

LEVITICUS 14:1- 57

OUTLINE

- Salvation v. 1-32
 - Examination and Cleaning: v. 1-9
 - Sacrifices: v. 10-32
- Sanctification v.33-57
 - Time to Clean House: v. 33-57

SCRIPTURE

Examination and Cleaning (v. 1-9)

v. 1-4 *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. 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, then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood¹, scarlet [dye]², and hyssop³... ”*

1. Cedar wood is antifungal, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and antiseptic; and it is a natural insect repellent, painkiller, and sedative. ~ nih.gov
2. Scarlet: Hebrew *tôlā'* (*toe-law*) was made from a worm (*coccus ilicis*) that when it died and its body was crushed, it produces a red dye.
 - "When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted. What a picture this gives of Christ, dying on the tree, shedding his precious blood that he might 'bring many sons unto glory' (Hbr 2:10)! He died for us, that we might live through him! Psa 22:6 describes such a worm and gives us this picture of Christ. (cf. Isa 1:18)" (Henry Morris. *Biblical Basis for Modern Science*, Baker Book House, 1985, p. 73)
3. Hyssop: Hebrew *'ēzōb* (*ey-zove*) - a plant used for medicinal and religious purposes, herb of purging qualities.
 - "Hyssop has been used in folk medicine for centuries for stimulation of the circulation and for treatment of a variety of conditions including upper respiratory illness, asthma, cough, sore throat, intestinal infections, gastrointestinal upset, gall bladder disease, poor appetite, urinary tract infections and dysmenorrhea [menstrual cramps]. Hyssop is also used topically in gargles, medicinal baths, and creams for skin irritation, burns, and frostbite." ~ nih.gov
 - "A 2014 review found evidence that herbs in the Lamiaceae family, including hyssop, may be able to destroy cancer cells." ~ *Phytochemistry Reviews*
 - "The Hyssop plant possesses excessive medicinal properties such as antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral activities..." ~ nih.gov
 - *(Should not be used by pregnant women, children, or those with seizure disorders.)*

v. 5-7 “And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel¹ over running water². 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. 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.”

1. Earthen vessel: represents humanity.

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” ~ 2 Cor. 4:7

“Insufficient Vessels Containing Sufficient Treasure.” ~ Bob Hoekstra

2. Running: Hebrew *hay* (hai) – alive, living, fresh flowing source.

Should be translated as “living water”.

- Ellicott: “Upon the priest ordering it, the cured leper is to kill the one which is the fairer and better bird of the two, as was the rule during the second Temple Period. Not being a sacrifice, the [bird] was killed outside the camp. The bird was killed over the dish, so as to let the blood flow into the water. The vessel had to be a new one; into it was poured an egg and a-half [sized amount] of “living water:” that is, water taken from a running stream or a perennial spring, where its continual motion resembles life, in contradistinction to stale or stagnant water. Water which had already been used for other purposes, salt water, rainwater, or water which had been melted or warmed, was illegal. When the blood had thus been wrung into it, a hole was dug, and the bird was buried in the presence of the priest and the patient.”
- Cambridge: “The word ‘running’ is somewhat misleading. The Heb. expression is ‘living water,’ i.e. water from a spring. It was to be put into the vessel over which the bird was killed: the water served as a medium for conveying the blood of the slain bird (Leviticus 14:6); so the ashes of the red heifer were mixed with water (Numbers 19:9; Numbers 19:17).”
- **Numbers 19**
 - v. 1-6 *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: “This is a requirement of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect or blemish and that has never been under a yoke. Give it to Eleazar the priest; it is to be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence. Then Eleazar the priest is to take some of its blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the tent of meeting. While he watches, the heifer is to be burned—its hide, flesh, blood and intestines. The priest is to take some cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool and throw them onto the burning heifer.”*
 - v. 9 *“A man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and put them in a ceremonially clean place outside the camp. They are to be kept by the Israelite community for use in the water of cleansing; it is for purification from sin.”*
 - v. 17 *“For the unclean person, put some ashes from the burned purification offering [heifer] into a jar and pour fresh water over them.”*

