it he shall be impure until evening. <sup>24</sup>And if a man lies with her, her menstrual impurity is communicated to him; he shall be impure seven days, and any bedding on which he lies shall become impure.

<sup>25</sup>When a woman has had a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her menstrual impurity, or when she has a discharge beyond her period of menstrual impurity, she shall be impure, as though at the time of her menstrual impurity, as long as her discharge lasts. <sup>26</sup>Any bedding on which she lies while her discharge lasts shall be for her like bedding during her menstrual impurity; and any object on which she sits shall become impure, as it does during her menstrual impurity: <sup>27</sup>whoever touches them shall be impure; he shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain impure until evening.

<sup>28</sup>When she becomes purified of her discharge, she shall count off seven days, and after that she shall be pure. <sup>29</sup>On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. <sup>30</sup>The priest shall offer the one as a purification offering and the other as a burnt offering; and the priest shall make expiation on her behalf, for her impure discharge, before the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>You shall put the Israelites on guard against their impurity, lest they die through their im-

בו יטמא עַד־הָעֶרֶב: <sup>24</sup> וְאִם שָׁכַב יִשְׁכַּב אִישׁ אֹתָהּ וְתָהִי נִדְתָהּ עָלָיו וְטָמֵא שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְכָל־הַמִּשְׁכָּב אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁכַּב עָלָיו יִטְמָא: פ

<sup>25</sup> וְאִשָּׁה כִּי־יִזְוֹב זֹב דָּמָהּ יָמִים רַבִּים בְּלֹא עֵת־נִדְתָהּ אוֹ כִּי־תִזְוֹב עַל־נִדְתָהּ כָּל־יָמֶיהָ זֹב טָמְאָתָהּ כִּי־יָמִי נִדְתָהּ תִּהְיֶה טָמְאָה הִוא: <sup>26</sup> כָּל־הַמִּשְׁכָּב אֲשֶׁר־תִּשְׁכַּב עָלָיו כָּל־יָמֵי זִוְבָהּ כַּמִּשְׁכָּב נִדְתָהּ יִהְיֶה־לָּהּ וְכָל־הַכְּלִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשָּׁב עָלָיו טָמֵא יִהְיֶה כְּטָמְאֵת נִדְתָהּ: <sup>27</sup> וְכָל־הַנוֹגֵעַ בָּם יִטְמָא וְכַבֵּס בְּגָדָיו וְרָחַץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד־הָעֶרֶב:

<sup>28</sup> וְאִם־טָהְרָה מִזִּזְוִיָּהּ וְסָפְרָה לָּהּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְאַחַר תִּטְהַר: <sup>29</sup> וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי תִקַּח־לָּהּ שְׁתֵּי תֹרִים אוֹ שְׁנֵי בָנֵי יוֹנָה וְהִבִּיֵּאתָ אוֹתָם אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: <sup>30</sup> וַעֲשֵׂה הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הָאֶחָד חֲטָאת וְאֶת־הָאֶחָד עֹלָה וְכָפַר עָלֶיהָ הַכֹּהֵן לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מִזִּב טָמְאָתָהּ:

<sup>31</sup> וְהִזְרַתָּם אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִטָּמְאָתָם

שביעי

מפסיר

**24. he shall be impure seven days** He must bathe and launder his clothing after seven days.

**25.** A woman who has discharges of blood not caused by menstruation bears the same impurity as a menstruating woman for as long as the discharges last.

**28.** Like the male in verse 13, the female must count off seven days after the termination of her abnormal discharge of blood.

**29–30.** This is the essential difference between abnormal and normal conditions: Abnormalities ultimately require ritual expiation as part of the purification process, whereas normal con-

ditions, though they induce impurity, require only bathing and laundering of clothing and observance of the proper period of waiting. Such normal conditions do not of themselves involve the sanctuary directly, unless a person in such a state actually enters the sacred precincts.

#### CONCLUSION (vv. 31–33)

#### **31. lest they die through their impurity**

It is not the condition of impurity itself that brings on God's punishment, but the failure to correct that condition so as to restore a state of purity.

purity by defiling My Tabernacle which is among them.

<sup>32</sup>Such is the ritual concerning him who has a discharge: concerning him who has an emission of semen and becomes impure thereby, <sup>33</sup>and concerning her who is in menstrual infirmity, and concerning anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and concerning a man who lies with an impure woman.

וְלֹא יִמְתּוּ בְטִמְאַתָּם בְּטִמְאֵם אֶת־מִשְׁכְּנִי  
 אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכְכֶם:  
<sup>32</sup>זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַזֵּב וְאֲשֶׁר תֵּצֵא מִמֶּנּוּ  
 שֹׁכֶבֶת־זָרַע לְטִמְאֵה־בָּהּ: <sup>33</sup>וְהַדָּוָה  
 בְּנִדְתָּהּ וְהַזֵּב אֶת־זוּבוֹ לְזָכָר וּלְנִקְבָּהּ  
 וּלְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב עִם־טִמְאָה: פ

**31. My Tabernacle which is among them**  
 Even when Israelites are impure, God's presence is found among them. Abravanel understands "My Tabernacle" as referring to the hu-

man body. Thus "defiling My Tabernacle" refers to rendering our bodies impure. Because each person is created in God's image, his or her body is a temple of God.