



Unclean Spirits in the New and Old Testament.

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Unclean Spirits in the New and Old Testament.

Topics: New Testament.

- When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man. (Matt 12:43-45).
- Jesus heals a man with an unclean spirit. (Mark 1:23-27).
- Unclean spirits cry out, "You are the Son of God." (Mark 3:10-12).
- Those vexed with unclean spirits were healed. (Luke 6:17-18).
- When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man. (Luke 11:21-26).
- Jews considered Gentiles to be born in utter sin. (John 9:30-34).
- Multitudes vexed with unclean spirits were healed. (Acts 5:16).
- Unclean spirits came out of many that were possessed with them. (Acts. 8:5-8).
- No man should be called common or unclean. (Acts. 10:28).
- Nothing unclean or common has entered Peter's mouth. (Acts. 11:8-10).
- Nothing is unclean of itself. (Rom. 14:13-14).
- Your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. (1 Cor. 7:14)
- Touch not the unclean thing. (2 Cor. 6:16-18).
- Uncleaness manifests the works of the flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21).
- No unclean person has any inheritance in the Kingdom of God. (Ephesians 5:5).
- Sprinkling the blood of bulls on the unclean sanctifies the flesh. (Hebrews 9:13-14).
- Three unclean spirits. (Rev. 16:13).

Topics: Old Testament.

- A person is unclean if they touch an unclean animal. (Lev. 5:2).
- A priest drinking strong drink is unclean. (Lev. 10:8-10).
- A person is unclean if they touch an unclean bird, animal and fish. (Leviticus 11:24).
- A woman that gives birth to a male child is unclean. (Lev. 12:1-2).
- People with leprosy are unclean. (Lev. 13:8).
- People who touch a dead body, a bone or a grave are unclean. (Numbers 19:16).
- The unclean person is the same as an uncircumcised person. (Judges 15:18).
- No unclean person was to enter the house of the LORD. (2 Chronicles 23:18-19).

- Land was unclean because of its people's uncleanness. (Ezra. 9:10-12).
- Can an unclean person give birth to a child that is clean? (Job 14:1-4).
- The hypocrites die with the unclean. (Job 36:13-14).
- Death comes to the clean (righteous) and unclean (wicked). (Ecclesiastes 9:1-3).
- Isaiah lips were unclean because he lived with unclean people. (Isaiah 6:5).
- The uncircumcised (Gentiles or anything not Jewish) are unclean. (Isaiah 52:1).
- The holy and the profane, the unclean and the clean. (Ezek. 22:26).
- Sin is identified with uncleanness. (Zech. 13:1).
- An unclean spirit is identified with idols and false prophets. (Zechariah 13:2-4).

INTRODUCTION

The expression unclean Spirits in the Old Testament is not used as commonly as it is in the New Testament nevertheless to understand what was in the mind of the Jews when they did use the term, unclean spirits it helps if we first take a brief overview of what the word unclean meant in the mind of the Jews and to the Jewish nation in the Old Testament. The meaning of the word unclean from Strong's Concordance in the Old Testament can apply to anyone who defiles themselves sexually, ethically religiously or ceremonially (i.e. touching a dead body etc.), or by idolatry. It can apply to an individual, a group of people or a nation and in some contexts, it carries the same idea as the word common and unsaved meaning separated from God.

In the Old Testament sin is identified with uncleanness, but unclean does not always apply to sin it can apply to a person who is uncircumcised and to anyone who has become ceremonially unclean or to the Gentile nations (everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) and to a man or woman who marries a person that is outside of the Jewish race. Unclean also applies to everyone who has defiled themselves morally, ethically, religiously or by idolatry and ritual which embraces eating or touching anything considered by Jewish law to be unclean.

The Jews used the words, uncircumcised, common and unclean to relate to those outside of Judaism because they saw themselves as the Holy Race so anything outside of their race was considered unclean likewise the Moslems use the word infidels to relate to those outside of the Islam faith. An unclean spirit in the Old Testament is identified with idols and false prophets and no unclean person was to enter the house of the LORD (Zech. 13:2-4). For Scriptures using the word unclean in the Old Testament, see the title:

- Unclean in the Old Testament.

At the end of unclean and unclean Spirits in the New Testament.

