

**September 2, 2018 - Lev. 14:1-57 - Cleansing the Leper**  
**Torah Reading: Leviticus 14:1-57 - Cleansing the Leper**  
**Psalm 78:40-72**  
**Haftarah: Isaiah 57:17-19 + 58:8-14**  
**2 Kings 7:3-11 + 8:4-5**  
**Isaiah 5:8-16 + 6:3**

## The Cleansing of a Leper

**Leviticus 14:2** - "This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:"

"leper" = *tzora* - a primitive root; to scourge, strike down, be stricken with leprosy

The phrase "*ha metzora*" ("the *metzora*" - leper) is numerically equivalent to "*Tohu*", the world of Chaos in **Genesis 1:2** - "And the earth was without form (*tohu*), and void"

Said Rabbi Yochanan say in the name of Rabbi Joseph ben Zimra: One who bears evil tales will be visited with the plague of *tzaraat*... Resh Lakish said: What is the meaning of the verse, "This shall be the law of the *metzora*"? It means: This shall be the law for him who is *motzi shem ra* ("gives a bad name" through slander)."

To Aaron and his sons belonged the affair of leprosy, to pronounce unclean or clean, to shut up or set free. - *John Gill's Commentary*

The same authority is given now to the Church.

- **Matthew 16:19** - "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

**Leviticus 14:3-4** "And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: etc"

- Similar to the two goats on Yom Kippur - one was sacrificed, one let loose.

The word "*tzipor*" (the bird offered in sacrifice for a leper's cleansing) has the gematria of "*zehu Mashiach*" (i.e. "this one is Messiah")

Rashi - Why are birds required for this cleansing rite?] Because lesions of *tzara'ath* come as a result of derogatory speech, which is done by chattering. Therefore, for his cleansing, this person is required to bring birds, which twitter constantly with chirping sounds. — [Arachin 16b]

## Cedar, Hyssop and Crimson

"Because he has exalted himself like a cedar... he should humble himself like a grass." (Midrash Tanchuma)

Rashi - Because lesions of *tzara'ath* come because of haughtiness [symbolized by the tall cedar]. — [Arachin 16a]

Rashi - A tongue-shaped strip of crimson wool - He must humble himself from his haughtiness, just as [symbolized by] the תולעת [lit., "a worm," which infested the berries from which the crimson dye was extracted.

**Leviticus 14:5** - "And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water"

The earthenware flask is us - the "running water" is the water of baptism - in which we've become a new creation.

Bird is killed over the water, the buried in front of the leper. The other is bound with the cedar, hyssop and scarlet wool, dipped in the water and blood of the first bird, the mixture is sprinkled on the leper seven times, and then the bird is released into the open field. (**Leviticus 14:6-7**)

Your conscience is freed from guilt!

- **Hebrews 9:14** - "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

- **Matthew 10:29** - "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."

**Leviticus 14:8** - "And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days."

The shaving of the leper's hair (twice) signified the weakening of the strength of sin:

- **Psalms 40:12** - "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me."

Rashi - "shall tarry abroad out of his tent" - This teaches [us] that [during this period,] he is prohibited to have marital relations. — [Torath Kohanim 14:34; Mo'ed Katan 15b]

**Leviticus 14:11-12** - "And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is

to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:"

Rashi - at The Nicanor gate, but not within the courtyard itself, since he is lacking atonement. [The Nicanor gate was at the eastern end of the courtyard, directly facing the Holy; thus, when standing inside the gateway, the person was placed "before the Lord" without entering the courtyard. For this purpose, the space under The Nicanor gate was left unsanctified.]- [Torath Kohanim 14:44; Sotah 7a] The leper then puts both his hands through the opening into the court, and lays them on the head of the lamb for a trespass offering, and the priest immediately slays it.

### **The Trespass Offerings for Cleansing**

- **Isaiah 53:8** - "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."

The word for "stricken" = *nega`* - occurs 78 times in the Old Testament. Sixty-one of them are used in Leviticus 13-14 discussing leprosy.

The translation could be: "For the transgression of my people was he leprous, was the stroke of curse upon him."

