

Leviticus 14

This chapter treats of the purification of lepers, and the rules to be observed therein; and first what the priest was to do for his cleansing when brought to him, by making use of two birds, with cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, as directed, #Le 14:1-7; what he was to do for himself, shaving off all his hair, and washing his flesh and clothes in water, #Le 14:8,9; the offerings to be offered up for him, two he lambs and one ewe lamb, and a meat offering, with a particular account of the use of the blood of the trespass offering, and of oil put upon the tip of his right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot, #Le 14:10-20; but if poor, only one lamb was required, a meat offering of one tenth deal, and two turtle doves or two young pigeons, and blood and oil used as before, #Le 14:21-32; next follow an account of leprosy in an house, and the signs of it, and the rules to judge of it, #Le 14:33-48; and the manner of cleansing from it, #Le 14:49-53; and the chapter is closed with a recapitulation of the several laws concerning the various sorts of leprosy in this and the preceding chapter, #Le 14:54-57. [Gill]

To me, this chapter leads us to conclude that leprosy was supernatural; its purpose was to typify sin and to glorify God. We see in this chapter that the priest could do nothing toward its cure, and if the leprosy departed from an individual, he had to be ceremonially cleansed. Though these laws refer to "he," obviously, they also refer to women, 13:29.

The laws of Lev 13, 14--the laws of leprosy--clearly pointing to Eph 1 & 2, especially chapter 2. The connection is developed at the end of this chapter.

I did not follow Gill very close in the last chapter, but I notice that he treats this chapter's laws of cleansing as I would based on my conclusions from previous chapter. So I will probably follow him closely here.

Vv. 1-9,

This first section describes the law concerning cleansing of leprosy. The person was separated from the congregation for his uncleanness; for some reason, he is healed. He then appears before the priest with two birds. One bird is killed, and its blood with water placed upon the second bird and the cleansed man. The bird with the blood is released. The obvious picture is of the sin, which leprosy represents, being removed from the leper.

V. 1,

he shall be brought unto the priest: not into the camp, or city, or house, where the priest was, for till he was cleansed he could not be admitted into either; besides, the priest is afterwards said to go forth out of the camp to him; but he was to be brought pretty near the camp or city, where the priest went to meet him. As the leper was an emblem of a polluted sinner, the priest was a type of Christ, to whom leprous sinners must be brought for cleansing; they cannot come of themselves to

him, that is, believe in him, except it be given unto them; or they are drawn with the powerful and efficacious grace of God, by which souls are brought to Christ, and enabled to believe in him; not that they are brought against their wills, but being drawn with the cords of love, and through the power of divine grace, sweetly operating upon their hearts, they move towards him with all readiness and willingness, and cast themselves at his feet, saying, as the leper that came to Christ, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean", #Mt 8:2 #Mr 1:40 Lu 5:12; and it is grace to allow them to come near him, and amazing goodness in him to receive and cleanse them. [Gill]

V. 3,

And the priest shall go forth out of the camp, &c.] A little without the camp, as Ben Gerson notes. There have been several goings forth of Christ our High Priest; first in the council and covenant of grace and peace, when he became the surety of his people; then in time by the assumption of human nature, when he came forth from his father, and came into the world to save them; next, when he went forth out of the city of Jerusalem to suffer for them; and also, when, at the time of conversion, he goes forth in quest of them, and looks them up, and finds them, and brings them home, which may answer to the type here; and all shows the great readiness of Christ to receive sinners:

What a wonderful picture of Christ our Redeemer! The sinner can not save himself any more than the leper could cleanse himself. The sinner can only come so far, and He goes to meet the sinner; the Great Shepherd goes to find His sheep.

Vv. 4-7, **the living and dead birds.** The two birds, one released and the other killed. Everything in this section typifies Christ, e.g. *an earthen vessel* speaks of the human body of Christ, 2 Cor 4:7 ; 13:4, & 1 Pe 3:18. Obviously, this law concerning the cleansing of lepers was fulfilled in Christ, Col 2:14, &c.