UNCLEAN SPIRITS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

From Strong's Concordance unclean in the New Testament comes from the following three Greek words (akathartos) (kathairo) (katharos) and carries the following three meanings:

1. Akathartos the key words in akathartos is, "not clean" meaning unclean in thought and life (in a moral sense), but also applies to anyone who is unclean in a ceremonial sense according to the Levitical law.
2. Kathairo the key words in kathairo is, "purge" and "guilt" it carries the idea of a person who is not cleansed or purged of their uncleanness in thought and the impurities in their life etc., and is likened to pruning trees and vines from their useless shoots. Figuratively it carries the idea of being atoned for, being redeemed, excused and forgiven from guilt.
3. Katharos the key word in katharos is, "pure" which means that being unclean is the exact opposite of being pure. It applies to anyone who is not considered clean in an ethical or Levitical sense and to a person who is bound by corrupt desires of sin and of what is false as well as to those who are guilty of anything.

The three Greek words (akathartos) (kathairo) (katharos) show that the word unclean applies to anyone who has corrupt desires in thought and behavior (morally or otherwise), but is not limited to sinful behavior or thoughts only but also embraces any person who in an ethical, ceremonial or religious sense is doing those things which must be abstained from according to Levitical law.

WHEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT IS GONE OUT OF A MAN

- **Matthew 12:43-45:** "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation."

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Prior to these verses Jesus has been rebuking the scribes and the Pharisees generation for seeking signs and tells them the only sign they will be given is the death and resurrection of Christ. The house in this context is the Levitical priesthood with its ceremonial and religious laws. The expression, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a person" can apply to anything within a person that hinders them accepting Christ and being saved. In the context of these verses the unclean spirit refers to the Jewish heart that is trusting in ceremonial and religious laws to be saved.

Jesus is telling his generation if they stop trusting in the law and accept God's righteousness that comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ they will be delivered from their unclean spirit (i.e., trusting in the law) that is opposed to the ways of God.

Jesus is also warning those who have been converted to Christ that if they turn back and re-establish the old system of law that Christ has pulled down and trust in it to save them, they will be worse off than before and judged and condemned accordingly. This is one of the great battles Paul had with new converts those who had great religious authority and spoke fluently were enticing them back under the law. The expression, "unclean spirit" in this context refers to a person who is trusting in something other than Christ for salvation to save them to eternal life and everlasting glory.

The practical application today: Old Judaism and the Levitical system is seen in some churches today that have re-established legalism, formalism, ritual and tradition as ways of maintaining salvation or being saved. Some of these things maybe OK in themselves and perhaps necessary for an organization to run smoothly, but when they become laws to be kept to be saved or to maintain salvation, they become grossly wrong and spiritually destructive. For further information see the notes following (Luke 11:21-26) (below) under the title: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man."

JESUS HEALS A MAN WITH AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT

- **Mark 1:23-27:** And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ²⁴ Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. ²⁵ And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. ²⁶ And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. ²⁷ And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

NOTICE: it was the man that cried out not the unclean spirit.

Jesus has taken Peter, Andrew, James and John into a synagogue on a Sabbath day and a man said to have an unclean spirit interrupts Jesus while he is teaching the people in the synagogue. This man believed Jesus was the Holy One prophesied to come from God he most likely knew the Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of God sending his messenger to the temple who will refine and purify the Levitical priesthood as silver (Mal. 3:1-3), and the many other Scriptures that speak of the Lord. This man obviously knew that a Holy One was coming from God to judge the people we know this because the man says, "Have you come to destroy us," meaning to destroy the Jews or the nation of Israel (he is not referring to the unclean spirits). Jesus rebukes the man telling him to be quiet and then tells the unclean spirit to go out of him. The unclean spirit in this context could simply refer to the man's blatantly offensive and rude spirit manifested in his standing up to interrupt, confront and mock Jesus during his teachings.

UNCLEAN SPIRITS CRY OUT, "YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD."

- **Mark 3:10-12:** For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. ¹¹ And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. ¹² And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

Unclean spirit, in the context of these verses most likely refer to people that were living a corrupt lifestyle or who had some kind of mental illness. The people of Jesus generation believed people who had a mental illness or sickness they did not understand, including deafness and blindness were caused by evil gods called demons or unclean spirit, possessing the sick person. This belief was strongly held amongst the Jews and the surrounding pagans and therefore those who were sick with these kinds of illnesses would also have believed that they were possessed with these evil gods and unclean spirits. No-doubt many of the people with these kind of sickness had heard that Jesus could heal them and that he was the Son of God, but unlike many amongst the crowd who were only interested in being healed they believed Jesus was who he claimed to be, that is why they humbled themselves and fell down before Christ's feet. These people had no embarrassment or fear in crying out, "Jesus is the Son of God." At various times throughout the New Testament Jesus told those who he had healed not to tell anyone or make it known. The two most likely reasons for Jesus saying this are:

1. The crowds were so great that he had no leisure time to pray, eat, sleep or teach his twelve disciples the Gospel which was his primary ministry.
2. Jesus did not want to stir up the anger of the chief priests, Pharisees, scribes and Romans as it was not yet his time to lay down his life.

