

Leviticus 14

Laws for Cleansing Lepers

Lev 14:1 The LORD said to Moses,

Lev 14:2 "These are the regulations for any diseased person at the time of their ceremonial cleansing, when they are brought to the priest:

Lev 14:3 The priest is to go outside the camp and examine them. If they have been healed of their defiling skin disease,

Lev 14:4 the priest shall order that two live clean birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the person to be cleansed.

Lev 14:5 Then the priest shall order that one of the birds be killed over fresh water in a clay pot.

Lev 14:6 He is then to take the live bird and dip it, together with the cedar wood, the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, into the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water.

Lev 14:7 Seven times he shall sprinkle the one to be cleansed of the defiling disease, and then pronounce them clean. After that, he is to release the live bird in the open fields.

Lev 14:8 "The person to be cleansed must wash their clothes, shave off all their hair and bathe with water; then they will be ceremonially clean. After this they may come into the camp, but they must stay outside their tent for seven days.

Lev 14:9 On the seventh day they must shave off all their hair; they must shave their head, their beard, their eyebrows and the rest of their hair. They must wash their clothes and bathe themselves with water, and they will be clean.

Lev 14:10 "On the eighth day they must bring two male lambs and one ewe lamb a year old, each without defect, along with three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering, and one log of oil.

Lev 14:11 The priest who pronounces them clean shall present both the one to be cleansed and their offerings before the LORD at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

Lev 14:12 "Then the priest is to take one of the male lambs and offer it as a guilt offering, along with the log of oil; he shall wave them before the LORD as a wave offering.

Lev 14:13 He is to slaughter the lamb in the sanctuary area where the sin offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered. Like the sin offering, the guilt offering belongs to the priest; it is most holy.

Lev 14:14 The priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot.

Lev 14:15 The priest shall then take some of the log of oil, pour it in the palm of his own left hand,

Lev 14:16 dip his right forefinger into the oil in his palm, and with his finger sprinkle some of it before the LORD seven times.

Lev 14:17 The priest is to put some of the oil remaining in his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering.

Lev 14:18 The rest of the oil in his palm the priest shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed and make atonement for them before the LORD.

Lev 14:19 "Then the priest is to sacrifice the sin offering and make atonement for the one to be cleansed from their uncleanness. After that, the priest shall slaughter the burnt offering

Lev 14:20 and offer it on the altar, together with the grain offering, and make atonement for them, and they will be clean.

Lev 14:21 "If, however, they are poor and cannot afford these, they must take one male lamb as a guilt offering to be waved to make atonement for them, together with a tenth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering, a log of oil,

Lev 14:22 and two doves or two young pigeons, such as they can afford, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.

Lev 14:23 "On the eighth day they must bring them for their cleansing to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting, before the LORD.

Lev 14:24 The priest is to take the lamb for the guilt offering, together with the log of oil, and wave them before the LORD as a wave offering.

Lev 14:25 He shall slaughter the lamb for the guilt offering and take some of its blood and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot.

Lev 14:26 The priest is to pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand,

Lev 14:27 and with his right forefinger sprinkle some of the oil from his palm seven times before the LORD.

Lev 14:28 Some of the oil in his palm he is to put on the same places he put the blood of the guilt offering--on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot.

Lev 14:29 The rest of the oil in his palm the priest shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed, to make atonement for them before the LORD.

Lev 14:30 Then he shall sacrifice the doves or the young pigeons, such as the person can afford,

Lev 14:31 one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, together with the grain offering. In this way the priest will make atonement before the LORD on behalf of the one to be cleansed."

Lev 14:32 These are the regulations for anyone who has a defiling skin disease and who cannot afford the regular offerings for their cleansing.

Laws for Cleansing Houses

Lev 14:33 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

Lev 14:34 "When you enter the land of Canaan, which I am giving you as your possession, and I put a spreading mold in a house in that land,

Lev 14:35 the owner of the house must go and tell the priest, 'I have seen something that looks like a defiling mold in my house.'

Lev 14:36 The priest is to order the house to be emptied before he goes in to examine the mold, so that nothing in the house will be pronounced unclean. After this the priest is to go in and inspect the house.

Lev 14:37 He is to examine the mold on the walls, and if it has greenish or reddish depressions that appear to be deeper than the surface of the wall,

Lev 14:38 the priest shall go out the doorway of the house and close it up for seven days.

Lev 14:39 On the seventh day the priest shall return to inspect the house. If the mold has spread on the walls,

Lev 14:40 he is to order that the contaminated stones be torn out and thrown into an unclean place outside the town.

Lev 14:41 He must have all the inside walls of the house scraped and the material that is scraped off dumped into an unclean place outside the town.

Lev 14:42 Then they are to take other stones to replace these and take new clay and plaster the house.

Lev 14:43 "If the defiling mold reappears in the house after the stones have been torn out and the house scraped and plastered,

Lev 14:44 the priest is to go and examine it and, if the mold has spread in the house, it is a persistent defiling mold; the house is unclean.

Lev 14:45 It must be torn down--its stones, timbers and all the plaster--and taken out of the town to an unclean place.

Lev 14:46 "Anyone who goes into the house while it is closed up will be unclean till evening.

Lev 14:47 Anyone who sleeps or eats in the house must wash their clothes.