- “Whereas one of the birds, however, had to lay down its life, and shed its blood for the person to be cleansed, the other was made into a symbol of the person to be cleansed by being bathed in the mixture of blood and water; and its release, to return to its fellows and into its nest, represented his deliverance from the ban of death which rested upon leprosy, and his return to the fellowship of his own nation...The sprinkling was performed seven times, because it referred to a re-admission into the covenant, the stamp of which was seven.” ~ Keil and Delitzsch
- The mixture that the living bird was dipped into and ‘cleansed’ with was: water from a living spring [living water], ashes of a red heifer [perfect sacrifice], blood from the bird that was killed [death of the old life], hyssop [healing], cedar wood [sanitizing], and scarlet dye [new life].
- Once he was cleansed, he was then set free.
 - Gal. 5:1 “*Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.*”

v. 8-9 “*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. 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.*”

- This was probably for practical reasons, knowing the leprosy bacteria can live as a mold in clothes and infect hair and beards, to get rid of all possible remnants.
- Some commentators say it is also for symbolic reasons: “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.” ~ Gill

Sacrifices (v. 10-32)

v. 10-20 “*And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one [ram] of the first year without blemish, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, and one log of oil. 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.*

*And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a **trespass offering**¹, and the log* of oil, and wave them as a **wave offering**^{1a} before the LORD. 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. >*

*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. And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. 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. 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. 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. Then the priest shall offer the **sin offering**² and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the **burnt offering** [ram]³. And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the **grain offering**⁴ on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean."*

- **Sacrifices Offered:**

1. Trespass offering (Propitiation - Payment)
 - 1a. Wave Offering (Proclaiming Possession)
2. Sin Offering (Atonement – Forgiveness)
3. Burnt Offering (Consecration)
4. Grain Offering (Thankfulness)

- **Similar to the Process of Salvation**

- Be cleansed of your sins (Propitiation, Atonement, Forgiveness)
- Proclaim whose who are
- Set yourself aside for Him alone
- Thank Him for saving you

v. 21-32 *"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, 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.*

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. 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. 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 > 4

right foot. And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD. 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. 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. And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford— 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. This is the law for one who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford the usual cleansing. ”

- Rich people: 2 lambs, a ram, 3/10 ephah of flour, log of oil
- Poor people: one lamb, 2 birds, 1/10 ephah of flour, one log of oil
- Notice the one lamb is always required.

Sanctification (v. 33-57)

Time to Clean House!

v. 33-35 *And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: “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, and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, ‘It seems to me that there is some plague in the house,’ 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. 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, then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days...”*

- Here you have God giving instructions specifically for the future for when they are in the land of Canaan. In the first part of the chapter, it was on how to cleanse a person from leprosy, in the second part of the chapter, it is on how to cleanse a house from leprosy.
- Notice it says, “I put” indicating that God was the one to infect this house. This appears to be an allusion to Zechariah chapter 5 where God promises to curse the house of those (Jews specifically) who break the commandments.

v. 39-42 *“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, then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in > 5*

which is the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city. 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. 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.”

- **Metaphor for Sanctification:**

1. Examine your heart, confess, and get accountability or someone who will be honest with you about if you have sin in your life.
2. Cut out all the places infected with sin.
3. Scrape all around to make sure you get all the vestiges out.
4. Replace with new stones (habits) that please God.
5. Reinforce those regularly!

- This is a painful, continual process that will take place throughout your entire life. Christ makes his home in your heart, Eph. 3:17, and it must be an appropriate place for Him to dwell.

v. 43-47 “*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, 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. 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. Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until evening. And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.*

- If there is habitual sin that keeps coming back, and it cannot be “cured”, don’t be surprised when God dismantles the house. God will often have to go to extreme lengths to get our attention – sometimes dismantling our life in the process. It is not fun, but **He doesn’t care about our comfort, He cares about our character.** Sometimes He has to dismantle the old one to build the new one.
- 2 Cor. 5:17 – “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*”

v. 48-57 “*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. And he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water; 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. 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. 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.

*This is the law for any leprous sore and scale, for the leprosy of a garment and of a house, for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot, **to teach when it is unclean and when it is clean.** This is the law of leprosy.”*

CONCLUSION

- Why this lengthy passage about leprosy in chapters 13-14? Because we are all spiritual lepers, and the Bible teaches us how to be cleansed!
- We would not know what is unclean without the Law, and we would not know how to be cleansed without the Gospel. Both are necessary!

DISCUSSION

1. Why is it important for us as Christians that the Priest goes outside the camp to the leper to examine him?
2. Name three (though there are more) pictures of Christ in this leprosy cleansing process.

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. Why was hyssop included in this cleansing process?
4. How can “running water” be better translated? Why is this significant for us as Christians?
5. Why are the ashes of the red heifer included in the cleansing process?
6. What is the significance of the two birds?
7. How can the cleansing of the house be a metaphor for us?