

# Leviticus 13-14

Bible Study

## Review

### Chapter 11

- First section [v.2-23]—clean and unclean animals for food [permanent]  
Second section [v.24-40]—contact with a carcass [temporary uncleanness]
- Clean and unclean meats connected to holiness principle

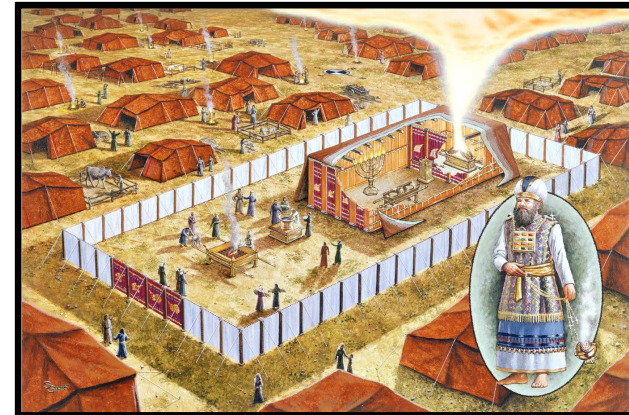
### Chapter 12

#### Uncleanness after childbirth

- A time of danger in the ancient world because of the loss of blood

Only the ceremonially clean could worship  
at the tabernacle...

**Three** ways of dealing with uncleanness:



1) Quarantine

2) Washing

3) Purification  
offering

Individual

Sanctuary

These abnormal conditions would disrupt the wholeness required for tabernacle worship and the infected persons were declared unclean

<sup>1</sup>And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

<sup>2</sup>“When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, a scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body *like* a **leprous sore**, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests.

“leprous sore”—[OKJ] ‘the plague of leprosy’

[Eng.] “leprosy”= Heb. *sara’at* [broad term]

(Theological Wordbook OT) “While usually rendered leper or leprous, the term ‘leper’ is not correct medically, since *sara’at* **refers to a wider range of skin diseases**”

(NIV Application Commentary)

“Hebrew *sara’at* applies to a complex of conditions, including some that resemble psoriasis and vitiligo.”

v. 2 “swelling, a scab, or a bright spot”

(Tyndale, Harrison) “When any one of these were present it could be the precursor of a variety of ailments , of which Hansen’s disease *could be one*’

Procedure: examination by the priest

<sup>3</sup>The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears *to be deeper than the skin* of his body, it *is* a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him unclean.

v. 3 [last part] 'the priest shall examine'

- The people relied on the priests for diagnosis of skin disease

(BKC) "The priest did not function as a doctor to prescribe medical treatment. He functioned more like a public health official who **isolated** a person with a **contagious** skin disease."

"it is a leprous sore"

(Word) "The understanding of Lev. 13-14 has been hampered by the translation of [*sara'at*] as leprosy in standard English versions.

Given the wide-ranging usage of *sara'at* in the OT, there is no single English word that may be used for rendering the Hebrew word"

<sup>4</sup>But if the bright spot *is* white on the skin of his body, and does not appear *to be* deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest **shall isolate** *the one who has the sore seven days.*

(Word) “If the symptoms are not so conclusive, the priest confines a person with such a suspicious lesion for a period of seven days, probably in a specific area outside the camp.”

(Tyndale, Harrison) “The Hebrew priest- ‘physicians’ appear to have been the first in the ancient world to isolate persons suspected of infectious or contagious diseases.

In the ancient world, where even physicians were abysmally ignorant of the nature and cause of disease, many sick persons would neglect their symptoms until a cure was impossible”

<sup>5</sup>And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore appears to be as it was, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall isolate him another seven days.

<sup>6</sup>Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore has faded, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it *is only* a scab, and he shall wash his clothes and be clean.

v. 6 “the sore has not spread”

After a two week quarantine for the skin affliction and inspection , the person has incurred a minor impurity (“it is only a scab”)... that only requires washing his clothes

(Word) “The affected person is to wash his clothes as a physical demonstration that he is truly clean. Being clean, he continues to have full access to the sanctuary.”

