

Leviticus 13,14

1-25-01

“Hate the Leprosy, Love the Leper!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. How much do you know about the Lepers in the bible? (Q&A)
- 1.1.1. **Questions**
1. What leper of Bethany entertained Jesus in his home? **Simon** (Mark 14:3)
 2. What king of Judah was a leper until the day of his death? **Uzziah** (2 Chronicles 26:21)
 3. What captain of the armies of Syria was a leper? **Naaman** (2 Kings 5:1)
 4. What prophetess became a snow-white leper for a short time? **Miriam** (Numbers 12:10)
 5. Who put his hand into his bosom and, drawing it out, found it leprous? **Moses** (Exodus 4:6)
 6. Who became a leper after he lied to the prophet Elisha? **Gehazi** (2 Kings 5:27)
 7. Who told Moses to send lepers away from the Israelite camp? **The Lord** (Numbers 5:1-4)
 8. What is the greatest number of lepers Jesus healed at any one time? **Ten** (Luke 17:12)
- 1.2. Does God care if you have a little mildew in your shower, or under your sink in a dark corner? - Does God care if you have 1 rotten board in a wall of your house? (we'll see, He does)

2. LEPROSY! (1-1)

- 2.1. **Leprosy** – The Hebrews had **no cure** for leprosy other than Divine intervention. In modern times, there are very effective medicines available, & leprosy patients are usually not isolated.
- 2.1.1. Now called “**Hansen’s Disease**”, after the **Norwegian physician, Dr. Hansen, 33**, discovers the leprosy bacillus(ba-sil-us).
- 2.1.2. (TWOT) “The leprosy in Lev.13,14 seems to refer to many epidermal maladies including **boils, rashes, impetigo**(im-pi-tie-go), **ringworm**, & even **mildew & rot** in ch.14”
- 2.1.3. Lepers were **ritually & medically** contagious.”

2.2. Chapters Outlined:

- 2.2.1. **13:2-8**(Eczema); 9-18(White Tumor); 18-28(White scab/pink blotch on the scar of a healed boil); 29-37(Ring Worm); 38,39(White blotches, Tetter); 40-43(pink sore on bald head); 44-46(excluded from the community); 47-59(leprosy in clothing & leather).
- 2.2.2. **14:1-32**(Cleansing & restoring lepers); 33-53(Leprosy in a house): 54-57(Conclusion).
- 2.2.3. **Chapter 13** is basically the **Examination of People**(1-46); & **Examination of Garments**(47-59).
- 2.2.4. **Chapter 14** is **Cleansing** of the People(1-32); & the **Cleansing** of the houses(33-53).

3. LIFE LESSONS FROM LEPROSY!

- 3.1. There is more to this law of leprosy than a lesson in **symptoms!**
 - 3.1.1. **Read** the opening of **Isaiah 1:1-6**. (description in vs.5b,6)
 - 3.1.2. These are lessons on **Sin!**
 - 3.1.2.1. These chapters teach us **what sin is like, & how God wants us to deal w/it!**
 - 3.1.3. **Lesson #1 we see...**
- 3.2. **The Lord's Love for Lepers!**
 - 3.2.1. God had **concern** for the leper & made certain he or she was **treated w/dignity**.
 - 3.2.2. Yet, God was also concerned for "the rest of his people" who **didn't** have it, **thus isolation** was important so it wouldn't spread.
 - 3.2.2.1. They were not to be "banned" but to be "quarantined" until better.
 - 3.2.3. God gave the priest all the information needed to **detect** the disease & make sure it **did not spread**.
 - 3.2.3.1. "It would have been devastating to isolate someone who was really not infected, or declare someone clean who was unclean!"¹
 - 3.2.4. The "**National Review**", December 30, 1988 reported, "Throw away those condoms, boys. AIDS is **not** -- repeat, **not** -- a **sexually transmitted disease**. Better yet, it's not even a **communicable disease**. A New York law exempts AIDS virus carriers from the usual requirements to which VD carriers are subject. The difference seems to be that syphilis and gonorrhea don't have their own political lobbies.
 - 3.2.4.1. For the 1st time I heard of in history did a **disease** "have rights"!

