

Leviticus 14

Good Evening, it is so good to be with you all.

Last time we were together, we were in Leviticus chapter 13.

It was a most discouraging chapter as it emphasized on uncleanness and isolation.

We learned of the pitiful existence of a leper.

It was an extreme fate.

Once a person was examined and determined unclean, he was to tear his clothes, mess up his hair, he was immediately excluded from the congregation and driven from the camp.

He was to cover his upper lip as an act of mourning.

If anyone was approaching this outcast, he was to cry out with the humiliating cry of “Unclean, Unclean!”

The law for the leper was just as if he was mourning over a death, his own death.

The leper was to regard himself as dead to the rest of society, even his own family and the community were to regard him as dead.

He was cut off from the life of the people destined to live in complete isolation and abandonment, left to beg for his meager provisions.

It was a hopeless existence and a sentence that would bring about the deepest, darkest sorrow a person could experience.

It would be better to be dead, then suffering alive, knowing your family and friends are carrying on right inside the camp.

My father-in-law is bound to a hospital bed right now, and his biggest torment that he tells us about, is that we are all healthy and carrying on with our lives, and he cannot join in.

He has missed every birthday party and celebration for the last two years, his condition keeps him away from all those he loves the most, even the families weekly

visits can only give him moments of joy and satisfaction.

But the reality is we all cannot stay with him there at the hospital, and when the moment comes for us to leave, depression instantly overwhelms Jessica's father.

The leper knew this kind of torment, and existence. It was devastating for the family and even worse for the unclean leper.

Chapter 13 is a hopeless read, and discouraging to say the least.

Yet, chapter 14 brings us a glimmer of light and hope in this section of the law.

We will find a leper can be cleansed and restored.

We often see in scripture the harsh realities, and the depths of hard truths, right before the hope that we need, is brought to light.

Paul does this in Romans, he presents the bad news of judgement first and the wrath of God, so the reader can appreciate the good news of salvation.

Now the Jews had no cure for these diseases mentioned in chapter 13, all referred to as leprosy.

So if a person suffering from these infirmities, found himself cured, it was a supernatural work and a gift from God's grace and mercy.

So when such a blessed individual found himself healed and cured, there was steps for the person to follow, to be restored to the community life.

All of which will be a picture of what Jesus Christ has done for the sinner.

Now the cleansing ritual we will see is not the cure for leprosy.

There even to this day is no known cure for leprosy or Hansen's disease, only treatment for the symptoms.

But as terrible as this disease is, we see the provision for cleansing, which means some were cured by the grace of God.

So let's get into it Chapter 14 tonight...

**The Ritual for Cleansing Healed Lepers(cf. Matt 8:1-4;
Luke 5:12-14)**

14:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. 3 And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him;

Now since the unclean leper was not permitted to enter into the clean camp of God's people, the priest must go out to examine him.

Now we need to note that the priest is not going outside the camp to heal the victim, but to examine if the victim was indeed healed.

Now it was the priest that condemned this person to an unclean lifestyle outside the camp, and it was only the priest that could reverse this sentence.

The healed leper must not dare to enter the camp until a priest has examined him.

This unclean outcast was shut out from society until the priest came to him.

Now this is a neat picture of our High Priest Jesus Christ.

He came from His throne in heaven to this cursed earth, full of sinful men; you know we are all lepers in this picture.

We had no part in heavens glory, or no hope of entering its community.

Yet our High Priest came outside the camp to dwell among sinners.

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

It was necessary for Jesus to come out of heavens glory to this earth.

Just as the leper had no hope apart from the priests pardon, so the sinner has no hope apart from Jesus' pardon of our sins.

John 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Let's read the protocol for this cleansed leper next...

3 And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper, 4 then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. 5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. 6 As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. 7 And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

So after the priests approval was secured for this individual the first part of this ritual can begin.

The cleansing ceremony began with two living birds.

Also listed in this portion is cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop.

It is assumed that the family of this leper acquired these items on behalf of their healed loved one.

The leper's plight left him without access to such items.

The priest was ordered to kill one of the birds in an earthen or clay pot over running water.

In such a manner that the blood would be preserved.

The remaining bird was then dipped in this blood.

It seems to me perhaps it was tied on the cedar wood by the scarlet material with a plant called hyssop.

Then the stick would be dipped in and the blood soaked onto the bird and apparently this hyssop and sprinkled on the cleansed leper seven times.

Seven being in scripture the number of completeness.

Now we must understand this was not a sacrifice for this person's sins, none of the pieces of the dead animal was placed on the altar of burnt offering.

This ritual is different, the symbolism here indicates this ritual was to declare publically that the formerly unclean individual was now ceremonially clean.

The clean bird's blood identified this individual once again as a member of society.

The dead bird seems to be symbolic of what could have been that fate of the leper without divine intervention.