1) The blood of the one killed is applied to the living bird and to the leper. The explanation is clear: The blood of the innocent victim cleanses the unclean. The "leprosy" is ceremonially transferred from the person to the live bird by the blood, and the live bird is released. Thus his uncleanness is separated from him as far as the east is from the west.

2) the living bird would speak of "the divine Person" of Christ, always alive. Though His body died, He could not "die."

3) the living bird with the blood of the dead bird upon it ascended into the heavens; Christ ascended into the heavens with the sacrificial blood for the cleansing of the unclean, where He ever liveth to make intercession for the saints. That blood was presented to the Heavenly Father.

V. 7, the blood *sprinkle[d] upon him that is to be cleansed... seven times* is referred to in Ps 51:7. Through the sprinkled blood of Christ, the unclean are declared to be perfectly and every part clean.

4) the live bird let loose speaks of the freedom the sinner's freedom through faith in the shed blood of Christ.

5) the dead bird and the live bird could also speak of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

Col 3:1-4 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, [who is] our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1 Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

[G]reat is the mystery of godliness... Though we are given some insight into the *great mystery of godliness* with these two birds, among other things, we are by no stretch of the imagination shown the details of the Creator's plan of making the ungodly godly, of making the unclean clean, of making the unholy holy, of making the fallen, broken, hopeless sinner righteous in the sight of the Holy Heavenly Father, **Isa 55:6-11** [note that the Lord implies in Isa that man cannot even understand how nature works, let alone how the Spirit of God works to make the unrighteous righteous]. We have, however, been shown as much as the fallen mind can comprehend in the Word of God. Though we will have a body as does Christ, our minds will still be finite. Can a finite mind completely comprehend the infinite mind of God, especially as It worked in the mystery of godliness? Not hardly!

Therefore, let us act on what we know, and leave the "inner workings" to the Lord God.

Vv. 8, 9, washing and shaving required.

Washing

One obvious reason for washing the person and the cloths is physical cleanliness. The washing pictures washing away the filth of sin by the blood of Christ as well as the washing by the water of the word, Eph 5:26 ; Rev 1:5, 6, & 7:14.

Shaving

All hair was to be remove so that only the bear "man" remained.

...Maimonides says {g}, that none but a priest might shave him; and yet the text seems plainly to ascribe this, as well as the washing of his clothes and himself, to the leper that was to be cleansed; and the same writers say, that if two hairs were left it was no shaving; and so says the Misnah {h}: the shaving of the leper's hairs signified the weakening of the strength of sin; the mortification of the deeds of the body, through the spirit, and the laying aside all superfluity of naughtiness,

and the excrescences of the flesh; a parting with every thing that grows out of a man's self, sin or self-righteousness; a laying a man bare and open, that nothing may lie hid and covered, and escape cleansing:

The person is permitted partial entrance back into the congregation of the Lord. He appears to be cleansed from sin and to have true repentance towards God and faith in the blood of Christ. He is not yet allowed access back into his house with his wife and children for seven more days.

Moreover, the shaving of all hair shows us that we are totally *naked* in the sight of the One with Whom we have to do, Heb 4:13.

At the end of the seven days, he shaves and washes again. If all is still proper, he is allowed full access back into his family, for he has already been allowed back into the congregation of the Lord.

APPLICATION

We are shown by vv. 8, 9, that we should not be too hasty to allow a converted, repentant sinner into full fellowship in the congregation of the Lord. Though speaking of leaders, 1 Tim 5:21 fits here:

1 Ti 5:22 *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

The person, converted or unconverted, may weep great tears of sorrow and/or joy before the Lord, but the Lord warns us to be cautious before he or she is allowed full access, e.g. working in the church or given positions of trust. This should apply, as Paul meant it, especially to pastors and spiritual leaders. It also applies to leaders in any area of life. Check them out.