- **Isaiah 53:10** - "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand."

"an offering for sin" = *'asham* - the trespass offering

Cleansing a leper required a trespass offering (the only trespass offering required for any defilement) Cleansing would allow the cleansed leper to once again "see his seed and prolong his days" (**Leviticus 14:8-9**)

### **Daubing of blood and oil on extremities**

**Leviticus 14:14** - "And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:"

First blood, then oil is daubed on the right ear, right thumb and right big toe of the leper, who had to put each extremity in turn through the opening to the court. Then the priest puts any leftover oil on the leper's head, "and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD" (**Leviticus 14:18**).

This showed that the leper had now a right to hear the word of God, to partake of all privileges, to touch anything without defiling it, and to go into any house or company

where he thought fit. The hearing of the ear is circumcised, then sanctified; the hands are atoned for their evil actions, then sanctified for holy service; the foot is atones from its wicked path and sanctified to walk in His ways - soberly, righteously, and godly.

If the leper was missing one of these parts - ear, thumb or big toe - he could never be cleansed.

But Rabbi Eleazer said, "If the blood and oil is applied to the place where the missing limb *should* have been, therefore he is clean." Rabbi Simeon said: If it is applied on the corresponding left side of the leper's body, it sufficeth. - *Alfred Edersheim, The Temple*

### **Oil used in Cleansing of the Leper**

The Hebrew word for "anointed" is *mashiach*, from which we get our English word Messiah. Oil was poured on the leper's head, making "atonement for him before the Lord" (**Leviticus 14:15-18**). Jewish tradition indicates that the oil was a symbol of the leper coming back to life because he or she had been considered dead.

Then, he offers a sin offering, a burnt offering and a meal offering. All of the aspects of Christ as sacrifice are present.

The poor could substitute pigeons for the other offerings, but a lamb was required for all for the trespass offering.

### **Cannot Cleanse Yourself**

Our tendency is to hide and cover over our leprosy, or try to cleanse ourselves in our own way.

The Talmud specifies that the leper cannot pluck out the hairs that have turned white and which indict uncleaness. If he does, he is unclean. Similarly, if leprosy breaks out on a finger or limb, and he cuts off the limb, he remains unclean. However, if he accidentally loses the limb, he is clean.

Nor could the leper cauterize the raw flesh which makes him unclean.

- **Matthew 5:36** - "Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black."

### **Leprosy in a House (Leviticus 14:33-53)**

**Leviticus 14:34, 36** - "When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession...Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go into it to see the plague, that all that is in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house:"

The God of mercy does not immediately inflict suffering directly.

Zohar Vayikra - "God, in reproofing a man, acts with him lovingly. At first He smites him inwardly. If he repents, well and good, but if not, he smites him under his garments, and this is called "chastisement of love". If he still does not repent, God smites him on his face where all can see, so that they may know that he is a sinner and not beloved of his Master."

As with Job, He will strike his possessions first, then his family. If he still takes no heed, his flesh. (**Job 1-2**)

"I will put the plague of *tzaraat* in a house" (**Leviticus 14:34**). So is it when leprous plagues come upon man: First they come upon his house. If he repents, it requires only the removal [of affected stones]; if not, it requires tearing down the entire house. Then the plagues come upon one's clothes. If he repents, they require washing; if not, they require burning. Then the plagues come upon his body. If he repents, he undergoes purification; if not, "He shall dwell alone." - Midrash Rabbah

A man says to his friend, "Lend me a kav of wheat," and the other says, "I have none"; or one asks for the loan of a kav of barley... or a kav of dates, and the other says, "I have none." Or a woman says to her friend, "Lend me a sieve," and the other says, "I have none" ... What does God do? He causes leprosy to light on his house, and as he takes out his household effects, people see, and say: "Did he not say, 'I have none'? See how much wheat is here, how much barley, how many dates! Cursed be the house with such cursed inhabitants! - Midrash Rabbah

If the leprosy returns to a house once cleansed, it is to be torn down:

**Leviticus 14:44-45** - "Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: it is unclean. And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place."

Some sages referred this verse to the destruction of the Temple.