The live bird, being set free, is symbolic of the new life the leper was to have.

That bird was free to find its nest once more with the blood still on his body.

As the leper was now free to go to his own abode once more.

Warren Wiersbe finds some interesting connections here in this picture with Christs work.

He states "This unusual ritual pictures for us what Christ did to save the lost world."

“Bird’s don’t belong in clay jars; they belong in the heavens.”

“Jesus came down from heaven and became a man.”

“As it were, He put Himself into a clay jar so that He might die for our sins.”

He states, “The running water over the bird that was killed, reminds us of the Holy Spirit of God.”

He says, “When the bloodstained bird was let loose it pictured the Lord’s resurrection.”

“The resurrection is where the hope of the gospel rests, only a living Savior can save dead sinners.”

Now I thought that was an interesting insight.

The bulk of the commentators find it hard to understand the meaning of all the items in this ritual.

We just simply know cedar, scarlet and hyssop are associated with purification.

Now next we will see the healed leper had some personal responsibility in this cleansing process.

8 He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, and shall stay outside his tent seven days. 9 But on the seventh day he shall shave all the hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows — all his hair he shall shave off. He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water, and he shall be clean.

On the day of the former lepers cleansing, he had to wash himself, and his clothes.

He also had to shave all of his hair off.

This would remove any final layers of filth on his skin and hair, perhaps removing lice or other impurities received in the slums outside the camp.

He was then permitted to come into the camp, but still had to stay outside of his tent for another week.

Then he would repeat the shaving and washing part of the ritual.

He would enter into the next phase of his life fresh, as a newborn baby.

There are few things as refreshing as a freshly shaved head and face accompanied by a shower.

Why did he need to wash himself if the priest already declared him clean?

Well it is simple, **he had to apply personally what God had declared for him positionally. Wiersbe**

He needed to be practically clean so he would fit within the camp.

This has practical application for us Christians today as well.

2 Cor. 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This is our reasonable duty as Paul says in Romans 12.

Now, there was a man who struggled with an alcohol addiction for many years.

He told me how he never thought he could be free of this addiction.

But he explained to me since he was a child he was up at every altar call, even through his addiction he would respond to the preachers plea.

Yet he would leave from that moment, and return to that fridge and open up another can of beer and begin his drinking once more.

He did not believe what was declared of him through the gospel.

Had he believed that God had freed him, he would go to that fridge and throw out those beers, and remove the filth from his life.

The sinner has a personal responsibility to cleanse himself of the filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

You know it is life changing, when the unclean person believes and acts on that belief that he has been cleansed.

It will change that person's life forever when they step out in faith?

They will find a supernatural strength to overcome that which has them in bondage.

I too responded to many altar calls, and I asked Jesus into my heart countless times in my life, but I remember the moment that I believed that I had been set free, I knew without a doubt that I was a changed man.

It was when I stepped out in faith, and rid myself of the putrid sins I was in bondage too.

It was like a light bulb went off in my soul, I knew in that moment that God was giving me strength over the sin, and He met me in my faith.

There have been so many times that I have prayed for someone stuck in addiction, for freedom from cigarettes or alcohol or any other unclean bondage, and I tell them to leave, and never touch it again, Christ has set you free.

But they neglect the personal responsibility to act on that declaration.

Christ will set you free tonight, from whatever your life is entangled in, however, He meets you in your faith.

And the fruit of your faith will be shown in the choices you make after your confession.

The leper had personal responsibility to cleanse himself before he could be accepted into the community once again.

This was all a preliminary ritual for the actual consecration ceremony that is next...

Now the next part resembles that of what the priests went through at their ordination ceremony.

10 "And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil. 11 Then the priest who makes him clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 12 And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them as a wave offering before the Lord. 13 Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering

and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering. It is most holy.

Now, on the eighth day, from the first day that the leper was met by the priest, the cleansed leper must bring to the door of the tabernacle one male lamb for the trespass offering, one male lamb for the burnt offering, and a female lamb for the sin offering.

He was also instructed to bring fine flour and oil for the meal offering.

This was done on the eighth day, and eight in the bible is the number for new beginnings.

The lamb first was waved as well as the log of oil before the Lord.

Then the sacrifice was killed in holy place.

The flesh belonged to the priest; the blood would be used to apply to the cleansed leper.

After being cut from contact with the people and the Lord, the former leper had to restore his relationship with God.

The trespass offering was an act of restitution for the offerings and the sacrifices the man was not able to make while in his unclean state.

Now the interesting thing about this ceremony is that the priest treated the former leper as though he was a fellow priest.

The only difference from this and the priestly ceremony was this was not the peace offering but the trespass offering.

It is important that this former leper used the trespass offering for this ritual.

