

Leviticus 13:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean.

Analysis

It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean.

This verse falls within the section on **Diagnosing Skin Diseases**. Detailed procedures for priests to diagnose skin diseases (צָרָעָת, tzaraat), often translated 'leprosy' but covering various conditions.

The Aaronic priesthood mediated between God and Israel, offering sacrifices and maintaining the tabernacle. This prefigured Christ's superior priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Ritual purity laws taught Israel to distinguish between clean and unclean, holy and common, training them in discernment and reverence for God's presence.

Every sacrifice and ritual in Leviticus points forward to Jesus Christ, who fulfills the entire sacrificial system as both perfect sacrifice and eternal high priest.

Historical Context

Detailed procedures for priests to diagnose skin diseases (צָרָעָת, tzaraat), often translated 'leprosy' but covering various conditions. Chapters 11-15 address ritual purity, teaching Israel to distinguish clean from unclean. These laws served multiple purposes: promoting health, teaching spiritual lessons about sin's defilement, and separating Israel from pagan practices. Archaeological evidence

shows Canaanite worship involved practices Israel's laws explicitly prohibited. Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. Ancient texts like the Code of Hammurabi show that law codes were common in the ancient Near East, but biblical law uniquely grounded ethics in God's character rather than merely social convention.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?
2. How can you develop greater spiritual discernment in distinguishing what honors God from what defiles?
3. In what practical ways should this verse influence your church life, family relationships, or personal integrity?

Interlinear Text

וְטַמֵּא יְבָשֵׂר וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	shall pronounce him unclean	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	הוּא הוּא הוּא הוּא	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת
leprosy	It is an old	H1931	in the skin	of his flesh	shall pronounce him unclean	
H6883	H3462		H5785	H1320		H2930
וְטַמֵּא יְבָשֵׂר וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	הוּא הוּא הוּא הוּא	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת	וְבָשָׂר וְבָשָׂר נֶתֶן צָרָעָת
and the priest	and shall not shut	H3808	and shall not shut	H3588	him up for he is unclean	H1931
H3548	H5462				H2931	

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