Vv. 10-20.

This section covers the law concerning atonement for the one who had the leprosy. Evidently, vv. 1-9 represented the leprosy of sin being removed, and this section deals with the forgiveness of sin, or the ceremonial cleansing of the leper.

V. 10, *the eighth day*. On the first day, he was pronounced clean and permitted to come back into the camp, but he could not go home yet, vv. 1-8. Then on the seventh day, if still clean, he could go home after again washing and shaving. Then on the next day, the eighth day, he had to make the offerings as required in vv. 10ff.

The *two he lambs without blemish, &c.* Everything mentioned here pictures the work of Christ, the Spotless Lamb of God slain for the cleansing of the unclean.

We should not overlook *one log of oil*, about half a pint: It "is an emblem of the grace and spirit of God received by the saints in measure, and is the same with the oil of gladness, poured on Christ without measure, Ps 45:7 Joh 3:34." [Gill]

V. 11, obviously, the priest had nothing whatsoever to do with the man's healing, but the work here of the priest for the man was required to ceremonially make him clean. All of this work was accomplished by the work of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus. **EVERYWHERE ONE TURNS IN GOD'S WORD, THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE WORK OF CHRIST IS SEEN-IF ONE WILL ONLY LOOK FOR CHRIST.**

Vv. 21-32

For the one who is poor, a lesser requirement is made upon him for his atonement. The law of atonement for the leper was based upon his ability to "pay," v. 32. I suppose the priest would determine if the former leper is making the proper sacrifice.

V. 30, *such as he can get*. Whichever bird he is able to capture. Thus the offering is placed within easy reach of all needing an offering. These birds would have been wild birds, so the person would have to put forth effort to capture them. The offering would have to cost the person something, at the least cost in time and effort to catch them.

Vv. 33-57

This section deals with leprosy in a house. The people at the time of this law were dwelling in tents, and would for another 40 years.

Note v. 34, the Lord is the One Who puts the plague of leprosy in a house. Why does He do it? Geneva:

This declares that no plague nor punishment comes to man without God's providence and his sending.

And leprosy was an especially strong statement of Divine Providence. I do not see how anyone can read this verse and not see that God controls absolutely everything by His providence. The plague could well have been placed there by the Lord because of the sins of the owner.

The rest of the law is specifically from the Lord; the inspired Word of God tells the people what to do if the Lord should happen to place the leprosy in their houses.

V. 36, *be not made clean...* If the priest entered into the house before it was emptied and pronounced the house unclean, all the contents would be unclean, and the loss would be greater.

V. 37, indeed a strange disease with strange effects on the house, but it proceeded from the hand of God.

V. 38-48. The house is shut up for seven days and reopened: If the plague had not spread, though it is not said so in the text, evidently, it is not a *fretting leprosy in the house*, v. 44. Fretting means pain, prick, irritate, be in pain. Apparently, the house was safe to dwell in, and the people could move back in.

But if the disease had spread, there were some steps to take, vv. 38-42. The place affected by the disease was to be removed and put the affected products in an unclean place, the dump. The area in the house is then replaced with clean material. V. 42, 43, reads as though the occupants could move back in. But I would assume that the house was resealed for another 7 days to check it out. Gill:

Ver. 44. Then the priest shall come and look, &c.] On the seventh day of the second week; though, according to Maimonides {o}, this was at the end of the third seven day, or on the nineteenth day from his first inspection into it; the seventh day being reckoned for the last of the first week, and the first of the second, and so on:

If the repair did not work, and the plague continues in the house, the house was to be totally destroyed.

Vv. 46, 47, what was a person doing in the house, for it was to be sealed? Maybe the people had no place else to go.

V. 48, on the other hand, the house, after being shut up another seven days, might be found to be clean.

Vv. 49-53, the law of the birds for cleansing a house is the same for cleansing a person. But there was no sacrifice nor offering required.

