

The Oologah Informer

Oct 29th, 2017

Thoughts from the Preacher “A Determined Nation”

A Nation determined to do evil is determined to answer to God.

Weekly Article

3 Good Reasons to Believe the Bible is from God

Part 5

by Eric Lyons & Kyle Butt

REASON #2:

SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY AND FOREKNOWLEDGE (Part 3)

Germ and the Water of Purification

When Old Testament instructions are compared to the New Testament explanations for those actions, it becomes clear that some of the ancient injunctions were primarily symbolic in nature (e.g., John 19:31-37). With the presence of such symbolism in the Old Testament, it is important, however, that we do not overlook Old Testament instructions that were pragmatic in value and that testify to a Master Mind behind the writing of the Law. One such instruction is found in Numbers 19, where the Israelites were instructed to prepare the “water of purification” that was to be used to wash any person who had touched a dead body.

At first glance, the water of purification sounds like a hodge-podge of superstitious potion-making that included the ashes of a young cow, hyssop, cedar wood, and scarlet. But this formula was the farthest thing from a potion intended to “ward off evil spirits.” On the contrary, the recipe for the water of purification stands today as a wonderful example of the Bible’s brilliance, since the recipe is nothing less than a procedure to produce an antibacterial soap.

When we look at the ingredients individually, we begin to see the value of each. First, consider the use of ashes. The chemical known as lye is one of the main ingredients in many soaps today. In fact, lye, in high concentrations, is very caustic and irritating to the skin. In more diluted concentrations, it can be used as an excellent exfoliate and cleansing agent. Various lye-soap recipes reveal that, to obtain lye, water often is poured through ashes. The water retrieved from pouring it through the ashes contains a concentration of the chemical. Moses instructed the Israelites to prepare a mixture that would have included lye mixed in a diluted solution, which would have been ideal for stopping the spread of germs.

What about the specific ingredients for the water of purification? Hyssop contains the antiseptic thymol, the same ingredient that we find today in some brands of mouthwash (McMillen and Stern, p.

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

What does Restoration Mean?

(Jude 3-4)

PM Sermon

An Inheritance

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Old Testament characters – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

Acts – V. Smith

In SEARCH of the Lord’s Way

On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

The Truth in Love

on Channel 19 Sundays @ 8am

The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

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The Oologah church of Christ only uses the **KJV, NKJV or ASV** translation of the Bible in classes & sermons.

24). “Cedar wood has long been used for storage cabinets because of its ability to repel insects and prevent decay. In oil form, applied to humans, it is an antiseptic, astringent, expectorant (removes mucus from respiratory system), anti-fungal, sedative and insecticide” (“Cedar Oil,” n.d.). The Israelites were instructed to toss into the mix “scarlet,” which most likely was scarlet wool (see Hebrews 9:19). Adding wool fibers to the concoction would have made the mixture the “ancient equivalent of Lava® soap” (McMillen and Stern, p. 25).

Thousands of years before any formal studies were done to see what type of cleaning methods were the most effective; millennia before American pioneers concocted their lye solutions; and ages before our most advanced medical students knew a thing about germ theory, Moses instructed the Israelites to concoct an amazingly effective recipe for soap, that, if used properly in medical facilities like hospitals in Vienna, would literally have saved thousands of lives.

Quarantine

The Old Testament record added another extremely beneficial practice to the field of medicine in its detailed descriptions of maladies for which living individuals should be quarantined. The book of Leviticus lists a host of diseases and ways in which an Israelite would come in contact with germs. Those with such diseases as leprosy were instructed to “dwell alone” “outside the camp” (Leviticus 13:46). If and when a diseased individual got close to those who were not diseased, he was instructed to “cover his mustache, and cry, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’” (13:45). It is of interest that the covering of one’s mustache (“upper lip”—ASV) would prevent spit and spray from the mouth of the individual to pass freely through the air, much like the covering of one’s mouth during a cough.

In regard to the understanding of contagion that is evident in the quarantine rules in the Old Testament, Roderick McGrew noted in the *Encyclopedia of Medical History*: “The idea of contagion was foreign to the classic medical tradition and found no place in the voluminous Hippocratic writings. The Old Testament, however, is a rich source for contagionist sentiment, especially in regard to leprosy and venereal disease” (1985, pp. 77-78). Here again, the Bible exhibits amazingly accurate medical and scientific knowledge that surpasses any known human ingenuity available at the time of its writing.

Many physicians who have compared Moses’ medical instructions to effective modern methods have come to realize the astonishing value and insight of the Bible. As 20th-century pharmacologist and Hebrew scholar, Dr. David Macht of Johns Hopkins University, once wrote: “Every word in the Hebrew Scriptures is well chosen and carries valuable knowledge and deep significance” (1953, p. 450). Indeed, the accurate medical practices prescribed thousands of years before their significance was completely understood provide excellent evidence for the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Continued next week