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Jesus Heals Ten Men With Leprosy
Luke 17: 11-19

Jesus Heals ten men with leprosy DIG: What was it like to be a leper? What would their healing mean to them? Why do you think the nine didn't go back to thank Yeshua? What is significant about the one who came back being a Samaritan?

REFLECT: How has Messiah healed you spiritually? Physically? Emotionally? Afterwards, how do you show your gratitude to the Lord? Do you throw yourself at Jesus' feet and thank Him like the Samaritan? Or take His healing for granted?

What if you only had today, the things you thanked ADONAI for yesterday? What would you have?

In **Messiah's** time, those suffering from **leprosy** were isolated in special camps outside the cities in an effort to contain the disease. According to the Torah, the only way **a leper** could be allowed to return to society was if he or she were declared clean by a priest **(Leviticus 14:1-32).**

During **His** ministry in Perea as **He** waited for **His** final appearance in **Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee (Luke 17:11).** Thus, **He** stayed away from Galilee, where Herod sought to kill **Him**, and from Judea, where the Sanhedrin was plotting to kill **Him**. **Christ** made several trips to **Jerusalem**, but **Luke** telescoped them to make **his** point that **the Lord** had to get to **Zion** to present **Himself** as **the Messiah**.[1151]

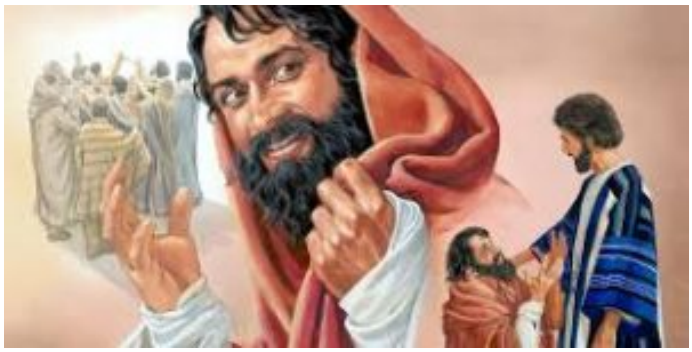


On one occasion, **as He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him.** In the Jewish culture of that time, **leprosy** was not merely the symbol of sin, but of death, to which it stood related to our state of sin and death before **God**. **The rabbis taught that lepers were regarded as dead, along with the blind, the poor, and those who had no children. They were excluded from the camp of Isra'el, which in later times the Talmudists understood to be all the cities walled since the days of Joshua, who was supposed to have sanctified them. Everywhere a leper entered was considered defiled. They were, however, admitted to the synagogue, where a place was railed off for them, ten handbreadths high** (a **handbreadth** being the measure of four fingers, equal to four inches) **and four cubits wide, on condition of their entering the house of worship before the rest of the congregation, and leaving them before the service was over (Tractate Negaim 13.12).**[1152] So it was natural that **they** would band together.

At first **Christ** did not see **them**, for **they stood at a distance. But** then **He** heard **their** cry as **they called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us" (Luke 17:12-13)! They** knew **His** name because **they** had heard of the remarkable cure of one of the worst lepers in Galilee (see **Cn – The First Messianic Miracle: The Healing of a Jewish Leper**), not far from **their** village. **Nine** of them were Jews, but fellow-sympathy in misery had broken down the barriers of racial prejudice. Miserably afflicted with this disease, which was itself a living death, **they** spent **their** days in hopelessness, waiting for the end to come. The Torah requires people with serious skin diseases to separate **themselves** from the rest of **the camp of Isra'el (Leviticus 13:45-46; Num 5:2-4)**. One **Samaritan** stood up with **the others** and joined with **them** in a heart-rending plea for **pity**.

