

Metzora מצרע

Tzara'at



This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing. He shall be brought to the priest.

Leviticus 14:2

In our Parasha teaching this week, we learn how God healed and restored the leper (מצרע) to his community and family. Leviticus chapter 14 showed us that the priest (Kohen) had a large role in this process. The priest (Kohen) was who God called to be over this process and who determined what was clean (טהור) and unclean (טמא).

Biblical leprosy was not just a physical problem, it was also a spiritual problem. The leper was demonstrating, as he went through the cleansing requirements, if he or she would submit to what God commanded. God delights in seeing individuals restored to Him and as we study this passage we can see how the cleansing process points to the work of Messiah on the cross and our need for restoration with God

Focus Passage

Leviticus 14:1-57

In Leviticus 14 we learned that the leper (מצרע) would be restored and brought back into the camp with his family and community. God, in His mercy and love, brought the leper back into the camp through His restoration process. God was very specific as to how this would be done.

Leviticus 14:2 says that this was the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing. In our previous Torah lesson, we learned that leprosy was given by God because of someone's sinful thoughts or speech that came from an unclean heart. The heart affects the entire body, so if the heart is unclean by not submitting to the will of God it will lead to unclean thoughts or speech. These sinful thoughts and words are rooted in pride. They demonstrate a lack of trust in God. Only God could heal the leper, and at the time of the leper's healing we read in Leviticus 14:3-4 that the priest (Kohen) would go out of the camp and examine the leper. If the leprosy was healed, the priest (Kohen) would command the leper who is to be cleansed to take for himself two living clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. The leper had been healed but now was the time for his purification. Just because the leper had been healed it did not mean the leper could come back into the camp immediately.

Pray First

Father God,

Thank You for giving us new life. Teach us to be submissive to Your Word so that we may serve You and bring glory to Your name.

In Yeshua's name we pray,
Amen

Read next :

Leviticus 14:1 – 15:33



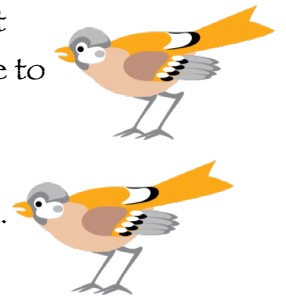
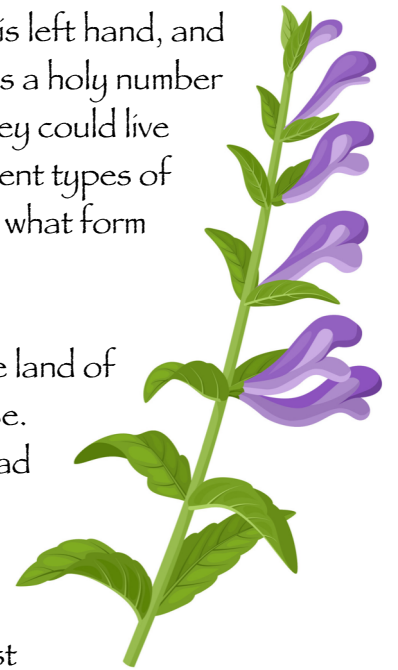
This process revealed if the leper had learned humility. Would the leper do what he wanted and immediately come back to the community, or would he submit to the priest's authority? Pride, which is what the leper had when he was sent outside the camp, is rooted in doing what we want, but humility is submitting to what God has commanded.

Leprosy can last a long time. In Leviticus 14:8 the priest commanded the cleansed leper to wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, so that he would be clean. Then the leper could enter the camp, but he still had to sleep outside the tent for 7 days. The leper was back in society but with limitations.

In Leviticus 14:14 the priest took the blood of the trespass offering and put it on the right ear of the one who was to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the leper's right hand and on the big toe of the right foot. This was done because the person being cleansed was saying, "I want to hear from God, I want to serve God, and I want to go where God wants me to be."

In Leviticus 14:16 the priest then dipped his right finger in oil, that was held in his left hand, and sprinkled some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. Seven is a holy number and holiness is related to the will of God. They were being restored so that they could live and serve God in the purposes that He had for them. There are several different types of Biblical leprosy: of the skin, hair and beard, houses, and garments. No matter what form of leprosy, the person needed restoration to God.