In fact, the Rabbis stated in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 71a): "The house affected by the plague never existed and is not destined to exist. It was stated for the purpose of edification."

### **The "Good" within the walls of the Leprous House**

<https://www.haaretz.com/1.5215783>

Midrash interprets the story of a house plagued with *tza'ra'at* (leprosy) as referring to the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the people in Vayikra Rabbah 17:7

"When ye are come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I

put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession" (**Leviticus 14:33-34**).

### **Leprosy Can Reveal a Spiritual Treasure**

(Leviticus Rabbah 17:6 ): "Rabbi Simeon, son of Lakish, says: When the Canaanites heard that the Israelites would be entering their land, they proceeded to hide their treasures in the walls of their houses and in the fields. God declared, I did not promise their [the Israelites'] ancestors that I would bring their descendants to a land that was in ruins; I promised that I would bring their descendants to a land that would abound with every good thing, as it is written: 'and houses full of all good things' [Deuteronomy 6:11]. What did God do? He afflicted the walls inside the Israelites' houses with the plague of leprosy so that, when they would demolish their houses, they would find the Canaanites' treasures."

But then the midrash changes gears - it identifies the "house of the land of your possession" as the Temple in Jerusalem.

"The phrase 'in a house of the land of your possession' refers to the Temple in Jerusalem, as it is written, 'Behold, I will profane My sanctuary, the pride of your power' [Ezekiel 24:21], while 'then he that owneth the house shall come' is a reference to God, as it is written, 'Because of My house that lieth waste' [Haggai 1:9].

"The phrase '[he shall] tell the priest' refers to the prophet Jeremiah, as it is written, 'The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiyah, of the priests that were in Anathoth' [Jeremiah 1:1], while 'There seemeth to me to be as it were a plague in the house' refers to the filth of idolatry. There are those who argue that it is a reference to the idol that Manasseh placed in the Temple, as it is written, 'and behold northward of the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry (babiya )' [Ezek. 8:5]. What is the meaning of babiya? Rabbi Acha says, 'It should be read baya baya [a cry of complaint], because the new inhabitant, that is, the idol, is forcing the owner of the house to leave ...'

"The phrase 'And the priest shall command that they empty the house' alludes to 'and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord' [1 Kings 14:26], while 'And he shall break down the house' is an allusion to 'who destroyed this house' [Ezra 5:12]; the phrase 'and he shall carry them [the house's stones, timber and mortar] forth out of the city into an unclean place' is an allusion to 'and [who] carried the people away into Babylon' (Ezra 5:12 ).

The dwelling must be evacuated, just as Shishak, king of Egypt, emptied the Temple when he removed the treasures of God's house; it must be demolished, just as Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, destroyed the Temple; and its stones must be carried "forth out of the city to an unclean place." The "unclean place" is also specified: Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar's exile of the residents of the Kingdom of Judah parallels the idea of the removal of the stones to an impure place. The reconstruction of the dwelling with other stones is explained as the fulfillment of Isaiah's promise that a second Temple will be built after destruction of the first.

## Lamentations Rabbah 12.5.1 proem 21 - The Leper and the Temple

This preface to the reading of Lamentations on the Ninth of Ab, anniversary of the destruction of the Temple, opens with a passage describing the leper and his impurity, which are allegorically interpreted to refer to the Temple. Zion is doomed because, like the leper, she is polluted and disgraced.

Rabbi Alexandri opened discourse. "And the leper in whom the plague is" (Leviticus 13:45): "the leper" refers to the Temple; in whom the plague is - this is idol-worship which defiles like the plague (as it is said, "And they profaned My sanctuary and defiled it" - Ezekiel 5:11?) "His clothes shall be rent:" these are the priestly garments; "the hair of his head shall go loose:" as it is said "And the covering of Judah was laid bare" (Isaiah 22:8): that which should have been covered [the Holy of Holies], He disclosed. "And he shall cover his upper lip: "When Israel was exiled among the nations of the world, not one of them was able to bring a word of Torah out of his mouth. "And shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean:" this is the destruction of the First and Second Temples.

