

WEEK 17

The Cleansing of Leprosy

Scripture Reading: Lev. 13–14

OUTLINE

« DAY 1 »

- I. Leprosy signifies the serious sin issuing from within man, such as willful sin, presumptuous sin, and opposing God with determination (Lev. 13):**
 - A. As seen in the cases of Miriam (Num. 12:1-10), Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20-27), and Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:16-21), leprosy issues from rebellion against God's authority, against God's deputy authority, against God's regulation, and against God's economy.*
 - B. In the biblical sense, sin is rebellion; thus, leprosy signifies sin (1 John 3:4).*
 - C. The first case of sin in the Bible was Satan's rebellion against God; hence, sin as rebellion was invented, inaugurated, by the rebellious archangel Lucifer (Ezek. 28:13-18; Isa. 14:12-15).*
 - D. Eventually, this sin, this leprosy, entered into mankind through Adam, and having entered into man, it issues from within man as many kinds of sins, that is, many manifestations of rebellion (Rom. 5:12, 19a; 7:20).*
 - E. Hence, a leper represents the fallen descendants of Adam, all of whom are lepers; as signs of leprosy, a swelling, eruption, or a bright spot on the skin of one's flesh signifies man's outward*

expressions in unruliness, in friction with others, and in pride and self-exaltation (Lev. 13:2).

- F. The condition in Leviticus 13:24-25 signifies that a saved person's acting by the flesh, that is, his losing his temper, his justifying himself, and his not being willing to forgive others, is a sign of spiritual leprosy.*

« DAY 2 »

II. The cleansing of the leper in Leviticus 14 portrays the rich, complete, and extensive salvation God has prepared and accomplished for us in Christ; in this salvation Christ is the all-inclusive One who has passed through a number of processes and is everything we need for our cleansing:

- A. "The priest shall command that two living clean birds and cedar wood and scarlet strands and hyssop be taken for the one who is to be cleansed. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be slaughtered in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it and the cedar wood and the scarlet strands and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the running water. And he shall sprinkle it on the one who is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times and shall pronounce him clean. Then he shall let the living bird go into the open field" (vv. 4-7):*
1. The two living clean birds are types of Christ, who is clean, without any defilement, and full of the life that is able to fly above the earth; the birds here signify that Christ came from the heavens and that He belongs to the heavens and transcends the earth.

2. The bird that was killed signifies the crucified Christ, who died for us that our filthiness might be taken away (1 Pet. 2:24).
3. The second bird, which was let go into the open field, signifies the resurrected Christ, who rose from the dead for us that we might be delivered from our weakness by the power, strength, and energy of His resurrection life—the divine, eternal, uncreated life of God (Rom. 8:2).

« **DAY 3 & DAY 4** »

4. Cedar wood (cf. 1 Kings 4:33) signifies the honorable and uplifted humanity of Jesus, which enables Him to be our Savior; hyssop, being one of the smallest plants, signifies that the Lord Jesus was willing to become lowly in His “becoming in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7) that He might be near to man and become man’s Savior (cf. Matt. 8:2-3); scarlet, a dark red color, signifies the shedding of blood and also implies kingship (27:28-29).
5. All of this signifies that in order to cleanse us from our leprosy, the Lord lowered Himself to become a man of high standard but of low status that He might do the will of God and shed His blood on the cross for our redemption, thereby being glorified in His resurrection and becoming the honorable and high King (Phil. 2:5-11).
6. The one who had been healed from leprosy (Lev. 14:3) still needed to seek to be cleansed before God, signifying that the one who is sick of the sin of leprosy, although he has been healed by the divine life within, still needs to have his shortcomings and defilement dealt with before God that he might be cleansed; our seeking to be cleansed is our cooperation with God’s grace and love.
7. The earthen vessel signifies the humanity of Jesus (cf. 2 Cor. 4:7), and the living water signifies the living and eternal Spirit of God (John 7:37-39; Rev. 22:1); the bird being killed in an earthen vessel over living water signifies that through His death in His humanity the Lord Jesus offered Himself to God through the eternal and living Spirit who was within Him (Heb. 9:14).