Unclean spirits and Old Testament prophecy: various Old Testament prophecies speak about God's messenger, a Holy One coming to the temple to judge and refine the wicked like silver (Malachi 3:1-3). The people in Jesus era who believed they had unclean spirits or demons also

believed Jesus was the Son of God and therefore most likely believed he was the Holy One prophesied to come from God to strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips condemn the wicked to death. (Isaiah 11:1-4). Jewish people who did not understand the cause of their sickness or illness believed they were possessed by evil gods called unclean spirits or demons. Because they believed Jesus was the Son of God it is more than likely that they would have also believed he was coming to condemn the wicked this is the most likely reason those who are said to have unclean spirits humbly fell down before the Lord and confessed who he was.

One of the primary reasons (there are many others) the Pharisees crucified Jesus was because he claimed to be the Son of God which is probably one of the reasons Jesus tells those who believed they were possessed with unclean spirits or evil gods called demons to stop telling people that he was the Son of God. Jesus would not have wanted to stir up the Pharisees wrath, especially since just prior to this story he had healed a man on a Sabbath Day which angered the Pharisees so they set about planning how to kill him and it was not yet his time to be crucified.

THOSE VEXED WITH UNCLEAN SPIRITS WERE HEALED

- **Luke 6:17-18:** And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; ¹⁸ And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

The people of Jesus generation believed people who had a mental illness or sickness they did not understand, including deafness and blindness were caused by evil gods called demons or unclean spirits possessing the sick person and those who were sick with these kinds of illnesses believed that their bodies were possessed with evil gods. This belief was strongly held amongst the Jews and the surrounding pagans. They knew nothing of mental illness or germs and bacteria that caused diseases so they credited sickness they did not understand as being caused by evil gods called demons or unclean spirits. Jesus had no need to explain the medical science behind many of their illnesses because once the people saw how great the power of his God was it would be pointless for them to continue to follow their weak and useless gods, so the Lord simply spoke according to what the people believed. Unclean spirits in the context of these verses refers to people that had some kind of mental illness or a sickness the people of that generation did not understand.

WHEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT IS GONE OUT OF A MAN

- **Luke 11:21-26:** When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: ²² But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. ²³ He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. ²⁴ When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. ²⁵ And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. ²⁶ Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

Unclean spirit in this context refers to anything in the human heart that is against Christ. This rebellion in the human heart against Jesus can also be referred to as having a common spirit with the world or with a false religious system. What the people of Jesus generation called an unclean spirit today we would call a bad habit or bad addiction. In relationship to religion, an unclean spirit, would apply to anyone who is against the Lord Jesus Christ and to a person who has an excessive desire towards the things of this world and forsakes the Lord to attain them or to those who are trusting in the law or a false religious system to be saved. In these

verses the expression, "unclean spirit" applies to any person who hears the Gospel, but is indecisive about turning from what they are trusting in to be saved to eternal life or whatever is hindering them from following Christ. This person will during the time of their indecision be spiritually empty because of their indecision and if they go back to whatever is hindering them from following Christ, they will end up worse than before. In this story the Pharisees, chief priests, scribes and the law are the strong man that had the power over the people and Christ and grace are the stronger man. Jesus came and took away the ceremonial and religious laws that the Pharisees and priests trusted in, he stripped them of all that they valued and robbed them of the power and stronghold they had over the people.

Christ is now saying if you don't follow me, you will be spiritually barren and eventually establish the old system of ceremonial and religious laws that I have pulled down and if this old religious system of pride, ego, power and control is re-established it will be worse than before. After the death of Christ, the apostles feared that their new converts would be enticed back under the law by those who had religious authority and were able to speak fluently. For further information see the notes following (Matt. 12:43-45) (above) under the title: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man."

