

Leviticus 13:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.

Analysis

And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.

This verse falls within the section on **Diagnosing Skin Diseases**. Detailed procedures for priests to diagnose skin diseases (צָרַעַת, 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.

What Leviticus portrayed through types and shadows, Christ fulfilled in reality through His incarnation, perfect life, atoning death, and resurrection.

Historical Context

Detailed procedures for priests to diagnose skin diseases (צָרַעַת, 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. The tabernacle's design parallels ancient Near Eastern temple architecture, yet its portable nature and absence of divine images distinguished it from pagan temples.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

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. What practical steps can you take this week to apply the principles taught in this verse?

Interlinear Text

וְכָא הַ	הַכֹּהֵן	וְהִנֵּה הַ	מֵרָא הַ	שָׁפָל לַ	מִן
seeth	And if when the priest	H2009	it behold it be in sight	lower	H4480
H7200	H3548		H4758	H8217	
הָעוֹר	וְשַׁעַר הַ	הָפָךְ	לָבָן	וְטָמֵא וְ	
than the skin	and the hair	thereof be turned	white	shall pronounce him unclean	
H5785	H8181	H2015	H3836	H2930	
הַכֹּהֵן	נֶגַע	צָרַעַת	הָוָא	בְּשֹׁחַ יִן	פְּרָחָה:
And if when the priest	it is a plague	of leprosy	H1931	out of the boil	broken
H3548	H5061	H6883		H7822	H6524

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