

Sermon #34 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title: **THE LAW OF LEPROSY**

Text: Leviticus 13:1-14:57

Subject: *Leprosy a Type of Sin*

Date: Sunday Morning — February 3, 2019

Reading: *Mark 1:14-45*

Introduction:

I have come here today with a message from God, the message of the law of leprosy. The title of my message is **THE LAW OF LEPROSY**. Our text will be Leviticus chapters 13 and 14. **In these two chapters the Lord God gave very specific laws regarding all manner of leprosy in men, in their garments, and in their houses.** These laws, we are specifically told, were **given to teach us to distinguish between that which is clean and that which is unclean.** Let's read several verses from these two chapters together.

Leprous Men — (Leviticus 13:9) “When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest.”

Leprous Garments — (Leviticus 13:47-48)
“The garment also that the plague of leprosy is

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in, *whether it be* a woollen garment, or a linen garment; (48) *Whether it be* in the warp, or woof; of linen, or of woollen; whether in a skin, or in anything made of skin.”

(Leviticus 13:52) “He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or anything of skin, wherein the plague is: for it *is* a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.”

Leprous Houses — (Leviticus 14:34-36) “When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession; (35) And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me *there is* as it were a plague in the house: (36) Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go *into it* to see the plague, that all that *is* in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house.”

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(Leviticus 14:45) “And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry *them* forth out of the city into an unclean place.”

(Leviticus 14:54-57) “This *is* the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and scall, (55) And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house, (56) And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot: (57) To teach when *it is* unclean, and when *it is* clean: this *is* the law of leprosy.”

Proposition: The Lord God sent the horrible plague of leprosy into the earth specifically to be a type of sin. — The progress of leprosy in a man shows us the utter ruin of men by sin. — The cleansing of leprosy by blood atonement and the pronouncement of grace show us God’s way of saving sinners through the sin-atonement death of the Lord Jesus Christ, our all glorious Substitute and the pronouncement of grace in the soul by God the Holy Spirit.

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In these two instructive chapters (Leviticus 13 and 14), the Lord speaks of the plague of leprosy in men, in garments, and in houses.

LEPROUS MEN

1st — **The law of leprosy deals with leprous men.**
— **The plague of leprosy in men portrays the personal depravity of all the sons and daughters of Adam by nature.**

(Leviticus 13:1-3) “And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, **2** When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh *like* the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: **3** And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and *when* the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight *be* deeper than the skin of his flesh, it *is* a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.”

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(Leviticus 13:9) “When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest.”

(Leviticus 13:12-13) “And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of *him that hath* the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh; **13** Then the priest shall consider: and, behold, **if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.**”

Leprosy begins deep within and works its way outward. A man might have leprosy for several (three, four, or five) years before he showed any symptoms of the disease. Then, he would have a rising (a boil), a scab (a small tumor), or a bright spot in his flesh. These things did not cause leprosy. They simply revealed its existence in a man.

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So it is with sin. Sin is primarily an inward thing. The plague of our race is a heart plague. It is leprosy of the heart.

(Matthew 15:19) “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

It is that which is in us that defiles us. That which is in us, at the very root and core of our inmost being, is enmity against God.

- Religion deals with that which is outward.
- Grace deals with us from the inside out.
- Men look on that which is outward. — “*The LORD looketh on the heart!*”

We are ready enough to acknowledge the guilt of our evil deeds; but we are terribly reluctant to acknowledge the inward corruption and depravity of our hearts. But it is this that must be confessed.

“Physician of my sin-sick soul
To Thee I bring my case;

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My raging malady control,
And heal me by Thy grace.

Pity the anguish I endure,
See how I mourn and pine;
For never can I hope a cure
From any hand but Thine.

I would disclose my whole complaint,
But where shall I begin?
No words of mine can fully paint
That worst distemper, sin.

It lies not in a single part,
But through my frame is spread
A burning fever in my heart.
A palsy in my head.

It makes me deaf, and dumb, and blind,
And impotent and lame,
And overclouds and fills my mind,
With folly, fear and shame.

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A thousand evil thoughts intrude,
Tumultuous in my breast;
Which indispose me for my food,
And rob me of my rest.

Lord I am sick, regard my cry,
And set my spirit free;
Say, canst Thou let a sinner die,
Who longs to live to Thee?"