The trespass offering was designed to render satisfaction for any harm done to another person, and for failing to perform any due service.

Because he was unclean, the leper had not been able to bring to God what was God's due.

He owed God sacrifice and service, and this trespass offering made compensation for his failure and loss.

As we read next...

14 The priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. 15 And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. 16 Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord. 17 And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put some on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. 18 The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord.

So as in the priestly ordination the blood was placed on the right ear, the right thumb, and right big toe of the offerer.

The symbolism here is the same as for Aaron and his decedents, the cleansed man will now listen and hear

God's voice, he would perform works of righteousness with his hands, and he will walk in the ways of God.

Then the priest would sprinkle the oil seven times before the Lord, then put the oil wherever the blood was put.

After this the remaining oil was poured out over the man's head.

The oil being poured out completely on his head symbolized that this man was totally dedicated to God.

I find it fascinating that the oil, which represents often times the Holy Spirit can only go on after the blood was applied to the man.

The blood cleansed and the oil consecrated or set apart the man to God.

The Spirit of God will only go where the Blood of Christ has cleansed.

Our lives cannot be sanctified by the Spirit without first receiving salvation through Christ's blood.

Now after the trespass offering compensated the man's debt to God, next he was to offer a sin and burnt offerings.

19 "Then the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. 20 And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

On the basis of these sacrifices the priest would declare the man clean.

Each sacrifice here pictures the work of Christ.

The sin offering shows Christ atoning for a person's sin.

The trespass offering reminds us the Christ paid a debt we could never pay; He paid it on our behalf.

In the burnt offering, the man dedicated himself wholly and completely to God.

The meal offering was brought in gratitude for the healing that took place in the worshipper.

Now the trespass offering had to be a lamb, but after that offering was presented, there are options for the poor for the rest of the offerings...

We read next...

21 "But if he is poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb as a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil, 22 and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. 23 He shall bring them to the priest on the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the Lord. 24 And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord. 25 Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering and put it on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. 26 And the priest shall pour some of the

oil into the palm of his own left hand. 27 Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the Lord. 28 And the priest shall put some of the oil that is in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering. 29 The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the Lord. 30 And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford — 31 such as he is able to afford, the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the Lord. 32 This is the law for one who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford the usual cleansing."

The fact that this person was leper meant that he would have been deprived of the opportunity for employment while the disease consumed him.

So here, we see this provision to reduce the sacrificial price for those who could not afford the animal sacrifices.

The trespass offering must remain the same, but in the sin and burnt offerings, we see two clean birds can be offered.

The birds are offered in the customary manner together with the meal offering, and at the end of the offering the same declaration is made by the priest, the person is now clean.

Now the message behind all of these laws is that any type of uncleanness separates a person from God.

There are some important principles to take away for us today.

Man in his natural state finds himself unclean, or sinful.

Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Now restoration to fellowship with God can only be based upon the confession of a need for cleansing.

With the knowledge that man's natural condition is sinful, the admittance that sin is a part of his being.

Then the sinner can be forgiven and can he be restored into fellowship with God.

1 John 1:8-10 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

In our society today, so many excuse their sin, they deny its hold in their lives; many will go to their graves maintaining their innocence.

Unfortunately, to never confess your need for salvation means a horrible fate is in store for your eternity.

The first step of salvation is to understand and confess that we are sinners, we are separated from God because of this nature.

Don't buy into worlds mantra that God wants you to be happy, and sin makes you happy therefore He is okay with it.

God is more concerned with your holiness then your happiness.

In fact, if you want true happiness, you will find it through a humble obedience to God's Holy demands.

To have peace with God, is the only way to have peace and contentment in this life.

Peace comes through confession of sin, not justification of sin.

Now the leper was isolated from the community, and brought into fellowship through this ceremony.

So to the believer is not meant to live in spiritual isolation.

It is here in the Body of Christ, the church, that our faith grows and we are matured spiritually.

Sin will keep you from fellowship, yet God makes a way for the sinner to be forgiven and restored.

It is always disheartening to watch as believers isolate themselves in their sins, the longer they are away, it seems the more difficult it is to find their way back to fellowship.

They start believing they cannot respond to God's call, and they start believing it is a difficult process to come back to Him.

Let me remind you, if you ever find yourself separated from us in your sin, it is only a one step program to get back into fellowship, come to Jesus, repent, and be restored.

Don't believe Satan's lies that you need to perform some religious duty, salvation is only through divine Grace through faith and not of any human endeavor.

It is through Christ alone, you will always be welcomed back into His work if you find yourself out wondering for a time as a lost sheep, as long as you come back through His blood you will be restored.

Just as the blood signified justification, so the anointing oil on top of the smeared blood shows that a truly

sanctified life of a believer needs the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

The leper was not cleansed to pursue selfish pursuits of the flesh, but the ceremony set his life apart for God.