Lev 14:48 "But if the priest comes to examine it and the mold has not spread after the house has been plastered, he shall pronounce the house clean, because the defiling mold is gone.

Lev 14:49 To purify the house he is to take two birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop.

Lev 14:50 He shall kill one of the birds over fresh water in a clay pot.

Lev 14:51 Then he is to take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet yarn and the live bird, dip them into the blood of the dead bird and the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

Lev 14:52 He shall purify the house with the bird's blood, the fresh water, the live bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop and the scarlet yarn.

Lev 14:53 Then he is to release the live bird in the open fields outside the town. In this way he will make atonement for the house, and it will be clean."

Lev 14:54 These are the regulations for any defiling skin disease, for a sore,

Lev 14:55 for defiling molds in fabric or in a house,

Lev 14:56 and for a swelling, a rash or a shiny spot,

Lev 14:57 to determine when something is clean or unclean. These are the regulations for defiling skin diseases and defiling molds.

The significance of Leviticus 14

Leviticus 14 is significant because it outlines the precise ritual laws and purification process for restoring a person healed of a severe skin disease (traditionally called "leprosy") back into the religious and social community.

The Cleansing Ritual

- **The Two Birds:** The priest takes two clean birds, killing one over running water in an earthenware jar.
- **The Blood and Wood:** The living bird, cedar wood, scarlet yarn, and hyssop are dipped in the dead bird's blood.
- **Sprinkling:** The priest sprinkles the healed person seven times with the blood before setting the live bird free.
- **Hygiene and Shaving:** The person must wash their clothes, shave all their hair, and bathe in water.

Community and Spiritual Restoration

- **Social Reintegration:** The ritual acts as a bridge from isolation back to family, camp life, and regular worship.
- **Atonement:** The priest performs sacrifices and uses oil to make atonement for the cleansed individual.
- **Spiritual Symbolism :** the physical cleansing points forward to spiritual renewal, forgiveness, and restoration by God.

Provisions for Everyone

- **Fairness for the Poor:** God provides alternative, cheaper sacrifice options so that financial poverty never blocks a healed person from being restored.
- **Sanitation:** the organic elements like hyssop and cedarwood also provided practical anti-bacterial and anti-fungal benefits for public health.

Leviticus 14 relates to Jesus and the New Testament as an ancient, symbolic shadow pointing to how Christ cleanses sinners, acts as both high priest and sacrifice, and restores outcasts to God's family.

The Priest Leaving the Camp

- **The Ritual:** In Leviticus 14:3, the priest had to leave the safety of the camp to go outside and examine the unclean leper where he lived in isolation.

Lev 14:3 The priest is to go outside the camp and examine them.

- **The New Testament Fulfillment:** Jesus left the glory of heaven and stepped into a broken, sinful world to meet outcasts where they were. In the Gospels, Jesus actively reached out and touched lepers, making them clean instead of letting their uncleanness defile Him (Matthew 8:2–3).

Mat 8:2 A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

Mat 8:3 Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.

The Two Birds Ceremony

- **The Ritual:** Leviticus 14:4–7 commands two clean birds. One bird was killed over running water in an earthen vessel, while the living bird, cedarwood, scarlet, and hyssop were dipped in the dead bird's blood. The living bird was then set free to fly away into the open field.

Lev 14:4 the priest shall order that two live clean birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the person to be cleansed.

Lev 14:5 Then the priest shall order that one of the birds be killed over fresh water in a clay pot.

Lev 14:6 He is then to take the live bird and dip it, together with the cedar wood, the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, into the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water.

Lev 14:7 Seven times he shall sprinkle the one to be cleansed of the defiling disease, and then pronounce them clean. After that, he is to release the live bird in the open fields.

- **The New Testament Fulfillment:** Many Christian theologians view this as a vivid picture of the Gospel. The killed bird represents Christ dying to shed His blood for human sin, while the released bird symbolizes the sinner who is set free and released from bondage because a substitute paid the price.

Blood and Oil on the Ear, Thumb, and Toe

- **The Ritual:** The cleansed person had blood and oil applied to the lobe of their right ear, the thumb of their right hand, and the big toe of their right foot, signifying total consecration and restoration to service (Leviticus 14:14).

Lev 14:14 The priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot.

- **The New Testament Fulfillment:** This physical marking echoes the New Testament call for believers to offer their entire lives to God. The ear represents hearing and obeying God's Word (Romans 10:17), the hand represents working in righteousness (Colossians 3:17), and the foot represents walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). Furthermore, the oil foreshadows the indwelling Holy Spirit given to believers after being cleansed by Christ's blood.

Rom 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gal 5:16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Jesus as the Ultimate Sacrifice

- **The Ritual:** The Levitical system required ongoing sacrifices, human priests, and repeated washings to manage uncleanness under the old covenant.
- **The New Testament Fulfillment:** The book of Hebrews explains that Jesus fulfilled these temporary laws permanently. He is simultaneously the [Priest as Mediator—A Shadow of Christ](#) who intercedes for us and the perfect, once-for-all sacrifice. Because of His finished work on the cross, believers no longer need animal rituals; instead, they have direct, confident access to God (Hebrews 10:19–22).

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,

Heb 10:20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,

Heb 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

Heb 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.