

## Christ's Healing of the Leper, Matt.7:28 – 8:4

(Mk.1:40-45; Lk.5:12-16)

(Kenny Chumbly's great article, "The Gospel in Miracle" {The Prairie Papers, #181} provided some of the information in this lesson, and much of its inspiration.)

### Introductory Observations:

- This story, in many ways, well-illustrates the Sermon on the Mount, Mt.4:23. Jesus' *compassion* (Mk.1:41) for the afflicted in all forms (cp. Mk.6:34) was on full display.
- Though "*great multitudes followed Him*" (v.1), He was moved to action by one man who was "*full of leprosy*," Lk.5:12 (cp. Lev.13:1-59).
- Leprosy, because of its *defiling capabilities* and the fact that it was *incurable by man*, is easily comparable to sin. If Jesus' power over *paralysis* demonstrates His divinity (cf. Matt.9:2-6), how much more so the isolating and loathsome disease of leprosy, cf. Lev.13:45-46!
- Jesus' warning to "*tell no one*" is explained in Mk.1:43 and Lk.5:14-16. His admonition to "*go, show yourself to the priest, and present the offering*" was exactly what the Law required (cf. Lev.14:1-32) that he might be certified as "*clean*," re-enter *the camp*, and rejoin his family and life itself, 5:17-18.

### Primary Lessons:

#### 1. The Leper's Faith, v.2.

Manifested great reverence: he *bowed down* (*proskuneo*- worship; *falling on his knees*, Mk.1:40; and *face*, Lk.5:12); addressed Jesus as *Lord* (*kurios*), acknowledging Jesus' *position* and His *divinity*.

Furthermore, "*if you are willing*" does not doubt His *power*, but is only concerned with whether or not such a one as Jesus has the *sympathy*, *compassion*, and *concern* for a wretch like me! Can *I*, even *I*, so steeped in defilement, be cleansed?

"*You can make me clean.*" You have to *power* and *ability* to return me *whole* to my family, to society, to life itself (cf. Lev.13:46)... if only you are willing to manifest compassion!

#### 2. "*He touched him.*"

We cannot possibly imagine the *power*, *compassion*, and *life-altering impact* of this single act of *touching* the defiled. Given the contagiousness of the disease, this man had perhaps spent years without knowing the simple pleasure of human contact.

Jesus' power to heal did not *require* physical contact, cf. vv.5-13, but He realized not only what the man *wanted*, but also what he *needed*! He was willing to become *defiled* Himself to provide *cleansing power*, cf. Lev.5:3.

### **3. “I am willing; be cleansed.”**

Can there be any *sweeter* and *hope-filled* and *realized* words for one who has lost so much, and suffered so greatly, cf. John 6:37? For one so defiled, and so mired in hopelessness, surely there can be no sweeter words!

The *immediacy* of cleansing manifests Jesus’ power, and that of His words, cf. 11:5; Rom.15:18-19; 1Cor.2:4-5.

#### **Lessons for Us:**

- 1. It does not matter how *defiled* (or *separated from the camp*) you are- Jesus can *heal* and make you *whole*, Titus 2:14!**
- 2. But you are going to have to *come*, *bow down*, and call Him *Lord* to be *cleansed*, Rom.10:8-10.**
- 3. He will *touch* you, and change your life completely, 2Cor.5:17!**
- 4. He did and does so by *taking on our defilement*, 2Cor.5:17-21.**