- **Matthew 24:2** - "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

- **Luke 19:44** - "And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

## Destruction of Jericho a type of Leprosy Ritual

The same language has been observed in reference to Jericho:

Leprosy in a house would only occur once they had entered Canaan (Leviticus 14:34)

**Joshua 6:1** - "Now Jericho was straitly (*cagar*) shut up (*cagar*) because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in."

"shut up = *cagar* - Used in **Leviticus 13:4** for shutting up a leper, and in **Leviticus 14:38** for shutting up an infected house.

Two spies are sent to "go view the land" as the priest was to come to view the house suspected of leprosy.

The stalks of flax that hid the spies correspond to the hyssop, the scarlet thread hanging from Rahab's house corresponds to the scarlet wool to tie together the hyssop and bird in the cleansing ritual of a leper.

The leper was to uncover his hair - loose or wild. This was also the sign of a woman suspected of adultery (**Numbers 5:18**). Her hair was loosed. Rahab was such a woman

- a prostitute. (See also **1 Corinthians 11**)

Rahab, who goes free, represents the bird who is not killed but released.

The two spies, having contracted uncleanness by their stay in Jericho, are said to cross the Jordan, thus washing in water.

This is followed by a seven-day period, in which Israel circles the city led by the priests (**Joshua 6**) similar to the seven-day period to see if leprosy spreads. A blast of the shofar collapses the walls - analogous to the leprous house being dismantled.

### **Achan and "leprous" garment**

Achan secretly brings a Babylonish garment into his tent from booty that should have been destroyed. A leprous garment was to be burned (Leviticus 13:52) and, since Achan had defiled himself and his family by his action, they were stoned and then burned, in accordance with the command to burn the leprous garment.

The same is said of Babylon:

- **Jeremiah 51:26** - "And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the LORD."

### **A New 'House'**

**Leviticus 14:42** - "and they shall take other stones, and put them in the place of those stones."

A prophetic "code" ( a spiritual treasure) has been concealed in the "walls" of the original text concerning the destruction of the Temple and the new Temple of which we are living stones.

From our viewpoint, Christ is bringing in a new Temple in a New Jerusalem:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a costly corner-stone of sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste"  
- **Isaiah 28:16**.

Even though he was rejected and cast out like a leprous stone:

- **1 Peter 2:6-8** - "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

- **Psalm 91:10** - "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

### Rebellion and "Evil Speech"

Midrash Vayikra (Leviticus) understands the law of leprosy as an allusion to seven traits the Lord hates: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked thoughts, feet that run eagerly toward evil, a false witness and one who sows discord among people.

In Hebrew, such speech is called *lashon hara* (literally, "an evil tongue"). *Lashon hara* is the practice of speaking about other people, rather than speaking to them. It involves transforming a living, complex human being into a caricature — an object. In speaking ill of others, we participate in their dehumanization. Consequently, leprosy does the same to the slanderer - he is dehumanized, turning into a caricature of a person, transforming from a living human being to what was called a "living death."

"Evil talk is like an arrow. A person who unsheathes a sword can regret his intention and return it to its sheath. But the arrow cannot be retrieved." (Midrash Tehillim)

Five times, the word "Torah" is used in association with 'tzara'at' (leprosy). Thus the sages derive that "one who utters evil reports is considered in violation of the entire five books of the Torah."

- **Psalm 34:11-12** - "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit."

"Evil speech" is also remaining silent, when speaking out could have helped someone.

### Satan the first purveyor of "Evil Speech"

- **Psalm 34:14** - "Keep thy tongue from evil"

The Zohar identifies the primordial serpent with Satan, the fallen angel whose function is to level charges and accuse in the heavenly court. Thus the creature that first spoke *loshon hara* (evil speech) against God Himself, is given the task of speaking *Lashon hara* in the heavenly tribunal.

The serpent's tongue was split because of this as part of the curse. (2 Alphabet Rabbi Akiba 61)

Satan/Sammael - who is Edom's guardian angel - will in the last judgment be stricken with leprosy (Tan. Mezora' 2)

"When leprosy defiles the Temple, the Holy One departs and the mighty serpent takes up residence there and casts in the filth of the world."