¹ Wiersbe

- 3.2.5. **Jesus** also showed great compassion on the lepers.
 - 3.2.5.1. See Mark 1:40-45
 - 3.2.5.2. Interesting flip-flop – This once banished leper can now go **into** the city, but Jesus is forced **outside!**
- 3.2.6. **Jesus** also empowered **The 12** to heal the lepers. (Mt.10:8) "Heal the sick, **cleanse the lepers**, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.
- 3.3. **This “beauty”(Leprosy) is more than skin deep!**
 - 3.3.1. The **disease** was **not** only on the surface...like **sin**, it was “**deeper than the skin**”. (this phrase was used **10 times** here in ch.13, see vs.3)
 - 3.3.2. It delves into our uttermost core...the heart!
 - 3.3.3. In 18th century England one pick-pocket had his hand cut off when he was caught stealing. The 2nd time caught his other hand. The 3rd time he was caught “pick pocketing with his teeth”!
 - 3.3.3.1. Even if they pulled out all his teeth, it wouldn’t have solved the problem because **sin is deeper than the skin!**
 - 3.3.4. **Leprosy starts insignificant & painless** at the start; **slowly grows**, with **serious results** to the person; **repulsiveness** to others; it was **incurable** by human means; ending only in **death**.
- 3.4. **Incurable!**
 - 3.4.1. The leper could **do nothing** for his own cleansing & cure.
 - 3.4.2. Jeremiah the prophet preached a message to Judah “**Your affliction is incurable**, Your wound is severe. There is no one to plead your cause, That you may be bound up; You have no healing medicines.” (Jer.30:12,13)
 - 3.4.2.1. But then Jeremiah went onto say in vs.17(NIV), “**But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,**’ declares the LORD, **‘because** you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.”
 - 3.4.2.2. **WHY?** “**because...**”God will not have it said, “**no one cares** for them!”
 - 1.1.1. **Ezek 36:22** ““Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "**I do not do this for your sake**, O house of Israel, **but for My holy name's sake**, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.”
 - 1.1.1.1. “This is **unflattering** to the sinner, yet **Reassuring!**”
 - 1.1.1.2. This snuffs out **human merit** which constantly seeks to creep back in & undermine **Pure Grace!**

3.5. **Leprosy & Sin Symptoms!** (It **spreads**, causes **uncleanness**, & **isolates** you)

3.5.1. **[1] Leprosy spreads** in the system.

3.5.1.1. Sin also, it is never content, but when we give into it, it just covets more & **more, & starts spreading like wildfire.**

3.5.1.2. **Prov.30:15,16** "The **leech** has two daughters; Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, "**Enough!**": The **grave**, The **barren womb**, The **earth** that is not satisfied with water; And the **fire** never says, "**Enough!**"

3.5.1.3. So with sin, it never says "Enough!"

3.5.1.4. Jesus said, **Jn.8:24** "whoever **commits sin is a slave of sin.**"

3.5.1.5. For 50 years **Alexander Whyte** preached God's Word at **Free St. George's Church** in Edinburgh, Scotland. He had a reputation for his "surgical preaching" exposing the sins of the human heart. - He had as assistant for a time named **Hugh Black** who preached Sunday evening & was much more liberal & optimistic in his message. The congregation said they were "**blackened by Whyte on Sunday mornings, & whitewashed by Black on Sunday Evening.**"

3.5.1.5.1. When a church has a superficial view of sin, it **spreads** through the church like a fungus!

3.5.2. **[2] Leprosy** makes the person **unclean**,

3.5.2.1. Sin makes us very "**unclean**" The angel to Joshua in **Zechariah in 3:4** "Take away the **filthy** garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your **iniquity** from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."

3.5.3. **[3] Leprosy** must be **isolated**.