<sup>7</sup>But if the scab should at all spread over the skin, after he has been seen by the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen by the priest again.

<sup>8</sup>And *if* the priest sees that the scab has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* leprosy.

v. 8 (Last part) “it is leprosy”– Better: “a grievous skin disease”

(Enc. Bible Difficulties, Archer) “Verses 7 and 8 seem to refer to a phagedenic ulcer”

- An ulceration of the skin which tends to spread

<sup>9</sup>“When the leprous sore is on a person, then he shall be brought to the priest.

<sup>10</sup>And the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed *if* the swelling on the skin *is* white, and it has turned the hair white, and *there is* a spot of raw flesh in the swelling,

<sup>11</sup>*it is* an old leprosy on the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not isolate him, for he *is* unclean.

v. 10 [last part] ‘raw flesh’= ulcerated tissue/ open sore

A sore that bleeds and has a discharge that may be serious

v. 11 “It is an old leprosy” (TEV) “It is a chronic skin disease”

The sore is so obvious that the priest does not confine the person but is immediately pronounced unclean



<sup>12</sup>“And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of *the one who has the sore*, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks,

<sup>13</sup>then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him clean who has the sore*. It has all turned white. He *is* clean.

The skin disease had covered the whole body but there are no open raw sores or anything beneath the skin after examination

(Word) “It is most likely vitiligo or leukoderma, a loss of skin pigmentation in patches of the skin.

Even though vitiligo makes a person unsightly, it does not have any seeping sores...that would render its victim unclean.”

<sup>14</sup>But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean.

<sup>15</sup>And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; *for* the raw flesh *is* unclean. It *is* leprosy.

<sup>16</sup>Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest.

<sup>17</sup>And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. He *is* clean.

v. 16 “turns white again” — new skin has replaced the sore, a sign of healing

v.16 [last part] “he shall come to the priest” — actually asks the priest to come to him, he is outside the camp (next chapter)

## Procedure for examination of skin disease associated with scars

- <sup>18</sup>“If the body develops a boil in the skin, and it is healed,  
<sup>19</sup>and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then  
it shall be shown to the priest;  
<sup>20</sup>and *if*, when the priest sees it, it indeed *appears* deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned  
white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore which has broken out of the  
boil.
- <sup>21</sup>But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in it, and it *is* not deeper  
than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days;
- <sup>22</sup>and if it should at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a  
leprous sore.
- <sup>23</sup>But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread, it *is* the scar of the boil; and the  
priest shall pronounce him clean.

v. 20 “deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned white”

(Wenham) “The presence of white hair and deep infection is a sure symptom that the  
disease is serious....

This could be a description of favus or patchy eczema, but Hulse suggests that psoriasis  
is more likely”

v. 24-28 Section concerning a burn which has not healed

<sup>24</sup>“Or if the body receives a burn on its skin by fire, and the raw *flesh* of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white,

<sup>25</sup>then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the hair of the bright spot has turned white, and it appears deeper than the skin, it *is* leprosy broken out in the burn. Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore.

(Tyndale) “A burn that has become infected and has produced a pustule is a potentially unclean condition”

<sup>26</sup>But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in the bright spot, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days.

<sup>27</sup>And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day. If it has at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore.

<sup>28</sup>But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread on the skin, but has faded, it *is* a swelling from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it *is* the scar from the burn.

v. 29-37 Concerning a skin condition with symptoms of psoriasis or dermatitis, with yellow hair pointing to favus (a ringworm type infection)

<sup>29</sup>"If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard,

<sup>30</sup>then the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed if it appears deeper than the skin, *and there is* in it thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a scaly leprosy of the head or beard.

<sup>31</sup>But if the priest examines the scaly sore, and indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, and *there is* no black hair in it, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale seven days.

<sup>32</sup>And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the scale does not appear deeper than the skin, <sup>33</sup>he shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave. And the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale another seven days.

<sup>34</sup>On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread over the skin, and does not appear deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean.

<sup>35</sup>But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing, <sup>36</sup>then the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the scale has spread over the skin, the priest need not seek for yellow hair. He *is* unclean.