JEWS CONSIDERED GENTILES TO BE BORN IN UTTER SIN

- **John 9:30-34:** The man (the blind man that Jesus healed) answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You (the Pharisees) do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They (the Pharisees) answered him (the blind man), "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

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Jesus has just healed a blind man and he tries to tell the religious leaders (the Pharisees) that the man who healed him must be born of God, but the Pharisees were so bound up in their high religious positions and their pride and ego that rather than hear what the man was saying they accuse him of being born in utter sin simply because he was born blind. The expression, "being born in utter sin" to the Jew is the same as saying he was born unclean. They would have considered this man to be unclean from birth because of his blindness. The Jews especially the religious leaders not only considered people with blindness to be unclean, but also considered those who were deaf or had any other disability to be unclean because under the Levitical law they were not allowed to minister in the temple.

MULTITUDES VEXED WITH UNCLEAN SPIRITS WERE HEALED

- **Acts 5:16:** The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Vexed means oppressed and afflicted: all of these people are coming out of the cities and towns. Those said to have unclean spirits in this context applies to those who had a mental illness, sickness, diseases or disorders (i.e. blindness and deafness). The people of Jesus generation did not understand these sicknesses so they credited them all as be the result of the people having an unclean spirit or being possessed with demons because they knew nothing of mental illnesses nor did they understand diseases germs, virus and bacteria.

UNCLEAN SPIRITS CAME OUT OF MANY THAT WERE POSSESSED WITH THEM

- **Acts 8:5-8:** Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. ⁶ And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. ⁷ For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much joy in that city.

The people of Jesus generation believed people who had a mental illness or sickness they did not understand, including deafness and blindness were caused by evil gods called demons or unclean spirits possessing the sick person and those who were sick with these kinds of illnesses believed that their bodies were possessed with evil gods. This belief was strongly held amongst the Jews and the surrounding pagans that is the reason the writer of these verses says, "Unclean spirits came out of many that were possessed with them." They knew nothing of mental illness or germs and bacteria that caused diseases so they credited sickness they did not understand to being caused by evil gods called demons or unclean spirits. Jesus had no need to explain the medical science behind many of their illnesses because once the people saw how great the power of his God was it would be pointless for them to continue to follow their weak and useless gods, so the Lord simply spoke according to what the people believed.

NO MAN SHOULD BE CALLED COMMON OR UNCLEAN

- **Acts 10:28:** And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.

It was unlawful for a Jew to keep company with another nation because they were seen as being unclean. Unclean in this context simply means that a person does not belong to the Jewish nation. It is interesting to notice that the word common in this context carries the same idea as the word unclean.

NOTHING UNCLEAR OR COMMON HAS ENTERED PETER'S MOUTH

- **Acts 11:8-10:** But I (Peter) said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. ⁹ But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common. ¹⁰ And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

Unclean in this context refers to foods that the Levitical law declared to be unclean. In this vision God is showing Peter that the Gentile nations who up to now had been considered unclean by the Jews were now to be considered clean. Notice that the word common in this context carries the same idea as the word unclean.

NOTHING IS UNCLEAR OF ITSELF

- **Romans 14:13-14:** Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way. ¹⁴ I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

The expression, "There is nothing unclean of itself" does not apply to everything obviously committing adultery would never be class as something that was clean. There is nothing unclean of itself, in this context refers to ceremonially unclean foods according to the Levitical law. Paul is simply saying if a person believes meat to be unclean, then to their conscience it is unclean and for them to eat it would be sin, but if another person eats the same meat because they just see it as being meat then they have not sinned since their conscious is clear before God.

YOUR CHILDREN WOULD BE UNCLEAR, BUT NOW THEY ARE HOLY

- **1 Corinthians 7:14:** For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

Made holy in this context means a congregation of a church or any other Christian group is to consider the unbelieving husband or an unbelieving wife of a Christian woman or Christian man to be holy in contrast to separating from them or treating them as an outsider (i.e. unclean) and they are to treat the children in the same way, but it does not mean they are saved. This is simply talking about the attitude Christians are to have towards their brothers and sister's unbelieving family and children. Unclean in this context simply means they do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are an unbeliever, today we would say unsaved.

TOUCH NOT THE UNCLEAR THING

- **2 Corinthians 6:16-18:** And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The unclean thing in this context refers to idols and by extension anything that is opposed to God and contrary to the Lord Jesus Christ.

UNCLEANNESS MANIFESTS THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

- **Galatians 5:19-21:** Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Uncleanness in this context is an attitude of the heart followed by an outward action that is offensive to God and against the Spirit of Christ.