3.5.3.1. "**he shall dwell alone!**" (see 13:46)

3.5.3.2. Sin isolates us from God. **Rom.11:22** "Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be **cut off.**"

3.5.3.3. **Is.59:1,2** "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have **separated** you from your God; And your sins have **hidden His face** from you, So that He will not hear."

3.5.3.3.1. **Sin separates us from God!**

3.5.4. [4] Leprosy must dwell **Outside the camp**.

3.5.4.1. Jesus went outside the camp to meet us & to die for us.

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

3.5.4.1.2. **Heb.13:12-14** "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered **outside the gate**. Therefore let us go forth to Him, **outside the camp**, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come."

3.5.4.2. Jesus identified himself w/the outcasts.

3.5.4.2.1. **Mt.9:11-13** "Why does your Teacher **eat with tax collectors and sinners**?" When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those **who are sick**. "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but **sinners**, to repentance."

3.6. **What is infected w/Leprosy is burned in the fire!** (13:52)

3.6.1. We also were destined to be **burned in the eternal fire**...but Jesus rescued us!

3.7. **Double Bird Lesson!**

3.7.1. **Birds do not belong in clay Jars**(they ought to be flying in the heavens).

3.7.2. That reminds us of Jesus' **incarnation**, when He limited Himself into a body once formed from clay, the body of a man.

3.7.3. If the **1st bird** speaks of Jesus life in an earthen vessel, & also experienced **death** in it also. Then the **2nd bird** being set free can represent His Resurrection from the dead. (note 8th day vs.10)

3.8. **The Lifting of a Leper?**

3.8.1. **Read 14:14** - Note: 14:14-20 as compared to 8:22-24.

3.8.2. Just as the Lord is making for himself a "kingdom of priests".

3.8.2.1. Oh, what a Savior!

3.9. **Divine Mildew?**

3.9.1. OK, who has mildew in their home? (shower, not glossy enough paint?)

3.9.2. This leprosy found in **clothes** or in **houses** was more like **mildew, mold, fungus, or bacteria**.

3.9.2.1. It's problem it could **spread rapidly & promote disease**.

3.9.2.2. It is important to check its spread ASAP.

- 3.9.3. God gives instructions regarding the **littlest things**, the **most mundane & ordinary situations**.
 - 3.9.3.1. A **Household nuisance** yes, **but** something that would effect **the fate of a nation?**
- 3.9.4. Here was a mildew **placed by God?** (34).
 - 3.9.4.1. **Maybe to test if they'd follow the prescribed procedures to eradicate the microbes?**
- 3.9.5. How do you tell **God sent Mildew** form the kind that **just grows** in the right condition?
 - 3.9.5.1. I don't think there is a difference. "Nothing" happens outside of Gods decrees.
- 3.9.6. **Application:** We need to eradicate the **little mildew** in our life before it grows...cuz it only gets **uglier!**
 - 3.9.6.1. **Q:** What **mildew** will He place in your life today, that He wants you to deal with?
 - 3.9.6.2. God not only cares about His "**big plans**" for us, but even for those that are "**little**" in scale also!
 - 3.9.6.3. It might be the Mildew of the Mundane of your life that He wants to test, "be faithful I the little things."
- 3.10. **Why the elaborate details?**
 - 3.10.1. The cleansing of a home suggests the need of a **pure environment** if we are to **live aright!**
 - 3.10.1.1. Have anything at home that you shouldn't have. What at home has the stench of Mildew in God's nostrils? (**cut it off, burn it, throw it outside your camp!**)
 - 3.10.2. Living a pure **social life**, a pure **family life**, a pure **church life**, **must be & will be** the outcome of **personal cleansing & consecration**.
- 3.11. **Lastly, Are you sick w/a skin disease?**
 - 3.11.1. Like the lepers of the NT who sought Jesus for a healing crying, "**Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**"
 - 3.11.1.1. **He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.** (Lk.17:13,14)
 - 3.11.2. **Make sickness itself a prayer.** (Saint Francis of Sales)
 - 3.11.3. "**The chamber of sickness is the chapel of devotion**". (English Proverb)