

Unclean!

Mark 1:40-45

1

I. A Leper's Request (40)

- "And a leper came to Jesus"
- During his preaching tour of Galilee
- "In one of the cities" (Luke 5:12)

2

Leprosy

- Leviticus 13-14
 - Hebrew--general word
 - Skin diseases
 - 1) Running sores
 - 2) Itches & rashes
 - 3) Boils & inflamed rashes
 - 4) Leprosy
- In the NT
 - Leprosy—Hansen's disease

3

Leprosy

- A disease of the nervous system
- A rod-shaped bacterium
- Disfigurement
- Tumor-like growths called lepromas
- Loss of pain sensation
- 10-20 years
- Fatal

4

The Scourge of Leprosy



5

Lepers in the Ancient World...

- The OT requirements: [Lev. 13:45-46](#)
- The Rabbi's additions in the Mishnah:
 - Allowed to live wherever they chose
 - Except in walled cities and especially within Jerusalem
 - Could attend synagogue services if a screen isolated them
 - If a leper even stuck his head inside a house, the whole house was unclean.
 - Forbidden to greet a leper
 - Required to stay at least 50 paces away
- Worst of diseases
- Only 2x in the OT someone cured
 - Miriam (Num. 12:10ff)
 - Naaman (2 Kings 5:1ff)

6

I. A Leper's Request (40)

- “And a leper came to Jesus”
 - “Full of leprosy” (Luke 5:12)
 - For more than 10 years
 - Cf. Luke 17:12 - ten leprosy men who stood at a distance met Him.
- “Beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him.”
 - Matthew and Luke—refers to Jesus as “Lord.”
- “Saying, ‘If You are willing, You can make me clean.’”

7

II. Our Lord's Compassion (41)

- **41** – “Moved with compassion.”
- Greek word—*splagchnizomai*
 - Noun form = actual entrails or bowels, specifically the heart, liver, lungs, etc (cf. Acts 1:18)
 - Affected Him in His bowels
 - Often used to describe the attitude of affection God has toward men.
 - E.g., Mark 6:34—When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

8

II. Our Lord's Compassion (41)

- “Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him.”
 - All three synoptic gospels
 - 1) Ceremonial defilement (Lev. 11:24-40; 14:46-47; 15:5-12, 19-27; Num. 19:11-16).
 - 2) Medical contagion.
- “And [Jesus] said to him, ‘I am willing; be cleansed.’”

9

III. A Dramatic Healing (42)

- “Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.”
 - Suddenly & Completely
 - Extremities, new
 - Disfiguring growths, gone
 - Physical features returned to normal
 - Function returned to his nerves
 - Skin, supple and soft
 - Every single bacterium was gone!

10

IV. A Clear Directive (43-44)

- **43** – “And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away.”
 - *Sternly warned* literally means “to snort in anger”
- **44** – “And He said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone’
 - A double negative
 - Luke adds that Jesus “ordered him to tell no one.”
- **44** – “But go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

11

The Mosaic Law

- Only a priest could declare...
 - Unclean with leprosy
 - Clean
 - Cf. Lev. 13:6, 13, 17, 23, 50; 14:2-4
- The process (Lev. 14:1-32)
 - Go to the priest in your own town
 - Go to Jerusalem & offer the prescribed sacrifices
 - The reasons ...
 - To acknowledge his sin and seek forgiveness from God.
 - To cleanse him ceremonially.
 - To serve as an acknowledgement that God had healed him
 - To express his gratitude.

12

“As a Testimony to Them”

- Proof:
 - 1) Of the reality of this man’s healing to the people of his town
 - 2) Of Jesus’ power to the priests and leaders of Israel.

13

V. A Tragic Disobedience (45)

- **45a** – “But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around.”
 - The words *proclaim* and *spread around* are words that are used to describe what the believers in the 1st century often did.
 - Cf. Acts 8:4ff; 9:20; 10:42
- **45b** – “To such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas.”
- **45c** – “And they were coming to Him from everywhere.”
 - Luke 5:15-16 – But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear *Him* and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.

14

The Lessons...

- 1) A lesson about Jesus’ compassion for the hurting.
- 2) A lesson about Jesus’ power to heal the body.
- 3) A lesson about Jesus’ power to heal the soul.
- 4) It’s a lesson about Jesus and His character.

15