Zohar - " if a man's lips and tongue speak evil words, those words mount aloft and all proclaim "keep away from the evil word of so-and-so, leave the path clear for the mighty serpent." Then the holy soul [it is this which ascends and speaks before the holy King and enters without let or hindrance in all gates, and therefore it is called "speaking spirit"] leaves him and is not able to speak: it is in shame and distress, and is not given a place as before. Hence it is written, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Proverbs 21:23). For that soul which was vocal is reduced to silence on account of the evil word. Then the serpent gets ready, and when that evil word finds its way to him, then many spirits bestir themselves, and one spirit comes down from that side and finds the man who uttered the evil word, and lights upon him and defiles him, and he becomes leprous. And just as a man is punished for uttering an evil word, so he is punished for not uttering a good word when he had the opportunity, because he harms that speaking spirit which was prepared to speak both above and below in holiness."

Different kinds of leprosy correspond to the 10 Commandments - some are directed toward God and some toward man. Leprosy of the forehead (Uzziah) reflects rebellion against God. Leprosy in the body reflects slander or accusation against your fellow man, and those in authority (Miriam vs. Moses).

Miriam challenged Moses (**Numbers 12:10–15**), and Gehazi lied to Elisha (**II Kings 5:20–27**).

Even accusing *yourself* becomes leprosy, since you do not belong to yourself but to God.

"Nowhere, to my knowledge, does it say that it is permissible to speak *lashon harah* about oneself." - Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch

Leprosy of the forehead is described as "utterly" leprous. The punishment is to be exiled outside the camp alone, like Uzziah.

Leprosy of the body - exiled with other lepers in a leper colony outside the camp.

The opposite of leprosy of the forehead is the mark of the cross on your forehead:

- **Ezekiel 9:4** - "And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark (the letter tau - a cross) upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."

Rabbi Moses Cordovero writes in his Pardes (see also Zohar 1:26, beginning of side b, et al): "*Nega*" (literally "ailment", the word used by the Torah to describe the *tzaraat* spots) is the opposite of "*oneg*", meaning "delight", a sublime spiritual state associated with the highest level. "*Oneg*" is an acronym for the words Eden, River and Garden.

## Idolatry

Leprosy leads to loss of sensation in affected areas. The leprosy become like the description of idolators:

- **Psalm 115:5-8** - "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

We try to hide our leprosy, but leprosy shows up and is discovered in our everyday activities:

A man is examined as one who hoes or one who harvests olives; as one who hoes in respect to the private parts; as one who harvests olives in regard to the armpit. And a woman as one who weaves (or rolls out dough) and as one who suckles her infant; who rolls out dough with respect to the private parts, and as one who suckles her infant with regard to the area under the breast; as one who weaves at a loom with regard to the armpit of the right hand. - Sifra Negaim Pereq 4:3

## Complete Defilement

The laws of the leper, as well as all the regulations about clean and unclean, are arbitrary, not naturally apparent.

According to a post-Talmudic source, Rabbi Yohanan Ben Zakai said to his pupils: "It is not the dead that defile and it is not water that purifies but rather it is an edict of God. God said: I have created my laws and my decrees and you may not violate my decree" (Pesikta Derav Kahana 4,7).

When God tells the prophet Haggai to quiz the priests about how things become unclean in Haggai 2:11-14, He emphasizes that the unclean renders the clean unclean, not the other way around.

## No Hope of Cure or Recovery

- **2 Kings 5:7** - King Jehoram, when confronted with Naaman's request to be healed of leprosy, exclaims, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?"

Miriam is assumed to have been "healed" (*rapha*) when Moses prayed for her:

- **Numbers 12:13** - "And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal (*rapha*) her now, O God, I beseech thee."

No cure is ever prescribed for leprosy, and it was considered a miracle if someone was healed.

Some scholars say the Leviticus regulations do not even provide a ceremony for a truly "cleansed" leper, because there could not be one. The ceremony for a "cleansed" leper was actually to declare him free from the "suspicion" of having leprosy.

