

Leviticus 13:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.

Analysis

He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.

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

The New Testament reveals that Christ's sacrifice accomplishes what the Levitical system could only symbolize—complete forgiveness and restoration of relationship with God.

Historical Context

Detailed procedures for priests to diagnose skin diseases (צִרְעָת, 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by 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. How does this verse reveal God's character, and how should that revelation shape your relationship with Him?

Interlinear Text

אִישׁ	צָר וָעַ	הּ וְאֵ	טָמֵא	הּ וְאֵ	יִטְמָא נֹ
man	He is a leprous	H1931	he is unclean	H1931	shall pronounce him utterly
H376	H6879		H2931		H2930
יִטְמָא נֹ	הַכֹּהֵן	בְּרֹאשׁוֹ	נִגְעוֹ:		
shall pronounce him utterly	the priest	is in his head	his plague		
H2930	H3548	H7218	H5061		

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