V. 53, the house must be atoned. Strange. Implied is that the Lord sent the leprosy as judgment against the sins of the dwellers in the house. It also shows that the atoning work of Christ covers all creation.

My thoughts here are as previously stated: Sin has affected all creation, especially the things touched by sinful man. The two birds show the power of Christ that broke the power of sin as placed against creation.

Vv. 54-57.

The Lord reiterates that the above laws, ch 13, 14, cover *all manner of plague of leprosy...*

V. 57, is an important statement. It was the business of the priests to teach men the Word of God. [Gill] In other words, though at the word of the priests people were removed from their families as unclean, at the word of the priests homes were tore down no matter how expensive, he was simply speaking in God's stead. The priest was only delivering God's Word to the people. Therefore, the people could not speak against the judgments of the priest without speaking against God, nor could they blame the priest for what took place nor for what he said.

OBSERVATIONS -- APPLICATIONS

PURPOSE

Evidently, leprosy was unique with Old Testament Israel, and no longer exists as it was then known. Biblical leprosy--which is not modern leprosy--

-was a supernatural disease, e.g. and I put the plague of leprosy in a house, Lev 14:34. As we trace it through Scripture, we see that in every case it brought glory to God; hence, its purpose was to bring glory to God by showing His power and to point to the coming cleansing work of Christ against sin, e.g. Naaman, 2 Kings 5. John 9:3, 4, records a man who was blind from birth specifically for the purpose for manifesting the works of God. Leprosy was, apparently, the same type of situation. See Eph 3:9-11

As did the tongues and supernatural healing of the Book of Acts, when leprosy's purpose was completed, it passed into history: It departed with Christ, for there are no recorded instances of the Apostles healing leprosy. Christ's healing of lepers was infallible proof that He was the Old Testament promised Messiah, for never could the leper be healed otherwise.

Gill points out that even the wicked, apostate Jews had to admit that only Jehovah God could heal lepers, and that Christ only healed by the power of Jehovah God. They, however, absolutely refused to admit that Christ was sent from God as the Messiah.

Gill refers to the Mat 8:2 very important statement for our study, **If thou wilt**. The man *full of leprosy*--the most grotesque and horrible disease of the day, maybe of all time--cast himself upon the mercy and will of the Lord: "**If thou wilt**, you can do this wonderful thing. But, If thou wilt not, then I will remain in this terrible situation." RWP on Mat 8:2:

{If thou wilt} (\ean thelêis\). The leper knew that Jesus had the power to heal him. His doubt was about his willingness. "Men more easily believe in miraculous power than in miraculous love" (Bruce). This is a condition of the third class (undetermined, but with prospect of being determined), a hopeful doubt at any rate. Jesus accepted his challenge by "I will." The command to "tell no one" was to suppress excitement and prevent hostility.

Christ gave the 12 power to *heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils...*, Mat 10:8. But notice the context of the passage of v. 8, i.e. Matthew chapter 10: It was before Christ finished His work against sin here on this earth, and He was sending the 12 only to the lost sheep of Israel; it was not the commission sending them to the Gentiles world-wide. In other words, Christ sent them to every area He was going to travel in the then home-land of Israel, Canaan; their unique power over leprosy was proof that the Messiah was among them, that He had sent them as His personal representatives, and that He would soon visit that area where the apostles went. Mat 10:15, the areas that refused the message and proof of the Messiah would be very harshly judged for their rejection and murder of the Old Testament promised Messiah Who alone could heal leprosy, John 1:11. That generation of rejectors was horribly judged with a terrible tribulation as Rome striped the land bear of trees upon which to crucify the Messiah-rejecting Israelite men of the land. The ones--men, women and children--who escaped death by crucifixion and the sword were sold into slavery.