NO UNCLEAR PERSON HAS ANY INHERITANCE IN GOD'S KINGDOM

- **Ephesians 5:5:** For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Unclean in this context applies to any person who does not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Today we would say the unsaved person will have no inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

SPRINKLING THE BLOOD OF BULLS ON THE UNCLEAR SANCTIFIES THE FLESH

- **Hebrews 9:13-14:** For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: ¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Unclean in this context refers to the Jews who were considered unclean before God, prior to their being sanctified by the blood of bulls, but in its wider understanding embraces anyone who is not sanctified by God through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS

- **Revelation 16:13:** And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

The three unclean spirits in this context that John saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet refer to doctrines that lead people away from Christ away from God's grace and toward ungodly behaviour.

SUMMARY OF UNCLEAN SPIRITS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Unclean can refer to:

- Jews doing things that must be abstained from according to Levitical law.
- The Jewish heart that was trusting ceremonial religious laws to be saved.
- Foods that the Levitical law declared unclean.
- Jews prior to their being sanctified by the blood of bulls.
- A person who does not belong to the Jewish nation.
- Gentile nations (i.e. everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).
- People who are trusting in something other than Christ for salvation.
- Anyone who is blatantly offensive and mocks the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Whatever is in the heart that is against the Spirit of Christ.
- Everyone who does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e., the unsaved).
- Anything that is opposed to God and contrary to Christ.
- Those who do not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e., the unsaved).
- Idols.
- Doctrines that lead people away from Christ and toward ungodly behaviour.
- Anyone who acts wickedly or lives a corrupt lifestyle (morally or otherwise).
- Every form of sinful behaviour.
- Anyone who has sinful desires in attitude or thought (morally or otherwise).
- Any kind of mental illness, blindness, deafness, paralyses and such like things
- Any illness, sickness, disease or disorder the people did not understand.
- A person being born blind or with any other mental or physical disorder.

For further information see the following title:

- Demons.
- In, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

INTRODUCTION: the following Old Testament verses show all the different meanings the word unclean embraces and the various contexts it is used in.

LEVITICUS

- **Leviticus 5:2:** Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether *it be* a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and *if* it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty.

This is the first mention of unclean in the Bible it shows that if a Jewish man or woman touched an unclean animal or the dead body of an animal, they were considered unclean.

- **Leviticus 10:8-10:** And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, ⁹ Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations: ¹⁰ And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

These verses show that any priest who drank strong drink during his service in the temple was considered unclean. Today we would say he was unfit for service. Drinking alcohol while serving in the temple is an offence to God for obvious reasons, but outside of ministry drinking alcohol is not a sin. Nevertheless, there are numerous Scriptures that do warn against drinking excessive alcohol.

This is because it weakens the will and leads to lose morals and often violence and results in behaviour that is often regretted when the drunken mind returns to its sober state this is the reason the Bible warns against excessive drinking. Though drinking alcohol is not a sin drinking and excessive amount can lead to sin (even the secular world understands this truth and this danger).

- **Leviticus 11:24:** And for these (unclean birds, animals and fish) ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.

If a person touched the dead body of any creature considered unclean under the Levitical law, they were declared unclean, but only for that day.

- **Leviticus 12:1-2:** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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.

A woman who gave birth to a baby son was to be considered unclean for seven days. This may have been for health reasons and so that she could have rest since by being declared unclean she would not be permitted to do any work that involved the temple or any service that involved the priests (i.e., cooking and preparing food for the priest and the daily cleaning of the temple etc.).

- **Leviticus 13:8:** And *if* the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: *it is* a leprosy.

Naturally any man or woman who had leprosy that was considered contagious was proclaimed unclean so that they would be separated from others for obvious health reasons.

- **Numbers 19:16:** And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

This verse shows us that anyone who touched the bone or body of a dead human or even a grave they were declared unclean for seven days.

- **Judges 15:18:** And he (Samson) was sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

In this context the uncircumcised refers to the Philistines and by extension to anyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew, unclean in some contexts carries the same idea as uncircumcised this is because to the Jews the Gentiles were considered an unclean race without God while the Jews considered themselves the holy race with God. The Moslems have a similar view whereby they consider themselves the holy race with God and everyone else outside of the Islam faith infidels without God it is in this fashion that the Scriptures and the Jews often use the term uncircumcised or unclean to relate to those outside of Judaism because they saw themselves as the holy race so anything outside of their race was considered unclean.

- **2 Chronicles 23:19:** And he (David) set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in anything should enter in.

David set men before the temple of God so that nothing proclaimed unclean could enter the house of the LORD.