8. The things recorded in Leviticus 14:6-7 signify that the Lord's perfect redemption not only causes man to be cleansed objectively in his position but also causes man to experience subjectively, in the Holy Spirit, the Lord's suffering in the shedding of His blood in His honorable, uplifted, and yet lowly humanity and to experience His death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification (Eph. 2:5-6; Phil. 3:10, 21; Col. 3:1-4); these things are all implied in the significances of the two birds, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet strands.
9. The sprinkling of the blood of the slain bird on the leper who was to be cleansed signifies that the blood shed by Christ was sprinkled on us, the sinners (1 Pet. 1:2), and this sprinkling connects us to Christ, the Redeemer; the sprinkling of the blood seven times signifies the completeness of the cleansing of the Lord's blood (1 John 1:7, 9).
10. Christ's ascension is signified by the living bird soaring in the air; letting the living bird go into the open field signifies that the living Christ causes the cleansed sinner to experience not only Christ's death and resurrection but also His ascension (2 Cor. 5:14-15; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:1-4).

« DAY 5 »

B. The shaving of the hair of the leper for his cleansing signifies dealing with the difficulties of the self, which is the enemy of the Body; the razor signifies the cross (Lev. 14:9):

1. The hair of the head signifies the glory of man; everyone has his boasts in certain areas; some boast of their ancestry, some of their education, some of their virtues, some of their zeal in their love for the Lord; almost everyone can find an area in which to boast, to glorify himself, and to make a display before man.
2. The beard signifies the honor of man; people esteem themselves honorable with regard to their position, their family background, or even their spirituality; they always have a superior feeling that they are above others.

3. The eyebrows signify the beauty of man; we have naturally good and strong points, which did not issue from the experience of God's salvation but from natural birth.
 4. The hair of the whole body signifies the natural strength of man; we are full of natural strength, natural methods and opinions, thinking that we can do this or that for the Lord and that we are capable of doing all things.
 5. When all the aspects of the self are dealt with through the "razor" of the cross, and when we have nothing and are nothing, we shall be clean (cf. Phil. 3:7-11).
 6. We should utterly reject the self by doing everything through the cross and by the Spirit to dispense Christ into one another for the sake of the Body of Christ.
- C. *The leper's shaving of his entire body, washing his clothes, and bathing his flesh a second time after waiting and watching seven days (Lev. 14:9) signifies that a sinner who is to be cleansed needs to bear the responsibility for dealing with every part of his natural life and daily walk; this shows that if we deal with our sin and our sinful self seriously, in a definite, thorough, and absolute way, we shall be clean.*

« DAY 6 »

III. In Leviticus 14:33-57, the house typifies the church as our real home, and the leprosy in the house signifies the sins and evils in the church; the priest signifies the Lord or His deputy authority, and the examining of the house is not for condemnation but is a grace for healing (1 Cor. 1:11):

- A. *The removing of the infected stones after seven days (Lev. 14:40) signifies that after the observation of a complete period of time, if the problem of the church is still spreading, the believer or*

believers involved in the problem should be removed from the fellowship of the church and be considered unclean, like the outsiders; this is done to stop the spread of the disease and to eliminate the disease (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10).

- B. Putting other stones in the place of the removed stones (Lev. 14:42a) signifies using other believers (1 Pet. 2:5) to fill in the gap; the replastering of the house with other plaster (Lev. 14:42b) signifies the renewing of the church with new experiences of the Lord's gracious works; this is needed for a new start in the church life.*
- C. The breaking down of the house after the infection of leprosy returns (v. 45) signifies that if the situation of the church reaches the point where it cannot be cured, healed, that church should be terminated (cf. Rev. 2:5).*
- D. If no sin is spreading after the renewing of the church with the new experiences of the Lord's gracious works, the church is clean and has no problem; the whole church needs to be cleansed with the eternally efficacious blood of Christ and His eternal and living Spirit so that the church is fully clean to be the mutual dwelling of God and man (Lev. 14:48-53; Heb. 9:14; 10:22; 1 John 1:9; Titus 3:5; John 14:2, 23).*

<< WEEK 17 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Lev. 13:2-3 When a man has a swelling or an eruption or a bright spot on the skin of his body, and it becomes an infection of leprosy,...then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests....If the hair in the infection has turned white and the appearance of the infection is deeper than the skin of his body, it is the infection of leprosy. When the priest has looked at him, he shall pronounce him unclean.

