

The Cleansing of the Leper Leviticus 14:10-20

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explains the significance of the cleansing of the leper in Leviticus 14, highlighting the type of sin and the means of cleansing, and emphasizing the importance of living under the blood of Christ.

Scripture: Leviticus 14:10-20, Psalm 32:3-5, John 17:17, Ephesians 5:25-27

Topics: "Communion with God", "Cleansing from Sin"

Description

John Nelson Darby expounds on Leviticus 14:10-20, illustrating the ceremonial cleansing of the leper as a profound symbol of the cleansing from sin that Christ provides. He emphasizes that leprosy, representing sin, excludes individuals from communion with God, and that true healing comes solely from God, not through human effort. The sermon highlights the significance of the blood and oil in the cleansing process, symbolizing Christ's sacrifice and the Holy Spirit's work in believers. Darby stresses the importance of understanding and accepting this cleansing to restore communion with God and live a life reflective of Christ's holiness. Ultimately, the leper's reinstatement serves as a reminder of the believer's right to communion with God through Christ's redemptive work.

Transcript

In this passage we find the ceremony, according to the law, for the cleansing of the leper - a figure of the cleansing which Christ has accomplished for us, for leprosy is a type of sin. There is a distinction to be made between the purification of the leper and that of the priest.

There were but three sprinklings with blood in the Old Testament - the sprinkling of the leper, that of the people, and that of the priest; they each took place once and were not repeated. There was nothing to be done for the healing of the leper; it was the work of God. In order to prove that the disease was leprosy, the leper was kept by himself, set apart and watched and observed every seven days. When he was entirely white, or when the spot had become white, he was purified. (Compare Psalm 32:3-5.) When sin is hidden, and the leprosy internal, the evil is greater. The manifestation and confession of sin lead to peace, and the heart is set at ease; this is the upright and honest heart. The symptoms of leprosy are described in Leviticus 13. The healing came from God; the priest could only ascertain the disease, and perform the acts for purification. Leprosy excluded its victim from the camp; sin hinders communion with God and His people.

After his cleansing, the leper was reinstated in communion with the children of Israel; but the first effect of the knowledge of sin is to take from us the desire for communion with God, the intelligence of that

communion, and the seeking after it. Cleansing gives us, indeed, the right of communion with the children of God, although souls often fail to understand from the first that they have this right. Healing often precedes the knowledge of this healing; the converted soul puts itself under law, instead of accepting joyfully the whole gospel.

As to the means used for the cleansing of lepers, they are: First, the birds, one dead - a type of the death of Christ. It was killed over a vessel of running water. The living bird is a type of Christ's resurrection. (Lev. 14 4-7.) Our sins brought Jesus to the tomb, but He rose out of it, and left them behind Him there; He had accomplished all. Second (vv. 8, 9), the leper was to be washed with water. Jesus cleanses us by the Word which He has spoken to us; His Word does for our souls what the cleansing with water did for the body. (See Eph. 5:25-27.) This cleansing was done once for all. Sanctification is once for all, but the Christian must grow in it. All believers are justified in Christ. This is an accomplished reality; the Holy Ghost puts us in this position. There is the sanctification by God the Father (John 17:17), that of Jesus by His blood, and that of the Holy Ghost, who gives efficacy to the Father's will and the work of the Son. The Holy Ghost accomplishes it in individuals. He communicates life to us by the Word, and sanctifies us wholly. Third, after cleansing follows the knowledge of what has been done; the leper must understand it, and receive its efficacy in his heart. (vv. 10-20.) The leper is presented to God, with a sacrifice for his offence. He was anointed with blood as a sign of sanctification.

The Christian is never to allow anything to enter his ear which would be inconsistent with the blood of the Lamb. The right hand is the symbol of action. The Christian should not do anything which would be dishonouring to the blood of Christ; all that he does every day should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, and he must not act in any way which would not accord with the measure of God's thoughts in the death of Jesus. All in our actions which is not holy as the blood of Christ is sin. Blood on the great toe is a figure of holiness in our walk. We are not negative beings; Christ's life should always act in us. Our thoughts, actions, walk, all are under the blood of Christ, and that blood is the measure of what our holiness should be. One must either be under the shelter of the blood of Christ, or outside it. The child of God has on him that blood which can neither be effaced, nor lose its value. There is never need of another sprinkling. Every day our souls are renewed inwardly by the Holy Ghost, and we confess our sins before our Father. Fourthly, blood was not the only thing necessary; oil was also required. The oil, a type of the Holy Ghost, is given because the blood is there. It was not after the water, but after the blood, that the oil was applied.

The Holy Ghost comes to dwell in us because the blood of Christ is on us. If we are as pure in the sight of God as that blood, why should not the Spirit be in us? The blood of Christ has exhausted the wrath of God against sin. There is nothing but love for those who are sprinkled with that blood. The Holy Ghost is a Spirit of knowledge, joy, peace, and love; these are His first-fruits. He is also a Spirit of strength and power, able to overcome the obstacles which arise in our path.

The effect of all was to re-establish the leper in communion with God.

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