

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

I worship you today as the God of healing. You sent your Son, Jesus, to heal the sick and cleanse the lepers (Luke 5:17). Jesus did not ignore the laws of Leviticus; in fact, He told those He healed to observe them (Matt 8:4; Luke 17:14). But Jesus also demonstrated that He was greater than any illness. Hallelujah for the cleansing blood of Christ! He set me free from the spiritual effects of sin, and in eternity, He will set me free from the physical effects of sin. Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about your laws regarding skin diseases and fungal infections. These laws were very important to the physical health of the community, for such infections could easily spread throughout the camp. Because of their contagious nature, you required priestly involvement in the diagnosis, treatment, cleansing and restoration of those affected by these ailments. As I meditated on these laws, several things stood out to me: (1) Skin diseases and fungal infections signified sin and its defiling effects. Just as a skin disease can spread across the body and then contaminate others, so a small sin can spread across the soul and then corrupt others. This perspective should radically change my attitude toward sin! (2) Each person was responsible to notice their ailment and take immediate action. This meant that personal hygiene was the duty of each Israelite. In the same way, spiritual hygiene is my duty. I must be on guard for areas of weakness or compromise and take immediate action. (3) The priest was to be involved in dealing with the infection or disease. The individual was *not* to try to handle the problem on their own. This teaches me that I should seek out my spiritual leaders when I'm struggling with sin. They should be involved in helping me to resist temptation and to stand strong against the enemy. (4) The rituals associated with cleansing and restoration were complicated and costly. They testified to the individual and the community that wellness and wholeness had returned. This speaks to me of the obedient life and costly sacrifice of Jesus. These laws make me appreciate all the more what Christ did for me on the cross. (5) As the people carefully followed your laws, they gained practice in recognizing physical defects and making sure that uncleanness didn't affect the ritual holiness of the camp or the Tabernacle. This skill in the physical, ritual realm was meant to carry over into the spiritual, moral realm. You wanted Israel to be as sensitive to sin and its corrupting effects as they were to infections and diseases. What a beautiful and effective way to teach holy living!

Reflection

Any Israelite who contracted a skin disease was required to present themselves to the priest for inspection. Would I be willing to do this if I knew the result could mean being declared unclean and having to live alone outside the camp?

Request

Father, give me a heart that honors the purity of Christ's body, the church, above all things. Help me not to cover or conceal any sin in my life; instead, help me to confess and forsake all unrighteousness.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for providing a way out of the mire of sin and into the glorious light of your grace. As Paul said, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Rom 8:37).

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: "I Would Be True"—Howard A. Walter.

Meditation Verse: Leviticus 14:32.