

זָבָה

(Jewish law) woman who has intermenstrual bleeding זָבָה

<http://www.morfix.co.il/en/%D7%96%D6%B8%D7%91%D6%B8%D7%94>


Zavael - An angel who controls and has dominion over whirlwinds.

<http://www.angelicreflections.com/angel-Dictionary-Z.asp>

Zav

Not to be confused with Zavah.

For the villages in Iran, see Zav-e Bala and Zav-e Pain.

Part of Judaic series of articles on
Ritual purity in Judaism

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tumah and taharah Mikveh
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v t e ^[1]

In Torah terminology, the Hebrew word **zav** (lit. "flow") is a state of ritual impurity arising from abnormal seminal discharge from the male sexual organ. Purification requirements for the *zav* include counting seven days without seminal discharge, immersion in a spring, and bringing certain *korbanot* (sacrifices).

In the realm of *tumah and taharah* law, the *zav* has the ability to create a *midras* and is required to abstain from entering specific areas of the Temple mount.

Etymology

The Hebrew verb stem *zuv* (Hebrew זָוַן) in the Qal *zava* (זָוַן) simply means to flow, as in "a land flowing with milk and honey".

Hebrew Bible

The initial commandments regarding the *zav* were given to the Israelites during the second year after the Exodus from Egypt;

Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue (זָוַן), and whosoever is defiled by the dead:

—Numbers 5:2, KJV 1611

The specific law governing *zav* status is written in the book of Leviticus;

And if a woman have an issue (זָוַן), and her issue (זָוַן) in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the evening.

—Leviticus 15:19, KJV 1611

Rabbinical interpretation

Maimonides describes the *zav* state as the weakening of the male reproductive system while the general health of the man is normal. The semen of the otherwise healthy man oozes out without stimulation, erection, or pleasure. The color of the discharge has a reddish hue and has a thin consistency.^[2]

Abraham ibn Ezra mentions that *zav* status can either be abnormal discharge or the complete loss of ejaculation ability.^[3]

Specifics

The above-mentioned laws of *zav* are applicable if the discharge in question had happened at least three times, whether thrice in one day, or over consecutive days, although certain laws of *tumah* are applicable after the first and second discharges (Mishnah, *Zavim*, 1). The *zav* is quantified as an *Av HaTumah*, something able to transfer uncleanness. In addition, his actual *zav* discharge, saliva, semen, and urine are also deemed to have *Av HaTumah* status.

Only after the week's wait and the immersion, would the person become ritually clean once more (Leviticus 15:25^[4]) although he would not be permitted to eat *terumah* until nightfall nor to eat the flesh of a sacrifice until after bringing his sacrifice (Mishnah *Nega'im* 14:3 and Obadiah ben Abraham's commentary).

Although the regulations clearly have a sanitary benefit in the light of modern medical knowledge, Biblical scholars see these regulations as having originally derived from taboos against contact with semen, because it is considered to house life itself, and were consequently considered sacred,^[5] the seven-day period is thought to exist to ensure that the abnormality has genuinely ceased, the *sin offering* is considered to have originally been made as an apology for violating the taboo,^[6] and the *whole offering* is regarded as a later addition (before the Priestly Code was written).^[7]

In regard to the transportability of *tumah* from the *zav*, the Mishnah records that if a ritually clean person and a *zav* both sat on an animal, or in a small boat, then the ritually clean person would become ritually unclean by doing so, regardless of how far apart they might sit. This is known as *hesset* ("minor movement") (*Zavim*, 3-4).

Regular ejaculation is treated as being distinct from *zav*, and is known as *keri* (Leviticus 15:16-18^[8]).

As divine consequence

Ibn Ezra notes that the Torah requirement of bringing a sin-offering upon the completion of seven clean days is an indication that the *zav* committed a sinful act that incurred his *zav* status.^[9] Similarly, Hezekiah ben Manoah writes that the textual order of the *zav* laws near those of *tzaraath* and embezzlement (*me'ilah*), and demonstrate that *zav* status is incurred by lack of earnestness (to God) and sin.^[10]

Rabbi Shabtai HaKohen, "The Shach," in *Sifsei Kohan* comments that *zav* status is a divine consequence for excessive indulgence in physical relations that take place in the laying position. Thus, as consequence, items the *zav* will lay upon (i.e. *midras* objects) will become *tamei* (impure) for the duration of his *zav* state.^[11]

In modern Judaism

Judaism regards regulations concerning ritual purity as being in abeyance since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, since impurity can no longer be cleansed, there being no Red Heifer. Conversely, Reform Judaism regards such regulations as anachronistic; adherents of Conservative Judaism take a view somewhere between these views. Wikipedia:Citing sources

Further reading

- Sefer Hachinuch, Mitzvah 178
- Mishnah, Seder Tohoroth, tractate Zavim

References

- [1] http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Tumah_and_taharah&action=edit
- [2] Maimonides on Mishna Zavim 2:2
- [3] Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 15:13
- [4] <http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Leviticus&verse=15:25&src=>
- [5] *Peake's commentary on the Bible*
- [6] *Jewish Encyclopedia* article *Sin Offering*
- [7] *Jewish Encyclopedia* article *Burnt Offering*
- [8] <http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Leviticus&verse=15:16-18&src=>
- [9] Ibn Ezra on Leviticus 15:13
- [10] Chizkuni" on Numbers 4:6
- [11] Sifsei Kohen to the Chumash vol. 2 p. 245

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