— *John Newton*

No one will ever be saved who does not confess his sin. We must repent of our sin, our sins, and our righteousness. Salvation cannot be had by any except those who must have it as the free gift of God's grace. And no one who confesses his sin to God will fail to receive his grace and salvation in Christ. — All who must have grace shall have grace! — All who must have Christ shall have Christ!

(1 John 1:8-10) "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
(9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just

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to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.”

Leprosy was not a terribly painful disease. — It was not something a person knew he had because he felt sharp pains or saw sudden, great changes in his health, the color of his skin, or appetite. Rather, it simply made a person a little restless and caused some sadness, some depression, some mental anxiety. He could function just fine. He just didn’t feel quite right. He knew something was wrong, but didn’t think it was much, and was sure it would go away. — So it is with sin.

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But leprosy was a corrosive, cancerous disease, eating away from the inside out, until life was gone. Sin is like that. It is unseen and unfelt until it has begun to consume the beauty of a person. But it is always present, secretly eating away from the inside. Suddenly, it bursts forth in a mass of horrid corruption, defacing the whole person, and when it is finished brings forth death!

Oh, how I pray that the Lord God will graciously show you who and what you are! — That he would grant you to know the leprosy of your heart! — If ever God shows you your sin, it is because he has come to grant to you his grace. Let me show you how.

The healing of the leper was God's work alone. — As I have tried to show you, **leprosy in Moses' day was never healed by medicine, but only by grace.**

- It was not cured by a doctor, but by God's priest.
- The leper was not cleansed by the sterile care of a surgeon, but by the blood sprinkling of a priest.

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- Leprosy in the Old Testament could not be healed by anyone but God himself. — “*Salvation is of the LORD!*”

Only God’s priest could help the poor leper. — What grace is revealed in this fact! The examination and care of the leper was never trusted to anyone but God’s priest. Moses (the law) could not help a leper; but Aaron (the mediator) could. The leper was trusted to the hands of no one else. He alone had the wisdom and skill to identify and deal with the leprosy. He alone had the experience to handle the leper’s case. Only the priest could have compassion upon the poor leper, because he alone knew how to make him clean.

How sweet, how blessed is this thought. — “*The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son!*” **Blessed be God, we have a High Priest who has compassion upon them that are gone out of the way, upon poor lepers. That Priest is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

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The priest had to come out of the camp and come down to the leper. — The Lord Jesus came out of heaven, came down to us poor lepers, and more. — **He was himself made to be a leper.** He took our infirmities and bore our diseases in his body on the tree (Matthew 8:17)¹. He was made to be sin for us! — *“Stricken, smitten of God and afflicted!”*

The leper had to be brought to the priest. — The leper would not come to the priest and could not come. He must be brought to the priest by another.

- The Holy Spirit
- A Compassionate Friend

Illustration: *The Man Carried by Four*

The leper healed by God’s intervention was made clean by divinely prescribed ceremonies and the pronouncement of the priest.

¹ So great is the compassion of our great God and Savior that he looks upon the sins of his people not as crimes to punish, but diseases to heal! — *“With his stripes we are healed!”*

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- Atonement had to be made. — Christ's Atonement for Sin!
- The atonement sacrifice was such as the leper could get. — Two Lambs, or a Lamb, or Two Turtledoves, or Two Pigeons — *“And if he be poor and cannot get so much, then such as he is able to get”* (Leviticus 14:21-22). — *“The word is nigh thee!”*
- The blood was caught in an earthen vessel. — *“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us”* (2 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 3:8).
- The blood must be sprinkled upon the leper. — *“Our hearts sprinkled.”*
- The leper must be washed. — *“The Washing of Regeneration and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost!”*

(Hebrews 10:19-22) *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And having an high priest*

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over the house of God; (22) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

- The leper was pronounced clean. — *“Then the priest shall consider: and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.”* (Leviticus 13:13)
- The leper was presented clean before the Lord. — *“He is clean!”*
- The leper was restored to the congregation, presented to the congregation clean! — *“He is clean!”*

This leprosy describes the sinner’s state in this world, in his exclusion from the Lord’s presence and his death in sin. — This is your present state and condition, if you are yet without Christ. You are a leper! May God the Holy Ghost convince you of your leprosy, for Christ’s sake.

