

Testing for Leprosy

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Leviticus 13:1-3

The law of Moses contained several tests to determine if one was infected with leprosy (Leviticus 13). This was a dangerous and contagious disease that would eat away at their body and spread to others. It needed to be detected, properly diagnosed, isolated, and (hopefully) cured. We can draw a parallel between this and sin. Sin is like a disease. It eats away at us (Psalm 32:3), can spread to others (1 Corinthians 5:6), and leads to death (Romans 6:23). Both diseases needed to be addressed. Let us notice some parallels.

Dealing with Leprosy

- They were to seek advice (Leviticus 13:2) – not to self-diagnose; too important for that; they needed an outside perspective that could provide unbiased insight
- They needed a qualified counselor (Leviticus 13:2-3) – not to go to just anyone to look at the infection; they needed one who was properly trained and qualified to diagnose this, a priest
- They needed to confirm the diagnosis (Leviticus 13:4-6) – a questionable spot might not be leprosy; they would isolate for seven days to confirm the diagnosis
- Once confirmed, they needed to deal with the disease (Leviticus 13:7-8, 45-46) – not to be ignored; again, this was a dangerous disease that could spread to others

Dealing with Sin

- We often need to seek advice – we can be biased and miss things in our lives (cf. 2 Samuel 12:1-7; Galatians 2:11-14); this is not to say we shouldn't examine ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5), but we need the help of others to make sure we don't miss anything (cf. Hebrews 3:12-13)
- We need qualified counselors – it is foolish to expect non-Christians/worldly-Christians to help (cf. Matthew 15:14); we need those who have knowledge, wisdom, and integrity; God expects us to receive help from brethren (Hebrews 3:12-13; 10:24-25; James 5:19-20)
- We need to evaluate the advice we receive – see if what others noticed needs to be addressed; the standard is still God's word (John 12:48), we need no other standard (Colossians 2:20-23); also, we are responsible for ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:10); we cannot blame others for giving us bad counsel if we chose to follow it (cf. 1 Kings 13:11-24)
- We need to deal with our sin – repent and seek God's forgiveness (Acts 8:22); we are not to remain in sin (Romans 6:1-2); we are not to remain in a state of spiritual immaturity (Hebrews 5:12); we must continue to grow and be perfected (Hebrews 6:1)

Conclusion

- Just as leprosy had to be taken seriously and handled properly in the Old Testament, the same is true of sin
- We need help from fellow Christians, guidance from God's word, and determination to correct our sin – without these things, we will remain sick with the disease of sin; with these things, we can be spiritually healthy as we serve the Lord