- **Ezra 9:10-11:** And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,¹¹ Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness.

The unclean things in the context of these verses refer to unclean foods and idols and the practice of pagan rituals and religious ceremonies and the worship of heathen gods. It embraces mixed marriages, sexual immoralities and all other types of wickedness throughout the land. When the majority of people dwelling on the land are corrupt not only are the people considered unclean, but the land they are dwelling on is also considered unclean.

- **Job 14:1-4:** Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.

In the context of this verse Job is saying that an unclean person (a sinner) cannot give birth to a child that is clean meaning perfect (i.e. without sin), rather every human child born has a certain amount of trouble bound up in them. This is why every child requires a certain amount of discipline as they grow so that they learn self-control, respect and what is right and good. The only woman who has ever given birth to the perfect child is the Virgin Mary and she had the help of the Holy Spirit.

- **Job 36:13-14:** But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.¹⁴ They die in youth, and their life *is* among the unclean.

The unclean in this context refers to hypocrites who deny God and the corrupt who have gone down to the grave

- **Ecclesiastes 9:2:** All *things come* alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath.

The clean in these verses refers to the righteous who acknowledge God and who are generous of heart and do-good, while the unclean refers to those who deny God lie and practice wickedness and do evil.

- **Isaiah 6:5:** Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah is saying that his lips were unclean because in a vision he has seen In a vision he has seen the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and above him he saw the seraphim crying "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD" (Isaiah 6:1-3) and because he lived amongst an unclean people because the people of Israel were in rebelling against the LORD.

- **Isaiah 52:1:** Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

The uncircumcised in this context refers to Gentiles and the unclean refers to anyone who is not Jewish and anyone who dishonours God and who is corrupt and who treats others contrary to the law of love.

- **Ezekiel 22:26:** Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed *difference* between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

Clean in this context refers to those who were priests while unclean refers to those outside of God's Kingdom. Ezekiel is saying there should be a clear difference between the lifestyle of those within God's Kingdom and those who are not.

- **Zechariah 13:1-2:** In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. ² And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

In these verses' uncleanness is identified with sin and with idols and false prophets

- **Zechariah 13:2-3:** and it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

The unclean spirit in the land refers to idols and those who worship them and to false prophets who speak lies (v3). That's the end of all the selected verses using the word unclean from the Old Testament (there are many more), but they all carry a similar meaning to these ones.

Throughout these verses the expression, "being clean and being unclean" carry the same idea as the following expressions:

- Being holy and unholy
- Being obedient to God and being rebellious to God.
- Being righteous and being unrighteous
- Being good and being wicked.
- Being truthful and being a liar.
- Being holy and being profane (blasphemous and disrespectful).
- Being unselfish and being selfish
- Being generous and being greedy.
- Being ceremonially clean and being ceremonially unclean.

SUMMARY OF UNCLEAR SPIRITS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A person was considered unclean if:

- They touched an unclean bird, animal or a fish or worshipped idols.
- They defiled themselves ethically, sexually, religiously or drank strong drink.

- A woman had given birth to a male child.
- The touched a dead body killed in battle, a bone or a grave or had leprosy.
- They broke ceremonial and religious laws or turned away from them.

Unclean can apply to:

- Sin, but it does not always apply to sin.
- The land because of the people's sinful lifestyle.
- The uncircumcised, the Gentiles and anything not Hebrew or Jewish.
- Certain sicknesses, foods and strong alcoholic drink.

Unclean in an Old Testament biblical sense is not the same as saying people are unsaved as in most instances the word unclean relates to God's chosen people.

CONCLUSION

Sin is identified with uncleanness, but unclean does not always apply to sin, it can apply to a person who is uncircumcised and to anyone who has become ceremonially unclean or to the Gentile nations (everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) and to a man or woman who marries a person that is outside of the Jewish race. Unclean also applies to everyone who has defiled themselves morally, ethically, religiously or by idolatry and ritual which embraces eating or touching anything considered by Jewish law unclean.

The Jews used the words, uncircumcised, common and unclean to relate to those outside of Judaism because they saw themselves as the holy race with God so anything outside of their race was considered unclean and without God. Unclean spirits can refer to any behaviour, thought or attitude that is offensive to God and the Lord Jesus Christ and anything a person is trusting in to be saved to eternal life and everlasting glory other than the Lord Jesus Christ and God's Grace.

For further information see the titles:

- Demons.
- Devil.

All titles are in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).