Thus Matthew 10, though containing many practical applications for Christians of all ages, was primarily to the twelve as Christ scattered them throughout Canaan to prepare the people to receive the Messiah Who was about to be among them, 11:1, *he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.*

It is evident that leprosy passed off the scene with Christ. Christ dealt with sin--typified by the Old Testament leprosy--at its root. Though Christ did not nor does He today deliver man from the power and results of sin apart from faith, Christ did clearly show His total power over sin. Our sinful natures cannot understand the power of Christ over sin, but as one reads the accounts of leprosy along with the accounts of Christ's work recorded in places such as Ephesians, he can get a faint glimpse of the work and power of Christ.

Leprosy drew everyone's attention to the horribleness of sin in the midst of God's people. Christ's work draws attention to the powerlessness of sin; thus Christ's work did away with the Old Testament leprosy: We have no record of leprosy after Christ finished His work here on earth.

CONTIGUOUS

Really, Scripture does not clearly say that the Old Testament leprosy was highly infectious; rather, it simply says the leper was ceremonially unclean, for they went through various rigorous ceremonies of cleansing. Scripture also says that those who came into "touching" contact were ceremonially unclean, but it does not say the uninfected person became infected. Nor is the sin that makes one unclean contagious. The child of God who closely associates with the wicked will, however, become unclean, so the Lord commanded to remove the habitual sinner from the congregation, and, furthermore, commanded to avoid close relationships with the unclean, both saved and unsaved, 1 Cor 15:33, &c. One caught in the uncleanness of sin has no one to blame but himself.

Lev 13:13, confirms the idea that it was not contagious, for those who were totally covered with leprosy were pronounced clean. But if any red, open sores developed, they were unclean again. If leprosy were highly contagious, the "total" leper would not have been permitted back in the congregation.

LEPROSY & THE NT

If Old Testament leprosy prepictured sin and the work that only Christ could--and would--do against sin, then there would be many parallels between the Old Testament leper and the sinner as recorded in the New Testament. There is no shortage of wonderful parallels and applications found in the Levitical leprosy laws--chs 13 & 14--that clearly point to Christ. The following also considers the documentation in "leprosy.wp." [Reproduce that document if I teach this.] We should also point out that one cannot parallel perfectly different passages such as these leprosy laws and their New Testament applications or he will come to some wild, unBiblical and troubling assumptions. Therefore, we are looking for general parallels.

Conversion

Leprosy's description quoted by Gill well describes sin. Leprosy, no doubt, was the most horrible sickness that could befall anyone in antiquity: Reading its description, one would have to say that those who had it were the **WALKING DEAD**. Thus is all mankind *dead in trespasses and sins*, and without the life-giving, healing, cleansing grace of God, every man will remain so, Eph 2:1, & Col 2:13, 14. Leprosy--as with sin--could only be healed by the Lord God. Hence, leprosy was basically a spiritual problem, for it was supernatural and could only be dealt with by the priests and healed by Jehovah God. And the World of God gave very specific details how to recognize the problem of leprosy and what to do about it. He does the same by His Word concerning sin.

Lev 13:45, strongly implies deep and sincere mourning over sin. V. 46, as long as the uncleanness was pronounced in him by the Word of God, he was outside the camp. Representing the horrid condition and effects of sin, the person fully covered with leprosy--fully realizing his totality in sin--was pronounced clean.

There is no way we can describe the horribleness of sin--leprosy: It leaves every man broken, helpless and hopeless.

Eph 1:6 ; 2:1, moreover, the law made it clear that only the hand of God could deliver one from the **LIVING DEATH**, leprosy. No one could help the "dead" person: neither the priest, friends nor infected individual could do anything. Only the Lord could solve the problem, Ps 49:7, 130:8, Eph 2:4-9. Furthermore, the Lord God only moved as He saw fit to heal the infected individual: He left some in their distressed conditions and some He delivered. Of course, one of the questions of the ages is, "Why does God shed His grace and mercy on some, calling them to himself, and not upon others?" Regardless of one's position, Arminian or Calvin, there is no answer to that other than what is clearly spoken in His Word, Titus 3:4-7.