<sup>37</sup>But if the scale appears to be at a standstill, and there is black hair grown up in it, the scale has healed. He *is* clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

v. 38-39 Irritations of the skin that appear to be skin disease, but are not

(possibly vitiligo leukoderma)

<sup>38</sup>“If a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body, *specifically* white bright spots,

<sup>39</sup>then the priest shall look; and indeed *if* the bright spots on the skin of the body *are* dull white, it *is* a white spot *that* grows on the skin. He *is* clean.

Vitiligo leukoderma—loss of skin color in blotches

v. 40-44 Baldness:

<sup>40</sup>“As for the man whose hair has fallen from his head, he *is* bald, *but* he *is* clean.

<sup>41</sup>He whose hair has fallen from his forehead, he *is* bald on the forehead, *but* he *is* clean.

<sup>42</sup>And if there is on the bald head or bald forehead a reddish-white sore, it *is* leprosy breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead.

<sup>43</sup>Then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the swelling of the sore *is* reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, as the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body,

<sup>44</sup>he is a leprous man. He *is* unclean. The priest shall surely pronounce him unclean; his sore *is* on his head.

Baldness is not an unclean situation... but a reddish-white spot on the baldness is

(Word) “Only if there is a swollen sore on the area of baldness is the person considered to have a grievous skin disease”

<sup>45</sup>“Now the leper on whom the sore *is*, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare; and he shall cover his mustache, and cry, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’

<sup>46</sup>He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He *is* unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling *shall be* outside the camp.

v. 45 (Word) “Anyone who is declared unclean by reason of a grievous skin disease must clothe himself like one in mourning. He is to wear old, torn clothing and to let his hair go unkempt. Also he is to cover his lower face (lit. mustache)”

v.45 “Unclean, Unclean”

(BKC) “The significance of this isolation was not only to prevent possible physical contagion but also to symbolize the person’s separation from the holy camp of Israel where the Lord was dwelling”

v. 46 “he shall dwell alone...outside the camp”

(NSB) “This ensured that the rest of the community and the sanctuary did not become ritually impure. The community was also protected from the unchecked spread of the disease.

The serious skin diseases became a metaphor for sin. Like them, sin is dangerous and ultimately fatal, often difficult to diagnose, and incurable without God’s intervention. Sin isolates its victims from God and His worship, and from the community of faith.”



Concerning growths like mold, mildew or other types of fungus in garments made of wool, leather or linen

<sup>47</sup>“Also, if a garment has a leprous plague in it, *whether it is* a woolen garment or a linen garment,  
<sup>48</sup>*whether it is* in the warp or woof of linen or wool, whether in leather or in anything made of leather,  
<sup>49</sup>and if the plague is greenish or reddish in the garment or in the leather, whether in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, *it is* a leprous plague and shall be shown to the priest.

v. 47 “a leprous plague in it”

(Expositors) “Obviously the word *sara’at* here refers, not to leprosy, but to some kind of rot, fungus or mildew.”

(Enc. Of Bible Difficulties) “A fungus or mold that attacks a fabric of cloth or leather or fur bears a resemblance to that which afflicts the skin.

Because of its tendency to spread on contact and because of its highly disfiguring effect, this kind of *sara’at* had to be sequestered, to see whether it was something that could be washed away....if these measures proved unavailing, the fabric in question was to be destroyed by fire.”

v. 49 “the warp or woof”

(Tyndale Commentary) “A comprehensive expression denoting the totality of a garment”

<sup>50</sup>The priest shall examine the plague and isolate *that which has* the plague seven days.

<sup>51</sup>And he shall examine the plague on the seventh day. If the plague has spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, in the leather *or* in anything made of leather, the plague *is* an active leprosy. It *is* unclean.

<sup>52</sup>He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of leather, for it *is* an active leprosy; *the garment* shall be burned in the fire.

(Word) “The handling of an infected garment is similar to that of a person with a grievous skin disorder. The infected garment is shown to the priest. He confines it for seven days; then he re-examines it. If the growth has spread, it is identified as a grievous mildew. The garment is declared unclean; it must be burned.”

