

~LEECH (37)

[Hebrew, 'alu-qah']

- A bloodsucking worm with a flat, segmented body that tapers at both ends but is broadest toward the posterior part. Leeches measure from over 1 centimeters (0.5 inches) to over 10 centimeters (4 inches) in length.
- These creatures have a disk, or sucker, at each end of the body, the one at the head end being equipped with biting jaws.
- Leeches are found in great numbers in many streams and rivers of the Middle East. The young of one variety, *Limnatis nilotica*, when swallowed with the drinking water, attach themselves to the nasal cavities, larynx, or epiglottis of their host.
- They grow rapidly and are not easily removed. Their presence can hinder breathing and this, as well as loss of blood, sometimes proves fatal to the victim.
- Sole mention is made of the leech Hebrew, 'alu-qah' at;
- The leeches have two daughters that cry; Give! Give! There are three things that do not get satisfied, four that have not said, Enough! (Proverbs 30:15)
- Where the reference is to insatiable greed, it being stated that the leeches have two daughters that cry: Give! Give! The Commentary by F. C. Cook suggests that the leech's greed is here viewed as its daughter, spoken of in the plural to express intensity.
- Others consider the two daughters to be a reference to the two lips of its bloodsucking disk. A leech may consume three times its own weight in blood, a strong anticoagulant in its saliva ensuring a continuous flow from the victim.