

THE MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS

Lesson Nine

III. The Ministry of Healing (4): Healing and Cleansing the Leper (Luke 5:12-15; Matthew 8:2-4)

Burden to Impart:

The Lord Jesus came as the compassionate Savior and mighty Healer to cleanse all men from their "leprosy." Leprosy in the Bible is likened to sin, especially the sins of rebellion and disobedience. Through the Lord's cleansing the leper could live in fellowship together with both God and man.

Memory Verse: If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 1:7

Facts to Teach:

1. One of the most feared diseases in Bible times was leprosy. Leprosy is a very serious disease of the skin and hair. It is a very dirty, contaminating and damaging disease.
2. Very strict laws were enforced in order to keep this terrible disease from spreading to others. If anyone was discovered to have leprosy they had to leave their family and friends and live "outside the camp" of God's people. They had to be isolated from the fellowship of God's people and were condemned to live all alone (Lev. 13:46).
3. If a leper ever came into the city they were required to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" wherever they went while covering their mouth (Lev. 13:45). This was to warn people to stay away from them lest they also would get their dreaded disease. Also, it was strictly forbidden to ever touch a leper.
4. One day such a pitiful man full of leprosy came to the Lord Jesus. He knew that only the Lord Jesus could heal him and cleanse him of his leprosy so that he could live a normal life again. He came near to Jesus and fell on his face. He cried and begged Him to please cleanse him. (How unclean he felt!) He called Him "Lord." This shows that he recognized Jesus to be the Lord God, Jehovah the Savior.
5. The Lord Jesus did not despise the leper nor did He fear his disease. The Lord Jesus was filled with sympathy for the leper: He stretched out His hand and touched him saying, "Be cleansed!"
6. Also, His divine attribute of great power is seen in the healing and cleansing of the leper. No human being can cleanse a leper. The One who cleansed this leper had to be God. By the Lord Jesus' one touch the man was immediately healed and cleansed.
7. According to scriptural examples, "leprosy" comes from rebellion and disobedience. The following examples may be used:
 - a) Numbers 11:1-10 -- Miriam became leprous because of her rebellion against her own brother, Moses, who was God's appointed authority.
 - b) 2 Kings 5:1, 9-14 -- Naaman's leprosy was cleansed because of his obedience.
8. All fallen human beings became leprous in the eyes of God because of their rebellion. This leprous man portrays the typical sinner. Leprosy is the most contaminating and damaging disease, isolating the victim from both God and man. To cleanse the leper signifies to recover the sinner to fellowship with God and with man.

(Continued)

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9. The one with leprosy not only requires healing, but he also needs cleansing. Just so it is with the sinner: he needs to be healed spiritually and cleansed outwardly. First John says: "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

(Points 7 and 8 come from footnote 2¹ of Matthew 8 in the RECOVERY VERSION of the New Testament)

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1. What did the leper do when he saw Jesus? (Luke 5:12)
2. According to the examples in the Old Testament, what does leprosy signify? (Numbers 11:1-10; 2 Kings 5:9-14)
3. What divine attribute does this incident show us about the Lord Jesus?
4. What does leprosy signify in respect to the problem of all men?
5. How can we be healed and cleansed of our sinful condition?
6. Write the memory verse (1 John 1:7):