

MARK

¹ ⁴⁰A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

⁴¹Jesus was moved with pity to the depths of his being. He stretched out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" ⁴²And, as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

⁴³Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴"See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and bring the offering for cleansing that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, spreading the news all over. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but he had to stay outside in the lonely places. Yet the people kept coming to him from everywhere.

Job 5 *Eliphaz the Temanite:*

⁸"But if it were I, I would appeal to God;

I would lay my cause before him.

⁹He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed,
miracles that cannot be counted.

James 4

⁶But he gives us more grace. That is why the Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the humble."

Process to confirm healing of leprosy Leviticus 14:1-32

Examination by Priest

Sprinkling of blood

Wash clothes, shave hair, bathe

Wash, shave & bathe again after 7 days.

Offerings (8th day) & consecration

(Atonement & forgiveness for
unintentional sin cf Nu 15:22-26)

Guilt offering

Blood & oil on right ear lobe, right
thumb, right big toe

Sin offering

Burnt offering

Grain offering

Cleansed by Grace

The man with leprosy

Jesus identified the *leprosy* as an infectious skin disease. Jesus' clear instruction to go to the priest to confirm that he was clean of the leprosy is a clear reference to Lev 13 (*Regulations about infectious skin diseases*) and Lev 14 (*Cleansing from infectious skin diseases*).

We learn from Lev 13

- He had open sores over his body, white swellings with raw flesh exposed. The sores were more than skin deep.
- He was examined [Lev 13:2-8] by a priest and pronounced *unclean*.
- He lived [Lev 13:45,46] alone, separated from family & friends. He wore torn clothes, head uncovered and hair unkempt. He had to cry out "*Unclean! Unclean!*" to warn others.
- The Jews connected sin and suffering.

The lower part of his face was covered (a sign of God's judgment and subsequent mourning at the loss of someone loved, or disgrace due to the destruction of something treasured Eze 24:17,22; Mic 3:7). In other words, the disease was a sign to the Jews that he was under the curse of God. God was angry and had "broken out" against him [Ex 19:22; 2Sa 6:7]. cf Miriam Nu 12:1-10; Gehazi 2Ki 5:27; Azariah/Uzziah 2Ki 15:5; 2Ch 26:20-21.

He was considered to be judged by God for unintentional sin [Lev 14:12-20; Nu 15:22-26; Job 4:7-9; 5:8,9, etc.]

- He was abhorrent. He felt humiliated and unloved (despised).

Humility is the prerequisite of healing.

You can make me clean

Mk 1:28 News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

The man with leprosy heard of others being healed of their diseases [Mk 1:34]. This could only be the power of God at work, as it was through the prophet Elisha [2Ki 5:3]. If he could meet Jesus, he too could be clean again.

He came begging

This man did not know that Jesus was the Messiah (in contrast to blind Bartimaeus [Mk 10:46-52]). Nevertheless, the man came to Jesus in humility (and disgrace) and appealed to the mercy of God [cf Naaman 2Ki 5:13,14].

The LORD gives grace to the humble. 2Ch 7:14; Pr 3:34; **Jas 4:6**; 1Pe 5:5.

Grace and Truth

In this story we begin to see what the grace of God is like. This same grace shown to the despised, unclean, empty man, is the same grace shown to us as sinners before Him! [Eph 2:8]

Compassion

Jesus did not turn away from the despised man, ignore him, or drive him away. On the contrary, "He stretched out his hand and **touched the man**"! Jesus saw beyond the physical uncleanness to a soul in desperate need.

Power/Grace

The man was immediately cured. This is a miracle, God at work to radically change the human condition [Ps 113]. That same power changes our lives.

Truth

Immediately, Jesus sent him to fulfill the required ritual ... to prove cleansing and to please God [Eph 5:2].

Jesus also told him not to tell anyone that Jesus healed him. Why? (a) The man's assumptions were wrong - Jesus was more than a prophet, (b) it would distract from the real message, (c) if the man lived an unholy life, his proclamation would be an insult. Grace demands holiness [cf Ro 6; Ro 6:19].