<sup>53</sup>“But if the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather,

<sup>54</sup>then the priest shall command that they wash *the thing* in which *is* the plague; and he shall isolate it another seven days.

v. 54 Washing the item was the most logical treatment to try to fix the problem

<sup>55</sup>Then the priest shall examine the plague after it has been washed; and indeed *if* the plague has not changed its color, though the plague has not spread, it *is* unclean, and you shall burn it in the fire; it continues eating away, *whether* the damage *is* outside or inside.

After re-examination the spot if the spot had not changed appearance, the garment is declared unclean and must be burned

<sup>56</sup>If the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has faded after washing it, then he shall tear it out of the garment, whether out of the warp or out of the woof, or out of the leather.

<sup>57</sup>But if it appears again in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a spreading *plague*; you shall burn with fire that in which is the plague.

<sup>58</sup>And if you wash the garment, either warp or woof, or whatever is made of leather, if the plague has disappeared from it, then it shall be washed a second time, and shall be clean.

<sup>59</sup>“This *is* the law of the leprous plague in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or woof, or in anything made of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean.”

Chapter 14

Rituals/cleansing—after recovering from skin disease

(Tanakh ,JSB) “better: these are the instructions concerning”

<sup>1</sup>Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,  
<sup>2</sup>“This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest.

v. 2 “leper”

(JSB, Tanakh) (Heb.) *metzora*, i.e. a person afflicted with *sara’at* (skin disease)

<sup>3</sup>And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed, *if* the leprosy is healed in the leper,  
<sup>4</sup>then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living *and* clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.

The priest goes out of the camp to examine the afflicted person...

➤ if he has recovered the cleansing ritual is the next step

v. 4 Cedar wood, scarlet: agents of purification used in the ancient near East

Hyssop: used for dipping and sprinkling and associated with purification

<sup>5</sup>And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water.

v. 5 (NSB) “Running water is literally ‘living water.’ ...living water symbolized life. The blood of the bird ran into the water in the earthen vessel.”

<sup>6</sup>As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water.

<sup>7</sup>And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

(JSB, Tanakh) “This is the only instance in which purifying blood is applied to a human....the second bird is kept alive and set free to carry off the impurity, like the scapegoat on the annual Day of Atonement.”

<sup>8</sup>He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, and shall stay outside his tent seven days.

<sup>9</sup>But on the seventh day he shall shave all the hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows—all his hair he shall shave off. He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water, and he shall be clean.

(NSB) “Two washings of clothes and body and two head shavings, seven days apart, completed the ritual cleansing.

These certainly served a hygienic purpose, removing residual scales and flakes that might have passed on contagious diseases to others.”

After seven days of semi isolation and a final bath, the man was clean and must offer a sacrifice

The sacrifices for atonement and purification on the 8<sup>th</sup> day involved all four types of sacrifices—trespass, sin, burnt and grain

<sup>10</sup>“And on the **eighth day** he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil.

(NSB) “The eighth day was the day of circumcision for a newborn male. The symbolism of starting again, almost of being born again into the community of faith, was continued.”

<sup>11</sup>Then the priest who makes *him* clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the Lord, *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

<sup>12</sup>And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them *as* a wave offering before the Lord.

v. 12 (BKC) “A guilt (trespass) offering was normally expected after a person defrauded either God or man. Perhaps the person isolated outside the camp was viewed as having deprived God of due worship and service.”

<sup>13</sup>Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering *is* the priest's, so *is* the trespass offering. It *is* most holy.

v. 13 (last part) “it is most holy”—belonged to the priests (7:6)



<sup>14</sup>The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

<sup>15</sup>And the priest shall take *some* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand.

v. 14-15 Blood and oil rites sanctify the person so that he may be a part of the community again

<sup>16</sup>Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.

<sup>17</sup>And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put *some* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering.

v. 16 “sprinkled some of the oil with his fingers seven times before the Lord” —symbolizing a bond between the person and God

v. 17 To be consecrated to God... oil is put on the ears—to hear God’s word... on the hands and feet—to do God’s will

<sup>18</sup>The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest’s hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord.