In Leviticus 14:33-53 God told Moshe and Aharon that when they went into the land of Canaan, which God would give them, He would put a leprous plague in a house. He who owned the house would come to the priest and say that their house had a plague in it. Again, this is an example of God giving the priest authority to decide if the house was clean or unclean. God was judging the household and the owner of that house. The first thing the owner of the house had to do before the priest came was to clean everything out of the house. The priest then came to the house and if the house had a green or reddish appearance on the walls the priest had the authority to close the house for 7 days. As they went through this process and the priest returned, if it was still unclean, they took the infected stones away and required the house to be scraped inside and all around. The steps of cleansing a house was long and costly. Leviticus 14:49 - 50 tells us the owner of the home had to take two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop and would kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water. This was all part of the purification process. We close Leviticus 14:54-57 with the law of leprosy. This was to teach what was unclean and clean.



Leprosy, no matter what the form, was uncomfortable and ugly to look at. It reminded the person of their sinfulness. Just like the leper, the unredeemed man cannot be in the presence of God until a cleansing takes place. Biblical leprosy was rooted in pride and evil speech, speaking in a bad way about one another. We are all guilty of this. We should not try to hide that sin, that would be foolish. We should humble ourselves and confess our sins to Messiah Yeshua and acknowledge that we believe in Him. He went to the cross, suffered and died, and was raised from the dead. He is now alive and sitting at the right Hand of God. When you repent, you will experience the grace of God and you will be restored to Him. Biblical leprosy does not exist today, but that does not mean the sin of pride will not affect you. Any sin left unattended in your life must be dealt with. Be quick to humble yourself and confess to Messiah Yeshua. He will purify you and restore you so that you can find peace and experience restoration with God.



Parasha Quiz

1. What does 'Metzora' mean?
 - A. One who is restored
 - B. One who has tzara'at
 - C. The edge of the camp
2. What color was the tzara'at on the walls of a home?
 - A. Red and green
 - B. Black and blue
 - C. Many different colors
3. Who has the authority to declare something clean or unclean?
 - A. Moses
 - B. The Kohen (priest)
 - C. A doctor
4. Biblical leprosy is rooted in which sinful attitudes or behaviors?
 - A. Pride and evil speech
 - B. Stealing and lying
 - C. Hateful thoughts and actions towards another

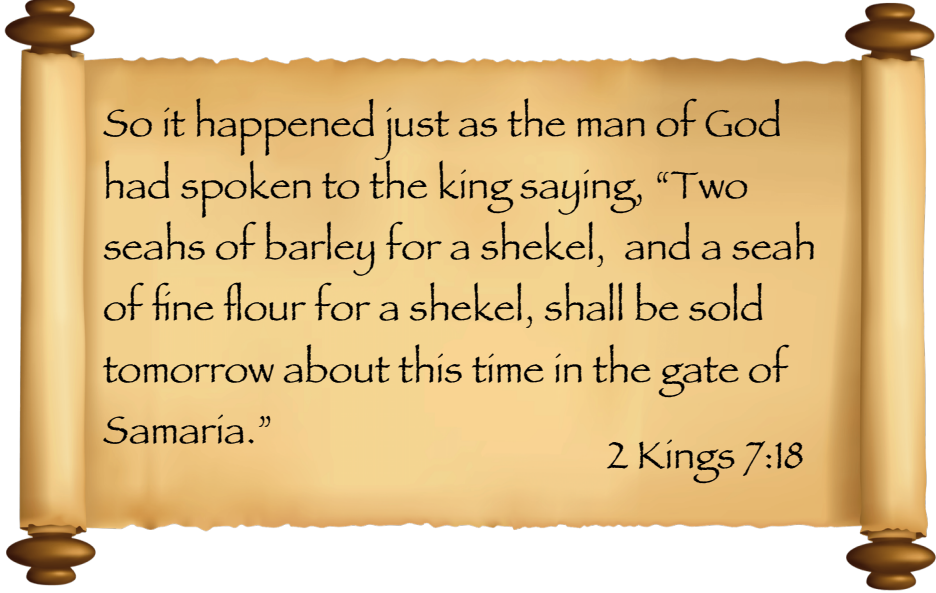
Haftarah

Read Next: 2 Kings 7:3-20

In our Haftarah this week we see that God keeps His word. We learn that our faith should not be in our circumstances but in God. To better understand the Haftarah, we need to read the first three verses of 2 Kings 7 before we begin.