It is difficult to analyze leprosy. We may say that leprosy originates from outside a person, that it is caused by the entering into a person of the germs of leprosy. We may also say that leprosy comes from within, since a person cannot develop leprosy unless the element of leprosy enters into his being to give rise to this disease. Leprosy, therefore, comprises both an outside factor and an inward effect. The cause is from the outside, but the effect is inward.

Leprosy (Lev. 13:2b) signifies the serious sin issuing from within man, such as willful sin, presumptuous sin, and opposing God with determination. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 339-340)

Today's Reading

Leprosy always comes from rebellion. Miriam rebelled against Moses, who was God's deputy authority. Her rebellion had a cause, and the cause was Moses' marrying a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). As the result of her rebellion, Miriam became leprous (v. 10).

In 2 Kings 5:20-27 Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, rebelled against Elisha's practices. Elisha would not receive anything as a reward from Naaman, a Gentile who was healed of leprosy. After Gehazi received gifts from the cleansed leper, Naaman's leprosy was transferred to him.

King Uzziah rebelled against God's regulation concerning the priesthood. According to this regulation, the king could not participate in the priesthood. But

Uzziah rebelled against this regulation, and as a result of his rebellion he became leprous [2 Chron. 26:16-21]. In each of these three cases, the leprosy first entered into the rebellious one and then issued from within that one.

According to the Old Testament, leprosy is the outcome of a certain cause, and that cause is rebellion against God's authority, against God's deputy authority, against God's regulation, and against God's economy. We all must admit that we have rebelled against God's authority,...against God's regulation, [and] against God's entire economy....In God's eyes we all became leprous.

Leprosy is sin....The first case of sin was Satan's rebellion....Before Satan's rebellion there was not such a thing as sin. Sin was invented, not created, by the rebellious archangel Lucifer.

Sin, therefore, is rebellion against God, against God's representative, or deputy authority, and against God's plan, arrangement, government, and administration. As a whole, sin is rebellion against God's economy. This rebellion was invented, inaugurated, by Satan himself. Eventually, sin came into mankind....Having entered into man [Rom. 5:12a], this sin, this leprosy, now issues from within man. As a result, we are leprous. Whenever we do something against God, that thing is leprous.

When the Lord Jesus came down from the mountain where He decreed the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens, the first thing He did was cleanse a leper (Matt. 8:1-4). This leper represents the fallen descendants of Adam, all of whom are lepers. The sin that was invented by Satan entered into mankind through Adam and made us all lepers. Leprosy now issues in many different kinds of sins, that is, in many expressions, manifestations, of rebellion. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 340-342)

As signs of leprosy, a swelling, eruption, or a bright spot on the skin of one's flesh signifies man's outward expressions in unruliness, in friction with others, and in pride and self-exaltation. (Lev. 13:2, footnote 1)

The condition in Leviticus 13:24-25 signifies that a saved person's acting by the flesh, for example, his losing his temper, his justifying himself, and his not being willing to forgive others, is a sign of spiritual leprosy. (Lev. 13:24, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 39

« WEEK 17 — DAY 2 »

Morning Nourishment

Lev. 14:4-5 Then the priest shall command that two living clean birds and cedar wood and scarlet strands and hyssop be taken for the one who is to be cleansed. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be slaughtered in an earthen vessel over running water.

The matter of [the] cleansing [of the leper] is the all-inclusive salvation God has prepared and accomplished for us. Here we see a Christ who is all-inclusive. He has the blood, the Spirit, and everything we need to be cleansed. In Him we have the rich, complete, and extensive provision of God's salvation. We all need to know this cleansing, this salvation, and experience it in full.