So us too, when the Blood of Christ sets us free, and cleanses us of our unrighteousness, we are not free to live as we choose, but we are free now to serve God.

Our lives are to pursue righteous living and holiness unto God.

The principles here for the Cleansed Leper holds true even for us in the age of Grace.

Now next we will see this holiness was even extended to the houses, and any impurity in God's covenant people in any area of their lives would affect the worship of their God.

The Law Concerning Leprous Houses

33 And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 34 "When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession, and I put the leprous plague

in a house in the land of your possession, 35 and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, 'It seems to me that there is some plague in the house,' 36 then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes into it to examine the plague, that all that is in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house.

God now giving instruction to Moses and Aaron for the homes the people will receive in Canaan.

It is not certain what kind of growth this is referring to, if it was fungus or dry rot, which got into the fabric of the home.

But the priest had certain instructions to examine the home.

37 And he shall examine the plague; and indeed if the plague is on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish, which appear to be deep in the wall, 38 then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven

days. 39 And the priest shall come again on the seventh day and look; and indeed if the plague has spread on the walls of the house, 40 then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which is the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city. 41 And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place outside the city. 42 Then they shall take other stones and put them in the place of those stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house.

Upon the inspection, if the growth was red or green in appearance and it seems to be deeper than the surface of the material, they closed the house for a week.

If on re-inspection the condition spread into the walls of the building, a treatment of the infected area would take place.

The same care here was taken for the home that was taken for the clothing.

It was not necessary to destroy the whole structure if the plague ceased from growing.

So they just first removed the affected plaster or mortar, and took the material to an unclean place outside the camp.

These future settlements that God's covenant people would live in must be free of anything that might corrupt or cause any kind of epidemic.

They removed the infected area, and replaced the material with new stones and fresh plaster.

After this was done, the residents could return.

Now as long as the plague did not return they did not need to fear losing their home.

But in verse 43 we read...

43 "Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered, 44 then the priest shall come and look; and indeed if the plague has spread in the house, it is an active leprosy in the house. It is unclean. 45 And he shall break down

the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry them outside the city to an unclean place. 46 Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until evening. 47 And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.

So if there was a resurgence of the disease on the home, this was an indication that the property could not be healed, and the home was condemned and determined unclean.

Since the attempts by the priests earlier had failed, they had no other choice but to demolish the home.

All of the material of the home had to be taken to an unclean place, for which all the building material would be condemned and destroyed.

Anyone who was inside the condemned home would be unclean until evening and they had to wash their clothes.

But if the home was healed there are further instructions...

48 "But if the priest comes in and examines it, and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed. 49 And he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. 50 Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water; 51 and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times. 52 And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet. 53 Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

If the plague had not spread again after the repairs were made, the priest would pronounce the home ~~ceremonially~~ ceremonially clean.

Then the ceremony of the ritual cleansing could take place.

This is a parallel ceremony to that of the healed leper's cleansing.

The house here would be returned in a ceremonially clean condition to the owner.

Next, we read...

54 "This is the law for any leprous sore and scale, 55 for the leprosy of a garment and of a house, 56 for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot, 57 to teach when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the law of leprosy."

We see here God designating all of chapter 13 and 14 as His authoritative Word.

These statements here encompass all that was said relating to these unnatural skin conditions of peoples bodies, their clothing, and their homes.

Now notice the purpose of these laws was to teach when something is unclean and when it was clean.

This nation's Holy God required holiness in His people, in their garments and even their homes.

In all ages, it is required of the true worshipper that he should be pure and holy, in his lifestyle and habits.

Even the home of a Christian should be considered a house of God.

Understand that the whole life of a Jew stemmed from their relationship with God, if any part of their life was not in line with His holiness, the Law was severe in dealing with them.

To be cut off from the community was the worst fate anyone could receive in ancient Israel.

Their lives were to be consumed in the things of God.

What a healthy mindset to be consumed in the things of God, to live our lives from the belief that everything revolves around Him and not us.

This should be the Christian pursuit as well, may our lives be holy and set apart to Him, amen?

So next week will be interesting for sure as we deal with bodily discharges, you don't want to miss that.

But we will pull all we can from that section, God's whole Word is profitable for teaching, we will surely test this next week.

But if you have any prayer needs this evening the Elders will be up front for you.

Ladies, I want to remind you tomorrow is the last woman's bible study until fall, it is a potluck, and every one of you are invited even if you did not attend the bible study.

There is a 9:30am meeting with childcare and a 6:30pm meeting with no childcare.

The ladies are planning summer events so pay attention to the church calendar.

Also tomorrow night at our Evangelism Class George Saieg from Ministry to Muslims will be sharing at 6pm in Grace Café. See you all Sunday!