The leper's ceremonial cleansing through the washing of the blood of the bird, &c., was identical to the cleansing of the sinner through the washing in the blood of Christ. The sinner is a new creation in Christ; he now has peace with the Lord God Who Alone was able to heal him. That healing was only by the grace of God, Eph 2:4-7. It is by the blood of Christ--illustrated by the cleansing of the leper--alone that the sinner has peace with his Creator: The enmity is abolished and reconciliation is made through Christ, Eph 2:13-16.

Note that there was no offering nor sacrifice attached to the uncleanness of leprosy: The person could only be pronounced clean or unclean, and that final determination was in the hands of the priest who did the examinations. It was incurable by the priest: All he could do was **speak in terms of God's Law-Word**, for it could only be cured by God.

The same laws concerning leprosy and sin applies to both men and women, rich and poor. The Word of God given concerning clean and unclean, concerning inability to do anything about it and concerning the final

authority of the Word of God as spoken by the priest, applied to EVERYONE: No one was exempt, 13:20, 38, &c. Therefore, the Lord made provision for everyone, 14:21-32. The Lord is the One Who enables the sinner to find cleanness in His sight.

It was not man who pronounced the leper unclean; it was God Who made the determination. It would do the infected person no good to get mad at the priest for pronouncing him unclean, separating him from his people and family, and for tearing down his house; the priest only spoke what was specifically given to him by God's Word.

CLEAN AND UNCLEAN

Everything touched by the unclean person was unclean. Everything touched by the sinner is unclean. Hence, the infected had to be separated from everyone. If for some reason healing came to the leper, he came close to the city, but he could not enter. The priest had to come out of the city to pronounce him clean. Lev 14:3, human effort can only bring a person so far towards the cleansing of the Great High Priest; the Priest must still come out to meet the unclean sinner. The sinner cannot cleans himself, pronounce himself clean.

At the sinners cleansing, his sins are removed from him as far as the east is from the west, Ps 103:12. His sins are washed away by the blood of Christ, and he is made a new creation as the old live is removed by the power of the Spirit.

Consequently, cleansing of leprosy speaks of the conversion *from sin to holiness* that should follow faith in Christ. See Eph 2:10.

Lev 14:10, is one of the more important verses: **the eighth day**. What a wonderful picture of the new beginning found in Christ and the work He did for and in the horribly unclean person, Eph 2:1-4. And the work is the work of the Spirit of God.

We should also mention that the curse of man's sin also applies to God's creation, Lev 14:34ff., e.g. houses. Rom 8:22--**Until now...**, the time of Christ. Christ not only broke the hold of sin's curse from His people--the elect, but He also broke the curse of sin from over creation, 1 Cor 15:26 & Heb 2:1-8.

LEPROSY & QUARANTINE

Finally, the law of quarantine, disinfections--and how infectious diseases spread--as established by God concerning the leper should be rigidly enforced for the safety and health of the general public.

Though Scripture does not say leprosy was contiguous nor is sin, we cannot overlook its obvious, physical implications: Diseases in individuals can and are clearly spread by people, garments and even houses. Sanitation is a must, especially in a very "tight" community as was Israel at that time. [I read or heard somewhere that contagious infections were extremely common in hospitals until someone recognized the God's laws concerning scraping the

walls of infected houses; they then started disinfecting operating rooms, resulting in a great decrease in spread of infections in the hospitals.

Quarantine and sanitation was and is a religious fact. Thus the modern warfare against quarantine by the ungodly is against God. Quarantine is required by God's law; ignoring that law results in an infected society, DEATH. Non-Christian countries are very unsanitary, and as we lose our Christianity, this nation is returning to very unsanitary conditions.

I find it interesting that the Christian foundations of this country required good sanitation. But the ungodly have the facts mixed up, and believe that sanitation is an end in itself: They have completely separated sanitation and cleanliness from Godliness.