The leper being brought to the priest [in Leviticus 14:2] signifies an unclean person being brought to the Lord. In preaching the gospel we are actually bringing unclean persons, sinners, to the Lord. (Life-study of Leviticus, p. 365)

Today's Reading

The priest going outside the camp to examine the leper (Lev. 14:3a) signifies the Lord Jesus leaving His original place and humbling Himself to be nigh to the sinner...This is portrayed in Matthew 8. "When He came down from the mountain, great crowds followed Him. And behold, a leper, coming near, worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if You are willing, You can cleanse me. And stretching out His hand, He touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed! And immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (vv. 1-3). This leper should have been isolated, excluded, from the people of God. He should not have been touched by others, lest the contagious disease be passed on to them. Nevertheless, having sympathy in love for the leper, the Lord Jesus came nigh to him and touched him.

In Leviticus 14:4-9 we see that the leper who was to be cleansed needed to seek for cleansing before God. This signifies that the one who is sick of the sin of leprosy, although he has been healed by the life within, still needs to have his shortcomings and defilement dealt with before God that he might be cleansed.

Cleansing from leprosy requires not only the action from God's side but also the coordination from our side. As lepers, as sinners, we need to seek for cleansing. Our seeking is our cooperation with God's grace and love.

The one who had been healed of leprosy still needed to be cleansed. To be healed is one thing, and to be cleansed is another. The process, the procedure, of cleansing includes many items which we shall now consider.

“The priest shall command that two living clean birds and cedar wood and scarlet strands and hyssop be taken for the one who is to be cleansed” (v. 4). These two birds, which are clean and full of life, are types of Christ. Christ is here typified by the bird life, the life that is able to fly in the air above the earth.

Birds are able to transcend the earth. The birds in verse 4 signify that Christ came from the heavens and that He belongs to the heavens and transcends the earth....The live birds signify that Christ is full of life. He is living because He is full of life....The clean birds here signify that only Christ is clean and is without any defilement. In this matter, Christ and we are opposite. With us everything is unclean; with Him everything is clean. We are uncleanness, but He is cleanness.

The two birds signify, on the one hand, that Christ died for us that our filthiness might be taken away and, on the other hand, that He rose for us that we might be delivered from our weakness. Christ died on the cross to take away our sins. This is typified by the first bird. Christ rose from among the dead for us that we might be delivered from our weakness by the power, strength, and energy of life. This life is the resurrection life, life in resurrection. It is also the divine life, the eternal, uncreated life of God. We receive this life from the resurrected Christ, who is typified by the second bird. Hence, these two birds signify two aspects of Christ—Christ in crucifixion and Christ in resurrection. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 365-367)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 42

« WEEK 17 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Lev. 14:6-7 As for the living bird, he shall take it and the cedar wood and the scarlet strands and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the running water. And he shall sprinkle it on the one who is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times and shall pronounce him clean. Then he shall let the living bird go into the open field.

Cedar wood (Lev. 14:4; cf. 1 Kings 4:33) signifies the honorable and high humanity of the Lord, which enables Him to be our Savior. In the Old Testament, plants are often types of the Lord's humanity. Wood, in particular, is such a type.

In 1 Kings 4:33 Solomon "discoursed about trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that shoots forth out of the wall." Hyssop was among the smallest of the plants. The hyssop in Leviticus 14:4 signifies that the Lord was willing to be lowly in becoming in the likeness of men that He might be nigh to man and become man's Savior. On the one hand, as typified by cedar wood, the Lord has the highest standard of humanity; on the other hand, as typified by the hyssop, He was willing to be lowly that He might be available to us. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 367-368)

Today's Reading

Scarlet (Lev. 14:4), a dark red color, implies much in typology. Scarlet here signifies that the Lord lowered Himself to become a man that He might do the will of God and shed His blood on the cross for our redemption, thus becoming the honorable and high King. The color scarlet signifies the shedding of blood. Thus it signifies Christ's redemption accomplished by His shedding His blood on the cross. Scarlet also implies kingship. Christ was slain, crucified, for redemption and through that redemption He became the King. The Savior has become the King not by fighting but by dying, by being crucified.

