

BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

LEVITICUS 12-13

Chapters 12-15 continue to denote the clean vs. the unclean through another series of ceremonial laws. The general themes are the same as chapter eleven: 1) laws which reminded the people of the necessity to be pure and holy before God (preparing them for the holiness of the coming Christ). 2) Laws which kept Israel separate as a nation until Jesus was born (Lev 20:26).

PURIFICATION AFTER CHILDBIRTH

Leviticus 12

After giving birth to a child, a woman was considered ceremonially unclean for seven days. On the eighth day she would take a male child to be circumcised (Gen 17) and then she was not to touch anything sacred or go to the temple sanctuary for another 33 days. If she gave birth to a female child, she would be considered unclean for 14 days after the birth— and she must wait 66 days before touching anything sacred or going to the temple sanctuary.

After the days of purification for a son or daughter were over, the woman needed to bring an offering to the Tent of Meeting and offer it before the LORD to make atonement. Then she would be ceremonially clean.

- ! Read Luke 2:21-24. How did Joseph and Mary fulfill the laws of God given here in Leviticus?

INFECTIOUS SKIN DISEASES

Leviticus 13

Diseases of the skin brought uncleanness upon a person as well. The priests were to be judges of the skin diseases and determine when a person was clean or unclean.

- ! A determination would be made as to whether a skin ailment was serious or not (v1-8).

If it was a serious infection, the individual would have to live outside the camp and warn others of his uncleanness.

If a sore did not look too serious, the person would be put in isolation for seven days and checked again. If things looked the same, another seven days isolation was required. If checked again and the sore was faded or had not spread, the priest would pronounce the man or woman clean. If the rash had spread, the priest would give the verdict of unclean.

- ! Serious skin diseases only become "clean" when it is evident that there is no longer any raw or diseased flesh exposed (v9-17).

! In the case of boils on the skin, the priest would again examine

to see if it was serious (more than skin deep). If it was, a verdict of unclean would be pronounced. If it did not look serious, it would be watched for a few days to see if it would spread. If the boils did not, the person would be clean (w18-23).

- ! Burns on the skin were treated in similar fashion— watched to see if they were serious problems or not (w24-28).
- ! The fifth set of tests for skin problems deals with those in the scalp and hair (w29-37). Thin, yellow hair is an indication of a serious skin disease known as *favus* which is very infectious.
- ! Harmless rashes did not make a person unclean (v38).
- ! Baldness was not considered unclean, however if the baldness occurred because of a skin disorder, the individual was unclean (w40-44).

WHAT IF YOU WERE DECLARED UNCLEAR?

Read Lev 13:45-46 to see how the verdict of “unclean” affected a person.

How do you think a person would feel living “outside the camp”?

Is there any symbolism in the fact that the unclean were living outside the camp?

Although these were “ceremonial” laws intended to convey theological truths, what practical health benefits would be realized among the Israelites by obeying the regulations concerning skin diseases?

Having now read this section of Leviticus, are the details of Luke 17:11-19 more apparent to you?

REGULATIONS ABOUT MILDEW

Leviticus 13:47-59

Mold and mildew on articles such as clothing, leather, etc. made that particular article unclean. If the mildew could not be washed away and it covered the entire item, it would have to be burned. If the mildew was isolated, the bad piece could be torn away.

From the *People's Bible*: “Skin diseases and mildew were symbolic of sin and its affect on people and the world in which people live.”