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- You have lost every principle of holiness.
- All your powers are withered, every sinew shrunk.
- Your comeliness is withered.
- Streams of putrid impurity burst forth from your soul.
- Your eyes betray your hopelessness.
- The death-like hue of your whole being proclaims the total departure of the breath of God from your soul
- God turns away his face from you.
- Your own guilty conscience compels you to cry, “*Unclean, unclean!*”

“Such is every convinced soul’s experience in the day of the Spirit’s dealing with it; when the High Priest has begun his treatment of the sin sick soul, compelling it to uncover its head and rend its garment, and with lips covered up, to take the portion of one exposed to death and curse.” — (Andrew Bonar)

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Oh, leprous soul, Christ, God's High Priest is passing through your country this day! He can deliver you from your diseases. Come, come, though you have sat alone, shut-up in your corruption for years. Come, though you have until now looked in vain for your condition to improve. Come, though you have, like that poor woman of old, spent all your living on physicians of no value. **If you come to Christ, it is because God the Holy Spirit has brought you to him.**

Perhaps no man ever cared for your soul before. Perhaps you have looked everywhere on earth for help and have found none. But **there is a High Priest in the land who can deliver you.** He takes you as you are. He pronounces you as you really are, “*Unclean.*” Then he stoops down and says, “*Look unto me and be ye saved.*” And he alone can pronounce you clean!

Illustration: *Those Four Leprous Men Sitting by the Gates of Samaria — Famine in Samaria — “Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will*

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enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. — Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.” (2 Kings 7:3)

He passes by. He walks on the outside of the city, where the lepers are sitting in their uncleanness. There you sit, outside the camp, wistfully looking in through the gates. Yet, you dare not enter. Christ has come to bring lepers in unto himself! Yes, the Son of God takes in lepers and pronounces them clean. He is near. — *“He it is that talks with you.”* — **Christ alone can pronounce leprous sinners clean!** His blood cleanses from all sin. His touch heals. His look is life. Is there a leper here? Is there here a desperate soul that needs healing grace? — **This great Priest heals all who have need of healing!**

LEPROUS GARMENTS

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2nd — **The law of leprosy deals with leprous garments.** — **The plague of leprosy in garments speaks of the corruption of all that we touch.** —

Oh, how corrupting our lives are in this world!

- Our seed is corrupt!
- Our influence is corrupting!
- If my leprous hand touches something, I spread leprosy!

The bulk of these two chapters deals with leprosy in men and women. — **But the law of leprosy also deals with leprosy in garments and in houses.** This is but another indication that the leprosy God sent among the children of Israel was unlike any form of leprosy known to men in modern times and was specifically intended to be typical of spiritual things. Leviticus 13:47-59 deals specifically with the leprosy that was found in a person's clothes.

(Leviticus 13:47-48) “The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, *whether it be* a woollen garment, or a linen garment; (48) *Whether it be*

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in the warp, or woof; of linen, or of woollen; whether in a skin, or in anything made of skin.”

(Leviticus 13:52) “He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or anything of skin, wherein the plague is: for it *is* a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.”

I will make no attempt to guess what this garment leprosy was. We are not told. But the leprosy found in the garments a man wore, while different from that found in a man himself, was also typical of sin and defilement — sin and defilement not in a man, but in the things around him.

Anything a person wraps around himself is his garment. — The circumstances of his life. — The business in which he engages. — All those things in which we wrap ourselves in this world. — All that gives warmth, comfort, and joy to us in this world. — All the events that affect our daily lives. **Particularly, the garment a man wears, the**

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garment we wrap ourselves in is, in Scripture, representative of his religion, his hope of salvation. A leprous garment speaks of corrupt religion, the religion a man makes for himself.

When **Jude** speaks of “*the garment spotted by the flesh,*” he is clearly talking about the defilement of our lives, the corruption of our entire being, particularly the corruption of all false religion (The way of Cain, The Error of Balaam, The Gainsaying of Korah – Jude 11), which every believer abhors.

(Jude 1:23) “And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

Our Lord commended those **saints in Sardis**, saying, “*They have not defiled their garments*” (Revelation 3:4). Most in the Sardis church, though they had a name that they lived, were utterly dead. But even there, in that dark day, there were a few who would not defile their garments (their hope of salvation) with the leprosy of freewill/works religion.

