

PURIFICATION

After the birth of a child, a woman has a discharge, showing blood. This occurs for a short period of time and varies in days with the individual woman. The Jewish religion had numerous laws for blood uncleanness and believed this to be a period in a woman's life when she was considered "unclean". According to Jewish customs, if a man or woman showed or had done any unclean act, before that person could become "clean" again, they would have to go through a specified time period of separation for their cleansing.

The showing of blood by a woman after birth of a child required a separation period called "purification" (cleaning). From Leviticus 12:2, 4 to 8, we read the requirements for child-birth: ***"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 ... 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. 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. 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 priests: 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. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, 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."***

In speaking of the temple rites concerning the presence of a woman for her purification after childbirth, the woman was not required to be physically present if her offering was given through a representative of the laity (ie. Member of Jewish religion who was not ordained), who come from various districts, taking part daily in the temple services. That said, devoted mothers such as Mary, who lived within a close distance of the temple, would attend personally. As we just read from Leviticus, a woman from the time of her giving birth was considered unclean; seven days unclean if she bore a boy or fourteen days unclean if she bore a daughter. During this initial period, the husband was not to have intercourse with her. In addition to this initial period, her days in the blood of her purifying was a further thirty-three days for a boy child or sixty-six days for a girl child. During the period of her purifying, she would not be allowed to enter the temple or any holy place nor touch anything considered holy.

The following is an excerpt from the book, *"Family"*, written by the Jewish writer Hayyim Schnied: ***"Whereas most of childbirth is surrounded by folklore, one aspect, the sexual relations of the parents after childbirth, is dealt with extensively in the law codes. The basic law is stated in the Bible, and according to its literal meaning a woman is prohibited from having intercourse for seven days following the birth of a male child, and for fourteen days if she gives birth to a girl. A further period of thirty-three days in the former instance and sixty-six days in the latter is laid down, these being the days of her purification, "during which any blood seen is the blood of purification" when she is permitted to have relations with her husband. After the period of purification has elapsed, she must bring prescribed sacrifices ... The law of sexual relations was preserved in the sages, who added, however, that any blood seen during the "days of her purification" renders her prohibited to her husband and requires her, when the blood flow ceases, to immerse herself in the Mikveh (ritual bath) at which time she becomes clean."*** This writing by Hayyim Schnied offers further proof that the Jews did follow this course of "purification" of the woman after childbirth. This purification act deals strictly with the discharge of blood from a woman after childbirth.

The sacrificial offering for the purification rite of the mother was for the ***"sin offering for the***

Levitical defilement symbolically attaching to the beginning of life, and a burnt offering, that marked the restoration of communion with God." (from "*Jesus The Messiah*" by Alfred Edersheim). After the completion of her time of Purification, the woman could again enter into the holy places having been cleansed. For additional laws pertaining to "issues of blood" from a woman, read Leviticus 15:19 to 25. These verses tell us that during the time of a woman's uncleanness, she is totally separated, even from her husband.

Mary went through the rite of Purification as every Jewish woman did after giving birth to Jesus. But an important detail for our edification is the fact that this particular purification rite was for the showing of blood from childbirth. In light of this, we should question the validity of the virgin birth concept. If she was a perpetual virgin and her womb had never parted for her to have a natural birth, then why did Mary go through her allotted time of Purification of forty days upon bringing forth a son? ***"And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished ..."*** Luke 2:22a. The truth of the whole matter is that Mary did not have a virgin birth with Jesus, nor was she a perpetual virgin. There is no place in the Holy Bible that says such an event every happened. If Mary did not have a natural birth in bringing forth Jesus, then she would not have had an afterbirth, and if she had no afterbirth then she would have not shown blood at birth or after. In fact, with Mary's supposed perpetual virginity, there was not a birth at all because her womb did not part for Jesus' delivery. Jesus would have had to miraculously appeared outside the wall of flesh without disturbance to the uterus. Contrary to the perpetual virgin doctrine, Mary finished her forty days of purification as required by the law of Moses.

One other important verse to pay close attention to is Luke 2:23: ***"Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the LORD."*** This was the reason for Mary presenting Jesus in Jerusalem (Luke 2:22) and again contradicts the virgin birth idea since it states that Mary's womb had opened in delivering Jesus.

We should be aware that the concept of a virgin birth is almost old as civilization itself. It is an ideology that began in paganism and then was taught by the Catholic church and then by other churches in Christendom. We have been warned that we should abandon heathen ideologies and practices which are steeped in man's fables and worship God in truth: ***"Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen..."*** Jeremiah 10:1; ***"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*** John 4:23, 24. Luke makes it clear that Mary went through the custom of purification signifying that she must have shown blood after giving birth to Jesus, thus, negating the idea of a virgin birth.