<sup>19</sup>“Then the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering.

<sup>20</sup>And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

v. 20 ‘burnt offering and the grain offering

These complete the full set of offerings... These acts of homage express rejoining the rest of the Israelites engaged in the worship of the Lord

v. 21-32 Provision process for the poorer person

The eighth day sacrificial process involves three animals—two male lambs and a yearling ewe—it was expensive.

v. 21-32 outline a parallel procedure with two birds substituted for the purification and burnt offering animals.

- There is no substitute for the male lamb of the reparation offering, which is the first and most important sacrifice of the occasion [v. 21]

<sup>21</sup>“But if he *is* poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb *as* a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil,

<sup>22</sup>and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.

<sup>23</sup>He shall bring them to the priest on the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the Lord.

<sup>24</sup>And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them *as* a wave offering before the Lord.

<sup>25</sup>Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

<sup>26</sup>And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand.

<sup>27</sup>Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that *is* in his left hand seven times before the Lord.

<sup>28</sup>And the priest shall put *some* of the oil that *is* in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering.

<sup>29</sup>The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the Lord.

<sup>30</sup>And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford—

<sup>31</sup>such as he is able to afford, the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the Lord.

<sup>32</sup>This *is* the law *for one* who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford the usual cleansing.”

v. 32 ‘who cannot afford’

A person's isolation from the community would quickly reduce him to poverty. it may be assumed that members of his family provided the materials for these offerings

v. 33-53 Treatment for fungus in houses

NIV Application Com. “This law is to apply after the Israelites settle in Canaan and live in houses rather than tents.”

<sup>33</sup>And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

<sup>34</sup>“When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession, and I put the leprous plague in a house in the land of your possession,

<sup>35</sup>and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, ‘It seems to me that *there is* some plague in the house,’

v. 34 (NSB) “Leprous plague is the same Hebrew term used in 13:2 to indicate serious skin diseases that could come upon humans. All of these were harmful growths, whether on human skin, clothing or the wall of a house.’

<sup>36</sup>then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes *into it* to examine the plague, that all that *is* in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house.

<sup>37</sup>And he shall examine the plague; and indeed *if* the plague *is* on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish, which appear to be deep in the wall,

<sup>38</sup>then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and shut up the house **seven days.**

<sup>39</sup>And the priest shall come again on the seventh day and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread on the walls of the house,  
<sup>40</sup>then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which *is* the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city.  
<sup>41</sup>And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place outside the city.  
<sup>42</sup>Then they shall take other stones and put *them* in the place of *those* stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house.

<sup>43</sup>“Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered,  
<sup>44</sup>then the priest shall come and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread in the house, it *is* an active leprosy in the house. It *is* unclean.  
<sup>45</sup>And he shall break down the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry *them* outside the city to an unclean place.  
<sup>46</sup>Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until evening  
<sup>47</sup>And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.

(New Bible Commentary ) “The OT concept of wholeness included the environment as well as a person.”

Offerings are made for a house that is declared clean similar to those for a person who has recovered from a skin disease

<sup>48</sup>“But if the priest comes in and examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed.

<sup>49</sup>And he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.

<sup>50</sup>Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water;  
<sup>51</sup>and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

<sup>52</sup>And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet.

<sup>53</sup>Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

v. 53 ‘to make atonement for the house’  
(Und. Bible Com.) “Atonement here puts the building back into a whole state, into cleanness, and into relationship with the community”

Summary statement that concludes chapters 13 and 14

<sup>54</sup>“This *is* the law for any leprous sore and scale,

<sup>55</sup>for the leprosy of a garment and of a house,

<sup>56</sup>for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot,

<sup>57</sup>to teach when *it is* unclean and when *it is* clean. This *is* the law of leprosy.”



## Lessons

Ancient Egyptian medical knowledge was primitive compared to modern medicine and sanitation principles were bare



God taught Israel laws of quarantine to keep infected persons from exposing others to any contagious or deadly disease

### Principle of quarantine

- Illustrates the need for removing spiritual uncleanness by the lesson of physical separation