Verse 5 says, "The priest shall command that one of the birds be slaughtered

in an earthen vessel over running water.” The Hebrew word translated “running” literally means “living.” An earthenware vessel filled with living water over which one bird was to be killed signifies that through death in the flesh the Lord offered Himself to God through the eternal and living Spirit (cf. Heb. 9:13-14).

The earthen vessel signifies the Lord’s humanity, and the living water signifies the living and eternal Spirit of God. Over an earthen vessel filled with living water a bird was to be killed. This signifies that Christ was killed in His humanity filled with the living, eternal Spirit. In Hebrews 9:14 we have the fulfillment of this type. This verse tells us that Christ through the eternal Spirit offered Himself to God. When He was dying on the cross, He offered Himself to God through the living water—the eternal, living Spirit of God—that filled Him. Christ was not alone when He was on the cross, for the eternal Spirit was in Him and with Him.

Without Paul’s word in Hebrews 9:14 we could not understand the type in Leviticus 14:5. In the type a number of details are covered in a very simple way. Here we have an earthenware vessel, living water, and a bird that was slain. When we put this type together with Hebrews 9:14, we see that when Christ (the slain bird) was being crucified, He was in His humanity (the earthen vessel), yet within Him was the eternal Spirit, the living Spirit of God (the living water). Through the Spirit who filled Him, Christ offered Himself to God.

Leviticus 14:6-7a...signifies that the Lord’s perfect redemption not only causes man to be cleansed objectively in his position, but also causes man to experience subjectively in the Holy Spirit the Lord’s suffering in shedding His blood in His noble, high, and lowly humanity, and to experience His death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification. All these matters are implied in the type. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 368-369)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 42

« WEEK 17 — DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 9:14 How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

As New Testament believers, we enjoy the Lord's cleansing. However, if we simply read and understand the New Testament, we shall not have a clear, detailed picture of what is involved in this cleansing. For this we need the types in Leviticus 14. From the types we see that to cleanse us of our leprosy the Lord had to be incarnated, to become a human being. As typified by the cedar wood, His humanity was high and honorable. As typified by the hyssop, He was willing to be lowly in becoming in the likeness of men. On the one hand, His standard was high; on the other hand, His status was very low. Both were for the producing of the scarlet thread. Furthermore, the two birds typify Christ in two other aspects, with the slain bird signifying Christ in His crucifixion and the live bird signifying Christ in His resurrection. Without Christ in all these aspects, we could not be cleansed of our leprosy, of our sin. (Life-study of Leviticus, p. 375)

Today's Reading

I do not believe that the ancient Israelites understood the significance of the two birds, the cedar, the hyssop, the killing of one bird over an earthenware vessel filled with living water, binding together the live bird, the cedar, the hyssop, and the scarlet thread and dipping this bundle into the blood of the killed bird that this blood might be sprinkled seven times on the one who was to be cleansed....However, we today do understand these types. Now we can see that for our cleansing we need a Christ of many aspects, a Christ who has gone through a number of processes. The blood shed by Him has been sprinkled upon us, and this sprinkling connects us, the sinners, to Christ, the Redeemer.

The Lord's redemption, His noble, high, and lowly humanity, and His resurrection, ascension, and glorification are all implied in this type. We have seen that the cedar wood typifies Christ's noble and high humanity, and the hyssop, His lowly humanity. The slain bird, of course, signifies His redemption....His resurrection is signified by the other bird, the live bird. These two birds signify Christ in two aspects—in His death and resurrection. On the one hand, as signified by the killed bird, He was killed. On the other hand, as signified by the live bird, He was resurrected. The dying Christ became the living Christ through resurrection. Christ's ascension is signified by the live bird's flying, soaring, in the air. The Lord's glorification is signified by the scarlet, which implies kingship. Christ is glorified in His kingship. Christ was humbled in His incarnation, shamed in His crucifixion, and glorified in His kingship. Therefore in this one type we see the all-inclusive Christ, for here we have His humanity, which is both high and lowly, His redemption, and His resurrection, ascension, and glorification.

“He shall let the living bird go into the open field” (Lev. 14:7). This signifies that the living Christ causes the cleansed sinner not only to die and resurrect but also to experience His ascension. These have all been accomplished for us by Christ, and we only need to experience and enjoy them. In the crucified Christ, the killed bird, we died. Now in the resurrected Christ, the live bird, we are soaring in ascension. We have been freed, and there are no frustrations.

