

Quarantines and Faith

Bible Study Starters

We designed Bible Study Starters to provide inspiration and guidance for your personal Bible study. Read the suggested passage, answer the included questions, and see where your study takes you!

LEVITICUS 13:1-3, 45-46; 14:2-3, 8-9

(English Standard Version)

The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "When a person has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns into a case of leprous disease on the skin of his body, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests, and the priest shall examine the diseased area on the skin of his body. And if the hair in the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a case of leprous disease. When the priest has examined him, he shall pronounce him unclean. ...

"The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp. ...

"This shall be the law of the leprous person for the day of his cleansing. He shall be brought to the priest, and the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall look. ... And he who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. And after that he may come into the camp, but live outside his tent seven days. And on the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair from his head, his beard, and his eyebrows. He shall shave off all his hair, and then he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean."

STARTER QUESTIONS

1. Is it a lack of faith in God to practice social distancing and self-quarantine when medical experts recommend it? Why?
2. When contagious diseases were involved, God had very strict quarantine laws for ancient Israel. Although we live under different civil laws today, the spirit, or *intention*, behind this law is timeless. How do you think the spirit of this law should apply to modern contagious outbreaks?
3. God was present in the camp of Israel. Why do you think He chose to enact a policy of quarantining the contagious instead of simply promising them immediate healing?
4. In Deuteronomy 13 God tells Israel to treat certain sins almost as if they were contagious, ordering that quick action be taken to "put away the evil from your midst" (verse 5) and involving the whole nation so that "all Israel shall hear and fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you" (verse 11). In the New Testament, Paul commands a congregation to disfellowship an openly sinning member, warning that "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6). How can sin spread from person to person? Why is it so dangerous to tolerate or accept sin?
5. With every contagious disease, there are steps people can take to reduce the risk of catching it from others. These might include hygiene, sanitation, social distancing, rest and other methods. What steps can you take to protect yourself from being contaminated by sins? (See James 1:12-15; Hebrews 4:14-16; and Psalm 1:1-2 for ideas.)
6. God identifies Himself as "the LORD who heals you" (Exodus 15:26)—our ultimate source of healing, both physically and spiritually. In what ways has God healed you?