When Yeshua saw them, He confirmed that **He** was Torah observant, by **saying: Go show yourselves to the priests (Leviticus 14:2).** At that time in the Temple, there were four chambers inside the Court of the Women. There was the Chamber of the Woodshed, which stored wood for the Bronze Altar; the Chamber of the Nazirites, where those who have made their vows would fulfill them, and make their offerings **(Numbers 6:1-21)**; the Chamber of the Oil, where oil needed for the lighting of the seven-branched Lampstand, for lighting the four large lamps in the Court of the Women during Sukkot (see **Gr – I Am the Light of the Word**), and the Chamber of **the Lepers**! There, **the leper** was supposed present his sacrifices, **shave off all his hair**, and undergo a ritual bath for cleansing **(Leviticus 14:1-9)**. But the Chamber of **the Lepers** had never been used. Ever. **Miriam** had rebelled against Moshe and had been stricken with **leprosy (Numbers 12)**, but that was before the giving of the Torah. And **Naaman** was cleansed after following Elisha's instructions **(Second Kings 5:14)**, but **he** was a Gentile, a Syrian. Therefore, it is very telling that Moses had written two long chapters **(Leviticus 13** and **14)** on cleansing **a leper**, but year after year, decade after decade, century after century, it stood empty. It was waiting for **Yeshua** to send **the priests** a cleansed Jewish **leper** to prove that **He** was, indeed, the **Messiah** (see **Cn – The Healing of a Jewish Leper: The First Messianic Miracle**).

The **lepers went** in faith even before **they** had actually experienced the healing. **As they** limped along the road, the dry scales fell from them, the white spots disappeared, a healthy color returned to **their** flesh, **their** disfigured limbs were restored, and the thrill of new life flowed through **their** veins. **They were cleansed (Luke 17:14).** Joseph Caiaphas, the high priest of the Sanhedrin, the Temple and the priesthood, led the rejection of **the Messiah**. Now he would have to see the results of this messianic miracle first hand.



All **ten** had enough faith in **Yeshua** to be **healed**. But only **one of them** had enough gratitude that **when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God**

in a loud voice. He understood the significance of what had been done for **him**. Therefore, **he threw himself at Jesus' feet,** worshiped **Him and thanked Him – and *he* was a Samaritan (Luke 17:15-16).** To *demand* an action in keeping with the Torah from **him** would in itself be a challenge and could have offended **him**. So **the Samaritan** who returned had to overcome considerable obstacles in order to be obedient to **the Great Physician's** request. How **his** obedience to **the Lord**, and **his** worship and gratitude for **his** healing, must have pleased **the Savior of sinners**. **His** faith had not only **healed him**, but also saved **him**.

Jesus asked: Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine (Luke 17:17)? They had received **God's** spoken word and believed enough to be healed of **their leprosy**, but they fell short of the ultimate healing of salvation. **They** had **once been enlightened . . . [and] tasted the heavenly gift (Hebrews 6:4)** in **their** physical healing, but **they** had not stepped across the line from knowledge to faith. The lack of gratitude by **the other nine** was typical of the rejection of **Christ's** ministry by the Jewish people. **None of the nine even thanked Him! He** alone had the power to cleanse the nation and make her ceremonially clean. However, Isra'el did not respond properly to **Him**. She accepted the healings and feedings, but she did not accept **Him** as **the Meshiach**. But those outside the nation, such as this **Samaritan leper** (a person doubly repulsive to the Jews) and many of those in Perea were responding.[1153]

Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner (Luke 17:18)? Several questions come to mind. Did these **nine** Jews separate from **the one Samaritan** when **they** realized **they** were healed? Or was it Jewish pride, which felt it had a right to blessings, and attributed **them**, not to the mercy of **the Galilean Rabbi**, but to **God**; or rather, to the relation of Isra'el to **God**. Or what seems the most likely it was simply ingratitude. A state of mind all too characteristic of those far from **ADONAI**, and which led to the neglect and rejection of **Christ**. It was certainly a terrible contrast between **the sons of the Covenant** and **this foreigner**.

Then He said to him: Rise up and go, your faith has made you well (Luke 17:19). The phrase **made you well** is literally ***saved you***. And in truth, **faith saves** us. Certainly the grateful **Samaritan** received a healing that far surpassed the physical cleansing of **his** skin. The wholeness **he** received in **his** flesh pointed to the wholeness **he** was receiving in **his** soul as **he** lay before **the Lord** in worship. Like this **Samaritan**, let us lay our hearts bare before **Jesus Christ** and allow **Him** to bring us deeper healing and wholeness.

***Lord Jesus**, we believe that **Your** desire to work in us far exceeds our expectations We come to **You** today asking **You** to transform us. **Yeshua**, we bow before you in praise and thanksgiving.*[1154]