

Numbers 5:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:

Analysis

God's command to put out of the camp all lepers, those with bodily discharge, and corpse-defiled persons emphasizes the incompatibility of uncleanness with His holy presence. The camp represented the congregation as God's dwelling place, requiring purity. This separation was both hygienic and theological, teaching that sin and defilement cannot coexist with God's holiness. The church today must also practice discipline, removing impenitent sinners from fellowship (1 Corinthians 5:13) to preserve the congregation's purity.

Historical Context

The three categories of exclusion (leprosy, bodily discharge, corpse defilement) covered various forms of ritual uncleanness detailed in Leviticus 11-15. Those excluded camped outside until cleansed and certified by priests. This physical separation symbolized spiritual separation from God caused by sin. Archaeological evidence shows ancient Israelites practiced careful hygiene and quarantine, advanced for their era, based on these divine health regulations.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the requirement for purity in God's camp inform the church's practice of discipline today?
2. What does physical separation from the camp teach about sin's spiritual effects in separating people from God?

Interlinear Text

בְּמִקְדָּשׁ	הַ	מִן
Command	H853	the children
H6680	H1121	of Israel
		that they put out
		H7971
		H4480
		of the camp
		H4264
כָּל	וְ	לִכְלִיכָּל
H3605	every leper	H3605
H6879		H2100
	and every one that hath an issue	H3605
וְ	לִכְלִיכָּל	
and whosoever is defiled	by the dead	
H2931	H5315	
לֹא	תִּטְפֹּשֶׁת	

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 21:1 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:

Leviticus 13:46 (Parallel theme): All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.

Numbers 12:14 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

Numbers 31:19 (Parallel theme): And do ye abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.

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