

Leviticus 13:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

Analysis

But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

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

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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. How does this verse point to Christ, and how does that deepen your faith and gratitude?

Interlinear Text

וְאִם	תִּתְחַתֵּי יְהוָה	תֵּעַמְד	הַבֵּה כֶּת	ל א	פֶּשֶׁתָּהּ
H518	H8478	stay H5975	But if the bright spot H934	H3808	in his place and spread H6581
צָרָה בָּת	הַשֹּׂחַ יוֹ	הוּא	וְטָהֵר וְ	הַכֹּהֵן:	
not it is a burning H6867	boil H7822	H1931	shall pronounce him clean H2891	and the priest H3548	