### **Isaiah's Vision**

Isaiah, who had seen King Uzziah struck down with leprosy, confronts God in a vision, and sees his own leprosy:

- **Isaiah 6:5** - "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Two mention of "unclean" twice here points to **Leviticus 13:46** - "And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean.'"

We must acknowledge that we are completely leprous, and without hope, among the "walking dead." Only then can we be cleansed and healed.

### **Messiah/Jesus as High Priest Heals and Cleanses**

In the New Testament there are numerous references to lepers. In the two instances in which Jesus is said to have cured lepers (one an individual – **Luke 5:12–14**; cf. **Matt. 8:3**; and the other a group of ten – **Luke 17:12**), he told them, "Go show yourself to the priest" after their cure, and one passage (**Luke 5:14**) adds, "and make an offering for thy cleansing, as Moses commanded..." This is evidence that the biblical laws were in operation, both as regards the functions of the priest and the obligatory offering. The Apostles are told in general to "cleanse the lepers" (**Matthew 10:8**).

- See <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/leprosy>

Touching a leper occasioned ceremonial defilement (**Leviticus 5:3**); even as the leper's coming near enough for contact was against the Levitical regulations (**Leviticus 13:46**).

(On the other hand, there was no apparent uncleanness contracted by Aaron in his performance of his office to Miriam under her leprosy, nor by the priests in **2 Chronicles 26:20**, though it be said they thrust out Uzziah).

### **Jesus took disease on himself, along with sin (Isaiah 53:4)**

"When the Messiah hears of the great suffering of Israel in their dispersion, and of the wicked amongst them who seek not to know their Master, he weeps aloud on account of those wicked ones amongst them, as it is written: But he was wounded because of our

transgression, he was crushed because of our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5). The souls then return to their place. The Messiah, on his part, enters a certain Hall in the Garden of Eden, called the Hall of the Afflicted. There he calls for all the diseases and pains and sufferings of Israel, bidding them settle on himself, which they do. And were it not that he thus eases the burden from Israel, taking it on himself, no one could endure the sufferings meted out to Israel in expiation on account of their neglect of the Torah. So Scripture says, "Surely our diseases he did bear, etc. (Isaiah 53:4). A similar function was performed by R. Eleazar here on earth. For, indeed, beyond number are the chastisements awaiting every man daily for the neglect of the Torah, all of which descended into the world at the time when the Torah was given. As long as Israel were in the Holy Land, by means of the Temple service and sacrifices they averted all evil diseases and afflictions from the world. Now it is the Messiah who is the means of averting them from mankind until the time when a man quits this world and receives his punishment, as already said."

- Zohar, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 212a

### **Jesus Heals and Cleanses a Leper (Mark 1:40-45)**

- **Mark 1:40** - "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 "And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 "And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 "And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 "But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."

"the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed" - The other Gospels are not specific, but this passage signifies that not only was the leper cleansed, but he was also healed. Then he sends the leper to the priests to be officially declared unclean according to the Law and to offer the proper sacrifices.

### **Another Instance when Jesus Both Healed and Cleansed Lepers:**

**Luke 17:11-19** - Cleansing of the 10 Lepers

“And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

“And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

“And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”

Luke's account seems to equate "cleansed" with "healed" and "made whole"

### **Leprosy reveals the evil that dwell within us:**

- **Titus 1:15** - "Unto the pure (*katharos* = clean) all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

- **Mark 7:20-23** - "And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

Pharisees insist on outward cleanness, “but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.” (**Luke 11:39**)

- **Luke 11:41** - "But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you."

Better: “Give away freely as charity what is within your soul...”

Leprosy and prophesy are opposites. Bacteria in wine causes the fermentation and “bubbling forth” of prophesy. Bacteria in leprosy causes us to go inward until what we're trying to keep hidden bursts out to show itself in a leprous mark. Both processes are irrepressible.

Confession, prophesy, letting out what is concealed, allows Christ to cleanse us with his word.

Like Naaman, our new identity "comes again like the flesh of a little child." (**2 Kings 5:14**) and as Jesus directed: Become as a little child.

**Once cleansed, God can tell us this:**

- **Ecclesiastes 9:7-10** - "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."