In 2 Kings 7:1-2 Elisha tells an officer from the king, "Hear the Word of the LORD: Tomorrow about this time a seah of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel at the gate of Samaria." There were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate. They were

hungry and had no food. The people within the gates were also starving because there was a great famine in the land of Yisra'el at the time. These men said to one another, "If we enter the city we shall die there, and if we sit here, we will die also. Now let's surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die."



So it happened just as the man of God had spoken to the king saying, "Two seahs of barley for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, shall be sold tomorrow about this time in the gate of Samaria."

2 Kings 7:18



When the lepers arrived at the Syrian camp, they found no one at the camp. God had caused the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and horses, and they thought a great army was chasing them. With no one there the lepers went from one tent to the other eating and drinking. Then they hid the silver and gold that they found. They did not stay long. They decided to go back and tell the King of Yisra'el what happened for fear that something bad would happen to them. The lepers had already experienced the consequences of doing things their own way. When they arrived at the gate they told the gatekeeper what they had seen and the king was summoned. The king heard the report from the lepers and had great suspicion. He thought the Syrians were pretending to pull back to appear defeated. When the messenger, which the king sent, saw that what the lepers had seen was true, he reported back to the king.



When the people of Yisra'el heard, they went out and plundered the tents of the Syrians. This all happened just as the LORD said it would. The officer who was there when Elisha told them the word of the LORD said, "If the LORD could make windows in heaven, could such a thing happen?" He did not have the faith that God would fulfill His word and looked to his own circumstances. Elisha told him, "You will see it happen but you will not eat of it." This is exactly what happened. The people trampled him down in the gateway and he died. When we do not have faith in God and walk in our own ways, it will always leads to death.

New Testament - B'rit Chadasha

Pray First

Father God,
We thank You that
You set us free from
sin. May our lives
reflect You in all that
we do and say.
In Yeshua's name we
pray,
Amen

Read next:

Romans 6:8-23

In this week's New Testament Scripture, Paul wrote to tell the believer that once you believe in Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), you have been set apart for a holy purpose to do His will. Paul instructed that believers received redemption through the grace of God, because of the death of Messiah Yeshua. Our sins departed from us simply because we repented of our sins and said yes to following Him.

In Romans 8:12, Paul told us not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies that we should obey its lusts. Paul was not talking about salvation, but rather sanctification. Sanctification is learning to live in a way that is pleasing to God. Do we reflect His character to others? Do we believe God's Word or are we unbelieving as the officer was in our Haftarah reading? Do we bring every action and thought under His authority? This should be our desire.

We are all slaves to unrighteousness or slaves to righteousness. If you are a slave to unrighteousness your master is the devil, but if you are a slave to righteousness, your master is God. In our Torah portion the lepers, through their trespass offering, showed that they wanted to hear from God, serve God, and go where He wanted them to go. Their faith and obedience showed their desire for righteousness. We have faith through the blood of Yeshua. As believers we are no longer under the law but under grace. This means we are no longer under the judgment of the law. The authority of the law brings judgment or punishment on all. Our natural state is rebellion. As followers of Yeshua the law brings light to our carnal nature but does not bring us judgment. When we become followers of Messiah Yeshua, we become people who fulfill the righteousness of the law, making us slaves of righteousness.

We desire to serve Him because our sin has been taken away. This means we are no longer connected to sin but are now slaves to God. The leper's cleansing was showing he desired to be obedient to God's Word. We should desire to be obedient to God's Word. This is not something we have to do, this is something we get to do. We are free from the power of sin and are now slaves to righteousness. Our desire to serve Him will continually grow as we seek to follow God. Sin always equals death, but when you trust in Messiah Yeshua you will be set free and know the peace and contentment that comes from following Him.

And having been set free from
sin, you became slaves of
righteousness.

Romans 6:18



Word Scramble

Use the words below to fill in the verses from this week's lesson.

“ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] ,
[] [] [] [] [] . ” Romans 6:18

you of from having set And became
slaves been righteousness sin free

“ [] [] [] [] [] [] []
[] [] [] [] [] [] [] .
[] [] [] [] [] [] [] . ” Leviticus 14:2

be This shall of the law of in
priest the to the He the his day
cleansing shall brought be leper