To expound this type we need the knowledge of the entire Bible....Biblical theology has much to do with the leprosy in Leviticus 13 and 14. If this theology were not involved with our leprosy, we would be altogether separated from God. He would be God, having nothing to do with us, and we would be lepers, having nothing to do with Him....In this type we see the Lord's redemption and the saving power in His resurrection. We have been redeemed by the crucified Christ, and now we are in the resurrected Christ, soaring in the air with Him. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 375-376, 370-371)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 43

« WEEK 17 — DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

Lev. 14:8-9 And the one who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair and bathe in water, and he shall be clean. And after that he may come into the camp, but he shall dwell outside his tent seven days. And on the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair; he shall shave his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair. Then he shall wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

“The one who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair and bathe in water, and he shall be clean” (Lev. 14:8a). This signifies that, on the one hand, a sinner who is to be cleansed needs to experience Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension and, on the other hand, he needs to bear the responsibility himself to deal with and cut off all that is of his old living and natural life. (Life-study of Leviticus, p. 371)

Today’s Reading

Leviticus 14:8b signifies that a sinner who is to be cleansed is still unable to recover the fellowship with the brothers; he needs to be watchful, to wait, and to be dealt with further. Even after a leper had shaved off all his hair and had bathed himself in water, he still needed to wait, to watch over himself, and to be dealt with further...To deal with our sin, our leprosy, our rebellion, which comes from Satan, is a serious matter with God. Because sin is so serious, we should not deal with it in a loose, light, or careless way. (Life-study of Leviticus, p. 373)

The leper has to “shave off all his hair...and bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be clean” (v. 9). The hair, which is something grown out from a man’s body, signifies the difficulties within ourselves. Therefore, shaving the hair means dealing with the difficulties of our own self. This is the work of the cross in dealing with our being. After one passes through the dealing of the cross, his whole being is cleansed in a practical way. This kind of dealing is not once for all;

it must be repeated again and again to become thorough.

In the Bible each of the different kinds of hair has its own significance. The hair of the head signifies the glory of man, the beard represents the honor of man, the eyebrows speak of the beauty of man, and the hair of the whole body denotes the natural strength of man. Everyone has his boasts in certain areas. Some boast of their ancestry, some of their education, some of their virtues, some of their zeal in their love for the Lord. Almost everyone can find an area in which to boast, to glorify himself, and to make a display before man. This is typified by the hair of the head. Moreover, people esteem themselves honorable with regard to their position, their family background, or even their spirituality; they always have a superior feeling that they are above others. This is their beard. At the same time, men also have some natural beauty, that is, some naturally good and strong points, which did not issue from the experience of God's salvation but from natural birth. This is the eyebrows of man. Finally, as human beings, we are full of natural strength, natural methods and opinions, thinking that we can do this or that for the Lord and that we are capable of doing all things. This means that we still have very long hair all over our body; we have not been shaved. All these are not outward contaminations but problems of our natural birth. The outward contaminations need only to be washed with water; however, our own natural problems must be shaved with a razor, which means that they must be dealt with by the cross. This kind of dealing is deep and severe, hurting us within and causing us much pain. (The Experience of Life, pp. 188-189)

The leper's shaving of his entire body, washing his clothes, and bathing his flesh a second time after waiting and watching seven days signifies that a sinner who is to be cleansed needs to bear the responsibility for dealing with every part of his natural life and daily walk. This shows that if we deal with our sin and our sinful self seriously, in a definite, thorough, and absolute way, we shall be clean. (Lev. 14:9, footnote 2)

Further Reading: The Experience of Life, pp. 185-189

<< WEEK 17 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Lev. 14:36 And the priest shall command that they empty the house before the priest goes in to look at the infection...

39-40 ...The priest shall return on the seventh day and inspect it...If the infection has spread in the walls of the house, then the priest shall command that they take out the stones on which the infection is and throw them away outside the city into an unclean place.