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The only thing that could be done with a leprous garment was to burn it. — *“It shall be burnt in the fire”* (v. 52, 57).

- It mattered not how costly the garment was. It had to be burned.
- It did not matter if the garment had belonged to a man’s family for generations. It must be burned.
- It did not matter how beautiful the garment was. It had to be burned.
- If there was so much as one spot of leprosy, in the warp or in the woof, it had to be burned.

I call upon you who are yet wearing your leprous garments of freewill/works religion, tear them off at once and burn them as contemptible things. Do not be concerned about burning your garments, there is a better garment to be had.

(Revelation 3:18) “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not

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appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”

(Revelation 7:9) “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

(Revelation 7:13-14) “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? (14) And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

(Revelation 14:4-5) “These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed

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from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. (5) And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

(Revelation 19:7-8) “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. (8) And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

(Revelation 16:15) “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”

LEPROUS HOUSES

3rd — **The law of leprosy deals with leprous houses.** — **The plague of leprosy in a house speaks of the defilement of the earth!** — In the last part of chapter 14 (vv. 33-57), the Lord gave instructions

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concerning the plague of leprosy he put into a person's house. — To teach and remind us that the earth itself is under the curse of God. — The Lord God sent leprosy into the houses of Israel because of sin.

(Leviticus 14:33-34) “And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, (34) When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession.”

Sin is a horrible leprosy that has defiled and continues to defile our entire race. That is leprosy in a man. Sin is a leprosy in us that defiles the whole world around us. Everything we touch, everything we come into contact with, everything that comes into contact with us is leprous. We defile everything. That is leprosy in the garment.

Yet, there is more. — Sin reaches even to the earth itself. The very ground upon which we walk and the

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atmosphere in which we live is defiled by sin, leprous and unclean, and therefore cursed by God. That is what is represented in the leprosy in a house. It was as though the plagued walls of the house cried out to Israel, “Repent! Confess your sin! Turn again to the Lord your God!” This leprosy in the houses of Israel said to the inhabitant of the house (no matter how stately the house), “This place is polluted. This is not your dwelling place. This is not your rest. This is not your home.” — **Here, we are taught to look for and anticipate a better house, “a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!”**

“We look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” — **But, before we can have that new house, this old, earthly, leprous house must be destroyed.** Is that not what is portrayed in the law of leprous houses?

The leprous house had to be emptied. The family had to move out of the house. That is what happens when God’s saints drop the physical body of flesh in

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the grave (2 Corinthians 5:1-9). — Then the Resurrection!

- Once it was emptied, it was purged. — “*Scraped!*” — Judgment!
- The house had to be broken down, stone by stone, timber by timber, board by board. — Even the dust of the mortar had to be carried away.
- Still, there was provision made for atonement for the house.

When God gets done with this leprous house we call earth, he is going to tear it down timber by timber, stone by stone, mortar joint by mortar joint, and burn the whole thing. Yes, the Lord God shall destroy this entire physical universe. But he will lose nothing to the leprosy of sin. Christ bought the earth itself; and he shall have it.

(2 Peter 3:11-14) “*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the*

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heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (14) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

Now, look at verses 54-57 and learn the ultimate purpose of God in giving us these two instructive chapters on the law for leprosy.

(Leviticus 14:54-57) “This *is* the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and scall, (55) And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house, (56) And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot: (57) **To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean:** this *is* the law of leprosy.”

There is a day coming when our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s great High Priest, shall declare that which is

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clean and that which is unclean. He's the only one who can.

(Revelation 21:1-5) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things new.** And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

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(Revelation 21:27) “**And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.**”

(Revelation 22:1-7) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (2) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. (3) And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. (5) And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. (6) And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy

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prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. (7) **Behold, I come quickly**: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

(Revelation 22:10-17) “And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. (11) **He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.** (12) **And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.** (13) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. (14) **Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.** (15) **For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a**

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lie. (16) I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star. (17) And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

(Revelation 22:20) “**He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**”

Blessed be his name, soon our God shall rid us of the horrid leprosy of sin forever! In that world awaiting us beyond the grave, there shall enter in nothing that defiles! Sin will not even be a possibility! — That is the message of the law of leprosy.

- It is healed by blood and by grace.
- It is purged by fire. — At Calvary! — In the Last Day!

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- It shall never enter our new house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!

Amen.