The house in Leviticus 14...typifies the church as our house, our home, and the leprosy in a house signifies sins and evils in the church (vv. 33-48)...[Verse 36b] signifies that the Lord or the apostle comes to examine. This kind of examination is not a matter of condemnation; rather, it is a kind of grace for healing...[Leviticus 14:39-40] signifies that after the observation of a complete period of time, if the problem of the church is still spreading, the believer or believers involved in the problem should be removed from the fellowship of the church and be considered unclean, like the outsiders (cf. 1 Cor. 5). This means that when the church is sick of a certain disease, the elders should first observe the situation. If the problem is becoming worse, the source of the problem—the believer or believers who have become involved in the disease—should be removed from the fellowship, the communication, of the church in order to stop the spread of the disease and to eliminate the disease. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 385, 387-388)

Today's Reading

Putting other stones in the place of the removed stones signifies the using of other believers to fill up the gap [Lev. 14:42a]. When the church becomes sick with leprosy, it often becomes necessary to remove from the fellowship of the church the saints who are involved in the problem. This will create a gap, and we should seek to fill this gap with other believers.

[The replastering of the house (v. 42b)] signifies the renewing of the church with new experiences of the Lord's gracious works.

We need to have a new start in the church life, that is, to renew the church with new experiences of the Lord's gracious works...[by] bringing in the riches of Christ in a new way. If we...simply do something in a legal way to remove certain persons and replace them with others, this will make the church empty, and in this emptiness the church will suffer even more. Therefore, the leading ones need to pray, perhaps with fasting, that the church will receive something new in the experiences of Christ's gracious works. Then the church life will be renewed, replastered with new mortar, and all the members will be happy about the renewed church life.

"If the infection returns and breaks out in the house after he has taken out the stones and after he has scraped the house and after it has been replastered, then the priest shall come in and look; and if the infection has spread in the house, it is a malignant leprosy in the house; it is unclean. And he shall break down the house, its stones and its timber and all the plaster of the house, and he shall bring them outside the city into an unclean place" (vv. 43-45). This signifies that after the dealing, if additional serious sins break out, the whole church should be torn down. This is most pitiful. If the situation of a church reaches the point where it cannot be cured, healed, then it will be necessary for that church to be terminated.

"But if...the priest comes in and looks, and if the infection has not spread in the house after the house has been replastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean because the infection has been healed" (v. 48). This signifies that if no sin is spreading after the renewing of the church with the new experiences of the Lord's gracious works, the church is clean and has no problem.

Leviticus 14:49-51 reveals the leprosy in a house is cleansed in the same way as the cleansing of leprosy in a man....[Verse 52] signifies that the whole church needs to be cleansed with the eternally efficacious blood of Christ and His eternal and living Spirit....The house being clean signifies that the church is fully clean to be the mutual dwelling of God and man. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 388-389, 391-393)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 44

<< WEEK 17 — HYMN

Hymns, #116

1

How wonderful redemption is,
My gracious Lord, in Thee!
Not seen, nor heard, nor e'er conceived
What Thou hast done for me!
Thou art divine, mysterious,
Beyond my grandest phrase!
Redemption is so marvelous,
Beyond all pow'r to praise!

2

For us Thou on the cross wast pierced,
And blood and water streamed;
That life divine be giv'n to us,
That we may be redeemed.
Thy precious blood has made us clean,
That we accepted be;
Regenerated by Thy life,
We now are one with Thee.

3

Thou art the grain divine that died
The many grains to bear,
Which, blent and formed, Thy Body are,

And all Thy nature share.
We are the increase of Thyself,
And Thou our content art;
Through us Thou livest and dost move
And manifested art.

4

Since we're Thy Body, Thou may come
And settle down in us;
In us Thou may obtain Thy home
And we become Thy trust.
Thy heart to satisfy and please,
We are Thy counterpart,
Now in one Body with Thyself,
Enjoying all Thou art.

5

While in remembrance now we meet
And here the symbols see,
For Thy redemption great and full
We're filled with praise to Thee.
Since we are made Thy Body, Lord,
Thy dwelling place and bride,
We would give thanks and worship Thee
And in Thy praise abide.